Eckhart Tolle Talk YouTube 00

[Speaker 2] (0:07 - 0:10)

Conscious sitting down.

[Speaker 1] (0:12 - 2:55)

There's a species that has developed out of Homo sapiens, a branch species called Homo turisticus. And they walk around continuously with either camera or something. You see them every day, they come in buses.

Now a strange thing is happening right now, the internet is down. Which means those of you who are joining us from elsewhere will be watching this in the future. No, I forgot the future doesn't exist.

So you'll be watching it in the present. Now when you're not, did you disappear when you're not thinking? When you're not remembering your problems, when you're not remembering whether your life is a big success or a big failure, to take two extremes.

If you think your life is a big success, you're in a state of temporary delusion. And just wait a little. A few times abdominal, a few abdominal breaths and you are in the body and out of your mind, in a good sense.

You're out of your mind, thank you, I am. Who am I? Because that also, when you ask yourself, who am I?

Consciousness awakening, at first it's painful. And then it says, what am I doing here? Not another incarnation.

I don't go into, I don't advise you to do it either, saying, I have no conceptual identity. They probably won't let you in.

[Speaker 2] (2:56 - 3:07)

We don't want people who have no conceptual identity. Technology is very difficult.

[Speaker 1] (3:08 - 2:11:15)

But then suddenly you realize you're nobody, beyond your job description and your function that you fulfilled for decades, perhaps an important function, member of the board. And suddenly you're not a member of the board, you're just bored. So a lot of our knowledge is just covering up our ignorance with words.

Entire PhDs are like that. I'm sorry that my chair is more comfortable than yours. And then there are other types of challenges that come at you seemingly out of nowhere.

It could be that an earthquake could happen here in a minute, or let's not manifest it. People who expect the conventional responses become confused. What, this is a weird person.

And so she decided to stay. And a few weeks later, when I got to know her better, she explained to me that that first night she was in her bedroom, and she said, I found you so weird that I thought you might creep in in the middle of the night and murder me. And if you're not careful, you think that all the important things is what's on the news, CNN or others, not to mention others.

I mean, they are trying to present what they think is important. I understand that, and it's their livelihood, that's fine. But if that deceives you and you think those things are really, those are the things that really matter going on in the world at this moment.

And all you look at is the deepest manifestations of unconsciousness. That should be the name for the news. So you have the six o'clock deepest manifestations of unconsciousness.

I was walking not long ago on my daily walk on this forest trail, and a couple were coming in the opposite direction, a young man and his girlfriend, wife. And as they were walking past me, he stopped and said, I know you from somewhere. Where do I know you from?

What's your name? I said, Eka, oh yes, YouTube, I'm watching you on YouTube all the time. Then he said to his girlfriend, he's a famous YouTuber.

So I have a new identity now. And now my ambition is, perhaps I too can become an Instagram influencer. All I need is weight for a different body.

In Thailand, just near Bangkok, somebody, they interviewed some near a Buddhist monastery. They interviewed some farmers and farm workers. They would give food to the monks.

That's the tradition in Buddhism in Thailand, the South Theravada tradition of Buddhism. The monks come with their begging bowls every morning. They just stand there.

And then the local people come and put food. They're dependent. It's done on purpose.

There's a wisdom behind it. All the Westerners would say, why don't they work for a living? The monks stand there with their begging bowls.

And then the poor people who hardly have enough, who hardly have enough themselves, they come and put some food, a bit of rice, whatever, in the begging bowl. And the monks just stand. They don't say thank you, because it's a privilege for you to give food to the monks.

That's part of the tradition. So the Westerners interviewed the farm workers. They said, why do you give your food to the monks when you have so little yourself?

And they began talking to each other and said, well, because we want a better incarnation next time. So we are accumulating merit. So next time we come, we are born into a better condition.

And then the Westerner asked, so what do you want to come back as in your next lifetime? And then they talked amongst each other. And finally the agreement was, we want to come back as tourists.

It's a wake-up call. Being is the one thing, of course it's not a thing, you're just using words, is the one thing that you can be absolutely sure about. The only thing that is beyond doubt in your life.

The only thing whose reality is beyond doubt. Everything else could be a dream or an illusion. Whatever you perceive could be a dream, an illusion.

You don't know that it's not a dream or an illusion. Because when this meditation comes to an end, then it evaporates into the so-called past. And everything that happens quickly dissolves, dissolves, dissolves.

The same way that a dream comes to an end when you wake up. Except that this dream seems to go on and on, replaced by another and another, if it is a dream. But what is it then that cannot be doubted?

That there is a consciousness in which, if it is a dream, whether it's a reality or a dream, it doesn't matter, the matter in which it arises, in which it is known, the light in which it appears. So your presence cannot be doubted. Whatever happens in that presence can be doubted.

But for it to happen, there must be a presence. And of course, I said your presence, it's not your presence, it's the One Universal. I particularly welcome those of you who are getting tired of their personality, that cumbersome thing, that weight you carry around, and creates the same old stuff again and again.

It's a good point to reach, to become tired of yourself. That is sometimes misperceived, and then you think you're tired of the world, you're tired of living, you're tired of... It's a misperception.

What you're really tired of is the self and the world that it creates, or seems to create, out there. And the same old conflict, the same old problems, or different problems, but basically the same, if you're deep down, the same old thoughts in your head again and again, the same complaints, oh dear. So the spiritual path, there are many practices you can use in order to access the dimension of presence, which is the spiritual dimension.

But the most direct practice that immediately accesses that dimension, we could call that surrender. What is that? It is to offer no resistance or opposition to whatever arises in the present moment.

Whatever happens, whatever arises, whatever people say or do, to become one with the is-ness of the present moment. The present moment always already is the way it is. There's no doubt about that.

Whatever form this moment takes, it is as it is. And if internally then you give up opposing, which is the normal state associated with dense personalities, instead of opposing internally what is, getting upset, getting angry, arguing with what is, either just in your head or out aloud, telling people what they should have done or should be doing, what they're not doing, what it should be like, what it isn't like, what I should be doing, what I'm not doing, whatever form the opposition takes, and I mentioned a few minutes ago, those of you who are getting tired of the old personality, and of course this is part of the old personality, the way in which it interacts with people and events and places, it's not usually pleasant.

There's always some resistance, always something not good enough, always something missing here and now. Wherever you go, the structure stays with you, goes with you. So you recognize that that's an important part of the false self that lives through opposition to what is.

It strengthens itself through that sense of separation, separating itself from what's going on, condemning it, judging it, and people. And then you realize, what happens if I just accept that whatever arises in the present moment, say, oh, that's what it is. You can still take action, but the foundation is acceptance, surrender.

And then immediately the false self can't really operate anymore. And something else comes in which is essence, which is awareness, which is consciousness itself. So the most fundamental spiritual practice is surrender, so that internally you're one with what is.

And immediately you are a spiritual master, because that's all a master. A master does not necessarily have more knowledge than you. You may have much more knowledge than a spiritual master, but the master lives in alignment with the is-ness of the present moment, that's all.

And that's where the power arises, because when you're aligned with the is-ness, that inner spaciousness opens up, essence is there, and that is the power that then moves through you and can become a thought, it can express itself in form through a thought, an action, a movement, something you do or make in many ways, or just as an emanation. That is true power, but it's not your power. It's universal power, and you become one with it.

Welcome to another live meditation. Sometimes people ask, what is meditation? And meditation could be defined in negative terms, simply by saying, you're no longer waiting for the next thing to happen, but you're not going to sleep either.

And, of course, to be added to this, you're no longer dwelling on the last thing that happened, or the one before, or the one before, but there's simply complete attention to this moment, and this is what we are here to learn and deepen, paying complete attention to this moment, without reference to the past. We're not imposing the past on the present. How do we usually impose the past on the present?

By commenting, interpreting, labeling, liking, disliking, saying good, bad. That's how we impose the past on the present, in other words. So in thinking, we perceive the reality, the external reality, through the veil of thought, which is conditioned by our past, the culture you grew up in, your personal history, the collective history, and so on.

When enormous liberation comes, the only true liberation, we no longer compulsively label and interpret things as they happen, or as they are. Whether it's things that are happening around you, things that other people say or do, and one could say that a higher form of intelligence begins to operate in your life, and you're able to pay attention to something without labeling or interpreting it. And that's a wonderful practice in itself, and we're practicing this now.

We can allow this moment to be as it is, without having to call it anything. The Buddha used the expression, or something like that, freedom from opinions. Actually, it points to the same thing.

So any situation in your life that arises, you can approach it through the veil of preconceptions and opinions and conditioned thinking and interpreting and labeling, or you can face it as it is, in that pure space of awareness. Just that. And look at it.

Look in a wider sense, not just visual looking. So you look at what is, and there's an enormous intelligence behind that, which is non-conceptual. It's nothing to do with knowledge.

And as this emerges, that which before had run your life, which we could call the personality, or the person that consists of incessant mind activity accompanied by waves of emotion, that which normally runs a person's life, a person's identified with, recedes, still there somewhere, of course, but something else emerges. We could call that, and I've called it that before, your essence identity, as opposed to your form identity, which is all that most people know about themselves, is their form identity, physical form, psychological form, the me, the psychological me entity. And that in itself, without the essence, awareness of essence, which is awareness itself, your personality is a kind of present, an enormous limitation that confines you, trapped in a personalized sense of self, and nothing else, nothing, not aware of anything beyond that at all.

The spaciousness, the depths within you, the vastness of that, the peace, the aliveness that's there, completely unaware of that, and just continuously preoccupied with protecting, defending, and strengthening that purely personalized sense of self. And that's what makes up most people's lives. And it's boring, it's so boring once you see that there's no solution there ever to the dilemma that the personalized sense of self finds itself in, even considers, it considers itself to be, most people are a problem to themselves, a walking problem in search of a solution.

Part of that is that sense of, there's always something missing here, not quite right, something lacking still. Of course there's something lacking, but it's not to be found within the realm of form, that which this personalized sense of self consists of. It can only be found beyond that.

And so there's suddenly a cessation in the stream of thinking, and just a sense of alive presence. As it first arises in you, perhaps you need to set aside a time or space every day when you access that, when you're not being disturbed, but ultimately that essence identity is not something that then exists in a separate compartment from the form identity, you as the personality, which of course is still there. It's not that occasionally you take a vacation from your personality.

At first it might seem like that. That's quite a relief too, from time to time take a vacation from your personality, and that's why people meditate, and other people might take drugs, but they're very different things. So it's not ultimately a question of taking a vacation from your personality, your person, the person, but of bringing the essence identity into everyday life, not as a separate thing that you do only when you're not being challenged, but to bring that spaciousness into everyday life, even while you're engaged in activities.

And then you move in the two dimensions, you embody the two dimensions, which we could call the physical realm, the physical and mental realm, the old world of form, whether it's physical forms or mental formations, to embody the physical and mental, and to use an ancient term, the spiritual dimension. In other words, the spiritual dimension coming into this world, so to speak. We are here to deepen our sense of I.

This is the most important thing, really, that you can do in this lifetime. Most humans, that's a sad fact, are not very deep at all. Most humans are superficial.

Their sense of I is derived from external things and is derived from certain ideas in their head. About who they are. Those ideas, of course, are connected to external things, what other people think of me, what I own, what I possess, my history, all things, ideas in your head.

So when the average person says I, he or she refers to that superficial sense of self that really is derived from the movement of thought and the emotions that go with it. But the

wonderful thing is that there is the possibility in every human of deepening their sense of I, so that when they say I, they no longer refer to the mind-made, idea-based sense of self, but a much deeper sense of self or being that has nothing to do with thinking and has nothing to do with external things. And you arrive there, you get there, by dropping down, taking your sense of your attention behind thinking, let's call it that.

And that's what meditation is about. And that's why we're here. And that's what's happening while you listen to these words.

Already there is a deepening in you, which is part of the transmission, which miraculously works even through electronics and the camera. And you notice that there is a sense of presence or beingness behind your thinking. And that realization is already the deepening.

And of course, I'm inviting you to enter that state of realizing that there is a presence there in you, a presence that is more essentially you, or that's I, really, that is more essentially who you are than anything in the realm of external things, physical body, or ideas in your head. So there is a dimension in you that's much more real, deeper than anything in the world of form, because that's really what the superficial sense of self comes down to. It's identification with some form, external form, thought form, emotional form.

And identification with form means, what does that mean, identification? It means you derive your sense of self, of I, of who you are, from a few, some accumulation of forms, ultimately thought forms, emotional forms, thought forms. External forms are really also ultimately experienced as thought forms.

You cannot experience anything out there as it is. It has to become through sensory perception, and as your mind is transformed into a mental image, and that's the thought form. So identification with form is, if there's nothing else, of course the form dimension is there, you cannot deny it, but if that's all there is in your life, then you are a superficial human being, and a superficial human being is anxious, fearful, easily upset, worries a lot, gets depressed when things don't go as they should, gets temporarily elated when something so-called good happens, but it never lasts very long, and often even the elation turns out to be a delusion.

So a superficial human being is continuously frustrated in their search for something more real, more lasting, but because they are looking for that which is more real, more lasting and more fulfilling in the realm of forms, they never find it. And they remain superficial. But that which is more deeply fulfilling than anything in the realm of form is very close to you.

You don't need time to arrive at it. You don't need to acquire it. It is very close.

That space where you are essentially formless but intensely alive, intensely intelligent, but formless, that formless inner space is very close. There was an astronomer who once said that outer space, we don't realize how close outer space is. He said you can get in your car, and if your car could drive vertically upward, within an hour's drive from where you are, you would be in outer space.

An hour's drive is not that far. So if you go upward, you drive for an hour, and you are in outer space, a totally different dimension. Now inner space is even closer than that.

And when we call it space, it's another word for formless, undifferentiated. So on the one hand, your I is the surface I of the physical body, of all the sense perceptions, of thoughts and emotions. That's the surface I with its name and its history, its temporary form.

And then there is the deeper I. As far as the surface I is concerned, you and I are different. Physical appearance, different kinds of thoughts, different history, different name.

But as you go deeper within, behind thought, where all there is is a sense of presence, beingness, or aliveness, that's exactly the same presence, beingness, or aliveness that is in me. And if we both go to that dimension of depth within ourselves, we can meet there in a sense of oneness. The surface self, there is no oneness there.

It's all differentiated. So if I'm stuck only on the surface dimension, every other human being is totally other. That's the egoic dilemma.

The ego actually wants it, because it defines its identity through the otherness of others. So it loves to criticize and judge and dismiss and gossip about the faults of others. So it makes the others more other than it feels more itself.

Love is totally impossible in that state. And what the ego calls love, of course, is not love at all. It's a clinging and a wanting.

It's only when I realize that apart from my surface self, there is a deeper I that has nothing to do with thinking or any form, and if I can sense that deeper I as a silent presence within, not just when I go and sit on the floor and meditate, it's fine there as an introduction to it, but in everyday life, so that you can simultaneously be the form I, the form identity, and the deeper sense of self. You can function in this world on the two levels.

Welcome to our live meditation. And I trust you're not waiting for me to start the meditation. Because then you would have missed that it started already, and you would think about meditation in terms of doing something, but you don't actually do a meditation.

As long as you're doing a meditation, you're not really meditating, or the meditation is not fulfilling its purpose. Meditation, true meditation, is not a technique or a mantra. It's about becoming aware of the being dimension, that's already the essence of who you are, and you don't have to do anything to become aware of the being dimension.

In fact, all you have to do is to stop doing, and that's not a doing. Now, to stop doing does not necessarily mean stop external activities, but it means not to be focused exclusively on doing, so that your entire attention is continuously absorbed by the doing dimension, which, of course, all goes back to thinking. Thinking is doing.

And then it becomes some external activity, which is fine, because that is one level of who you are. You have to do things in this world, and you have to think. And it's good.

Doing and thinking is good. But if that's all there is in your life, then you're missing the deeper dimension. And then doing and thinking, this continuous absorption in that dimension of form, becomes frustrating, leads to anxiety or depression, burnout, a sense of meaninglessness after a while.

And all those who are not in touch with the deeper dimension, the dimension of being, which is the essence of who you are, which I sometimes call the essence dimension, or your essence identity, being able to sense, and this is why we are here now, being able to sense your essence identity, in addition to having a form identity, which is always connected with some kind of doing or thinking, that is liberating.

So what you are liberated from is an exclusive identification with who you are, on the level of form, the body, the mind, and whatever the mind identifies with in the realm of form. Mental images that arise, that the mind identifies with and says, that's me, that's my body, me, my possessions, my status in society, my work, my function, my social function, my social and economic position, my class, social class or background, my knowledge that I have accumulated, or any other image, which may not necessarily be positive, it could be negative, me, the victim, me, the one that was never given a chance, all these are mental images that you derive your sense of self from, and usually it's a certain bundle of images, which in every image is also a little story, and this bundle of images becomes the self, the me, or what you refer to when you say I, and yes, that is, one could say, who you are on the level of form, but even on that level, it's certain stories that you believe in, that tell you something about who you are in relation to others, and your past and your history, your successes, failures, achievements, these are perspectives on what happened to you, or what you did or failed to do, what other people did to you, one could have other perspectives, you could have the perspective, I'm a successful, wealthy professional, and your ex-wife might have a different story about you, call you an obnoxious jerk, or you can have a negative story about yourself, on this dimension of form, or one could easily have a story, I could tell you a story why I am a very unfortunate human being, you may not believe it, but I could, and it would be

very convincing, and I could tell you a story why I'm one of the greatest, there would be stories, and every one of you, you could have a story that proves that you are justified in being miserable, or you could have another story that says you are actually very good, but they are all just stories, so there will be some stories in your mind, but is that who you are?

And the stories, of course, refer to other people, your reflection in the lives of others, and so they don't exist in isolation, and they are reinforced by others, and so on. Who am I? So the question is, are you what your mind tells you about yourself?

On the level of form, that's one way of looking at who you are, but there's a deeper dimension. We've just been talking about form identity, and what most humans don't know yet, because it's not taught at school, whereas it should be one of the most important things, it's not one of the most, the most important thing taught at school, there is in you a deeper dimension, and there's an essence identity that you can sense, even while you play whatever your role is, or your function is, in the world of form, and even while you do things, and deal with things, and speak to people, and even think, it is possible to sense, in the background of your life, your essence identity, and what is that?

It's this, being aware that there's a presence in you, which is not the right way of describing it, let's put it differently, being aware that you are a presence, being aware of the presence that you are, I am, another way of pointing to it, being aware, quite simply, right now, that you are aware, that you are, I am, and that has no content, it's just a knowing, a sensing, of a presence, and that is who or what you are, the one thing that you cannot doubt is that, there is a conscious presence here, I am that, before there's any content to it, that is the light of consciousness, and then things appear in the light of consciousness, or illuminated by the light of consciousness, or the light of consciousness, becomes those things, thoughts, sense perceptions, but there would be no sense perceptions, without the light of consciousness, there would be no thoughts, without the light of consciousness, in other words, there would be no world, without you, because you are the light of consciousness, in which the world appears, and that's form, the world of form, so it's a simple realization, of your own presence, or, of presence, the moment we use words to describe it, it gets distorted, because it's not, you don't become aware of presence, but when we form a sentence, we have a subject and an object, but what happens is that, presence becomes self-aware, or awareness becomes self-aware, consciousness becomes conscious of itself, and that is the awakening of consciousness, to itself, to its own essence, that can be felt or sensed more strongly, in the gap between two thoughts, when there's a space within you, of simple presence, much still taking sense perceptions, but there's no thinking, right now you don't need to think, you can just be aware, in that awareness, the words that I speak, are perceived, they're also understood, without any additional thinking on your part, the words are recognized, because they point to something that's beyond words, and you can only recognize the truth of these words, by sensing, that towards which they point, which is beyond words,

and suddenly it makes sense, so, our meditation here, and as I'm talking, this is the meditation, only makes sense, if you can sense, what the words are pointing to, in yourself, and it has no form, it is, essentially, who you are, conscious presence, we don't need to go here, to the question of whether, is that conscious presence, not as many mainstream scientists, would say, is that not just an epiphenomenon, of brain activity, is it not just a byproduct, of the chemical soup, in your brain, or molecular activity, in the brain, or we might say, well, no, there is a consciousness, is not produced by the brain, although that would be the mainstream, scientific belief, if they even recognize, the existence of consciousness, or is consciousness, does consciousness pervade the universe, and is the brain only a, an instrument, highly complex instrument, that receives consciousness, and focuses consciousness, into a particular form, in which then, the universe perceives itself, as form, so is consciousness, perhaps more like a radio receiver, or a television receiver, which does not produce the program, it just receives it, and so if you destroy the television, or you destroy the receiver, and if the brain no longer functions, then that would mean, not that consciousness is lost, just mean consciousness, no longer manifesting, through that form, welcome, are you there, of course you're not there, you're here, I sometimes quote, I don't know who said it, when you get there, there's no there there, in other words, wherever you are, it's here, that applies to, the spatial dimension, it also applies, to time, there, can be used, with reference to, some other place in space, there can also be, some place in the future, I want to get there, tomorrow, I want to get to tomorrow, tomorrow, so when you get there, there's no there there, can be applied to space, and also applied to time, you're always here, and it's always now, there's no there there, let's talk about it briefly, with special reference to, the temporal, there's no there there, with reference to the temporal means, that there is never, a future, moment, there is no such thing, as a future moment, the there, the temporal there, there's only ever, the here, the here and now, nothing else exists, it just seems to, it appears to, and that appearance, that something else is there, is very strong and, it runs most people's mind, they live unconsciously, as if the there, were more important, than the here, that's the unawakened state, or one aspect, of the unawakened state, so any meditation, and our meditation here, if you want to call it meditation, is to bring your attention into, the now, so you become aligned, with reality, so that you learn to dwell, in the now consciously, that's really, the awakened state, so I'm inviting you, not just to listen, or try to understand, the simple fact, that there is only now, there isn't much to understand there, there's only now, or let me think about that, of course it's true, so there's not much to understand, but, there's only now, is a powerful pointer, to a shift in consciousness, so I'm not asking you, to agree conceptually, or figure something out mentally, but to experience, or to sense, what that implies, or what that means, there's only now, so, I'm inviting you to, to sense, let's put it like that for a moment, the presence, that is, the now, now whether you perceive that as something outside of you, or inside of you, it doesn't matter, ultimately, it's one and the same, this is a wonderful realization, if you can, join me in that, to feel or to sense, the now, itself, the presence, not what happens, in the now, what happens in

the now, in this very simple now, are just words that, you perceive, and, other, the visual perception, the focus of your visual perception, and the peripheral visual perception, wherever you are, on the periphery of your vision, you see the room, or whatever it is, just as I do, but when I say, become aware of the now, the now, yes, it includes, the sense perceptions, but that's not the main thing that I'm referring to, becoming aware of the now, is to become aware of something that is, deeper than, the things you perceive, a presence, let's just say it's within you, it is, it's also without, but let's stay with the within, once you sense it within, you can also sense that, it pervades everything, a presence, that never changes, eternal, eternal, which does not mean, it goes on and on, but, it has nothing to do with time, there is no time in there, it is presence itself, another dimension, coming into this dimension of space and time, there are other pointers, one could use, to point to, that presence, that you can sense, and another one that I sometimes use, of course, is stillness, you feel a stillness, within, that presence, or that stillness, although I just said, that it is something that you feel or sense within, that's language, we're using language, it's not quite right, of course, because, you don't sense the presence, or feel the presence, subject and object, I feel the presence, that's how language works, it breaks things up into duality and multiplicity, that's the mind, but it's not really correct to say, although I sometimes do say it, I feel the presence, because, in that arising of presence, there isn't you and the presence, there is no duality, there is only, the presence, and you are, that, I don't need to point out to you, I'm sure you know that, that, as I speak, the presence can be felt, most strongly, by paying attention, so to speak, to the silence, or the stillness, in between the words, and underneath the words, that's why we call it a meditation, so again, there is no duality in that presence, you don't achieve it, attain it, it is you, it is the essence of who you are, the very foundation of your sense of identity, and that foundation of your sense of identity has no form, it is formless, timeless presence, so your true identity has nothing to do with that which arises in the dimension of form, which of course is first of all the physical body, and then it is the thought forms that arise in the mind, and then it is emotional formations that come and go, and then it is external things you identify with that give you a sense of who you are, that's all very limiting, you don't need to push that away, or push that out of your life, but realize there is something much vaster than that, if you miss that vastness, then your life is a very limited affair, reduced to the merely personal, and the most you can hope for is to identify, perhaps to go beyond the personal, a bit more with the collective, you identify with us, a group, which is dangerous by the way, if there is no transcendental dimension to who you are, so if you are unable to leave the world of form, then you have only the personal sense of self, or the collective sense of self, so the me, or the us, both are very limiting, both are ultimately egoic, but that's all people know, now in quite a few people, the formless dimension, the timeless presence, sometimes shines through a little bit, although they are identified with form, there are moments and on occasion that some presence shines through, they don't realize that, but it comes through when there is pure contemplation of beauty, for example, it comes through when there is an appreciation of just the presence of another being, without

wanting anything from them, it comes through when there is some selfless action, helping somebody or being truly open, listening to somebody in that state of openness, when there is an experience of joy and aliveness, there is some presence coming through, and some people have that more than others, so the degree to which people are trapped in form, varies from person to person. For today's meditation, I'd like to have a little bit more silence, I believe we are ready for that, at least most of you, I'd just like to explain how this works in the context of our technology here, when I'm not speaking, all you do is you look at the screen and you look at the image on the screen, my job is to be here in the state of presence, which means to hold the state of not thinking, and as you look at me, please realize that you're not really looking at a person, it looks like a person, but when there's no thinking, no form consciousness, no concepts, where is the person? The person is generated by thought, so when there is no thought, all there is is something that's prior to the person, more fundamental, more basic, more real, formless, just consciousness, so it can be helpful then, if you're receptive, to be with someone, even if it's only through the means of technology, to be with someone who is in that state of no thought, which means above thinking, not below thinking, because that apparent person has become transparent to the light of consciousness, and somehow if there's even the slightest opening in you to that, you can sense that there is something there that is deeper than the person, in fact the person becomes irrelevant, but that in you that senses that, is of the same frequency as consciousness itself, so if you even have the slightest glimpse of there's something that transcends the person when you look at the image on the screen, you're right, but at that moment, you have already transcended to some extent your own person, person being form identity, psychological form identity, consists of thoughts and images, so it may look at first a little weird, as the human mind would tell you, to be staring at a person on the screen who is staring back at you, and perhaps once or twice a thought will come into your head, this is weird, it's just a thought, it's not really weird, it's much more weird to be trapped in your mental noise for most of your life, and to live on the basis of that, which is a false sense of identity, so what you endeavour is to, as you look at the screen, and don't wait for me to say let's start now, let's consider that we've already started with our silent meditation, because silence underlies the words, that is in between the words, all you need to do then, it's not doing at all really, is you're looking at the screen and you're aware of the sense perception, and you're aware that you're aware, you can sense the presence that you are as you look at the screen, and you're alert, you're aware that there is awareness, otherwise you wouldn't be seeing anything, or hearing anything, so the prerequisite for any sense perception is awareness, consciousness, so you become aware of that in yourself, and what the technology here provides is a reflection of the consciousness that you are, a helpful reflection, that's all, when thought comes in, you realise the thought has arisen, and you watch it like a cloud, and then it drifts past, and there's a space again, don't believe when any thought tells you, as we sit here, don't believe when a thought tells you that this thought is more important than sitting here in presence, thought likes to do that, it comes in to think about this, no, you've decided that the most

important thing as you sit here is to be just present, if you like you can think for the rest of the day when we finish here, plenty of time for thinking, but this is a time for not thinking, rising above thinking, looking at the image on the screen will help you to stay above thinking, when you're feeling drowsy or sleepy, then it's a sign you're falling below thinking, so continuously looking at the image helps you to stay alert, connects you with alertness, those of you who find it hard to sit here in presence, and whose mind is still very active, thinking, feel the inner body as you sit here, feel the aliveness in the body as you sit and look at the screen, feel the aliveness in your hands, your feet, your legs, your arms, there's a field of aliveness, the life within the body, feel that in the background, that takes attention away from thinking, and then you have two things, you have the sense perception, that is helpful, takes attention away from thinking, and the connection with the inner body, and those two should keep your mind fairly clear, if you're able to hold attention there, it's no effort, just effortless, close your eyes for a moment, presence, spacious awareness, aliveness, life itself, the life that you are, consciousness, open your eyes, present, within and without, look at your left or right hand for a moment, see the hand, the skin, the texture, how it reflects the light, without thinking, just present awareness, sense perception, appearing in the field of awareness, looking back at the screen, awareness remains, what appears, changes, that's sense perception, form, look away for a moment, any object where you're sitting in the room, no matter what it is, look at it for a moment, take in its shape, its color, no mental labeling, just an aware presence behind the sense perception, amazing shift from continuously labeling everything and just being there as the presence, look back at the screen, space of awareness remains, this is how you gradually become free of being dominated by the person, of course you're still a person in your daily life, but there's something more vital and more powerful that arises from behind the person and begins to shine through the person, everything else is meaningless in this life, if that doesn't happen in your life, what's the point? It means evolution hasn't happened for you, no, it doesn't matter to the universe, but to the little entity it does, in ultimate terms it doesn't matter at all, only in relative terms, of course in miracles there's delay, does not matter in eternity, but it is tragic in time, there's nothing to think about now, now there are two movements inside you, one is the awakening consciousness and the other is the pull of the person of unconscious thinking that wants to continue to be in control and run your life, you cannot fight the person or the thinking mind, you can only recognize yourself as the presence behind it, there's an inertia in everything and the person is the principle of inertia, the gravitational pull, back into my drama, into my imagined problems, back into the old reactivity that keeps the person alive, just waiting for another excuse for a reaction, that's the inertia of the person, as you know the word person comes from Latin and it's original meaning is mask, so it is not something that is ultimately real, it is a mask, it's a mask that actors used to wear in ancient theatre, the word consists of two parts, per, p-e-r, means through, s-o-n is the same root as the word sound, s-o-n, sound through, it's the mask through which the actor speaks, the sound comes through, your primary task is to transcend that in this lifetime because that's part of the evolution of

the universe, consciousness coming in.

Make sure you're not waiting for anything so that you're completely present, not waiting for me to add anything to this moment, not waiting for anything to be added to this moment so that this moment is completely self-contained, fulfilled, fulfilling, not waiting for anything is for many people something that they very rarely experience, occasionally, accidentally, when a certain desire has just been met and then for brief moments they are not waiting for anything to be added, but most people, most of the time, are never fully present, they're always more focused on some future moment, whether it's a minute from now or an hour from now or tomorrow or next week or next year or even just getting ready to do, to go somewhere, to do something or the intervening, it's always, your entire life is an intervening period, the arriving is just very little because then you wait for the next thing, you look to the next thing, it's all a journey, but if you are excessively focused on the destination, then you miss 99% of your life because the destination, the arriving at a destination is the end of this very little there. Now what? The habit is, if the habit, the mind habit is not to be present, you can't even appreciate the destination, very briefly perhaps, and then because of the underlying mindset of ignoring, denying, diminishing, devaluing the present moment, you can't even appreciate your destination in whatever form it arrives, the achievement, the destination, the end of a task, the outcome, and so you spend your entire life on a journey to some place that always changes, but always it's some future place, some future time, that never really arrives.

The fulfillment that the future moment promises is always very short-lived. So the Buddha saw that already, perhaps the most famous statement of the Buddha, one of the most well-known statements is, in order to go beyond suffering, he says, because he says suffering is a normal state of human beings, suffering in a wider sense, it doesn't necessarily always mean you're in intense agony, but a sense of dissatisfaction, a sense of unfulfillment, unhappiness in whatever form, an underlying discontent is usually connected with this waiting for something to take you out of the present moment. All that is what the Buddha calls suffering, so unhappiness, non-fulfillment, misery, including, of course, extreme forms of unhappiness, minor forms of unhappiness, like slight irritation, the Buddha would say is already a form of suffering.

Anger is a form of suffering, although it's not recognized as such by the ego, because the ego thrives on anger, but if you observe what anger does to your body, then you will know that it is a form of suffering. So the Buddha recognized that most humans are in that non-satisfying state most of the time, unhappy, except, as I said, when some desire has just been fulfilled and then there's a brief moment of, ah, and then the next thing comes. So the Buddha says life is suffering, and in order to go beyond suffering, you have to let go of desire.

Now, doesn't that not imply that you would no longer do anything? If you let go of desire,

for what reason would you engage in any activity? Wouldn't you just sit there, nothing, whatever, there would be no civilization, because nobody would be, has no desire to create anything or do anything.

So that can, I don't think he was talking about it in that sense, but it can be misunderstood easily. When he used the term desire, he was talking about, the better translation might be craving, this needing the next moment, and needing to get away from this unsatisfying present, this pull, longing, a craving that manifests in different ways, craving for sensual pleasure, sex, and of course, adding things to your psychological sense of self, obtain this or that, get this or that, I must have this, I must attain it. So the desire is that state of craving, and in order to get rid of the dissatisfaction, humans then engage in activity in order to free themselves from an unsatisfying state. That is how many humans, most humans operate, but whatever they obtain, they're not happy, doesn't make them happy, except very briefly.

It doesn't free them from unhappiness, except very briefly, but we need to realize that craving is not the only possible motivating force behind action, behind doing. You can have an intention to create something, to engage in some kind of activity. You have an intention to do this or to do that.

It does not necessarily mean that there is this force of craving behind it, which ultimately is an extreme dissatisfaction with what is, and looking for some future satisfaction, something that will be, but if you create, if you have an intention to create something, it does not necessarily imply that there's also a craving. So these are two modalities of creating in this world. One is you create because your state of consciousness is a state of dissatisfaction and lack and neediness, and so you engage in activities in order to either cover up that state, desensitize yourself to the underlying pain, emotional pain, physical, even mental, or to the belief that something or someone can free you from that state of lack and dissatisfaction.

And so that's how craving arises. And many things in this world are created out of that state of consciousness. And then a kind of civilization arises, but it's not a happy civilization.

It's a civilization where millions of people are basically unhappy, needing medication to keep going. Millions upon millions need medication just to continue to function in this life because they haven't been told that another state of consciousness is possible for every human. Nobody at school, nobody told them.

At university, nobody told them. In the media, nobody tells them, or very rarely might get in accidentally, but it's normal to live like that. You see it everywhere.

In every movie, people live like that, the characters in the movies. But there is another way, and it does not mean that you no longer engage in activities, that you no longer

create things, you no longer do, but it means that the activity, the motivating force behind your activity is no longer a state of neediness or dissatisfaction. Because if it is, then the activity is stressful.

[Speaker 2] (2:11:17 - 2:11:19)

I need to get there.

[Speaker 1] (2:11:20 - 2:48:53)

I'm not there yet. I need to get there. And stress is not a happy way to live.

It's not a skillful way, as the Buddhists would call it. It's not a skillful way to lead your life. To be motivated by unhappiness, neediness, dissatisfaction, a sense of not enough, never enough, never have enough, never am enough.

And whatever you achieve or get, always gets, well, that's not quite, there's always something that very quickly comes in that is another form of suffering, no matter what you achieve. Fame, wealth, you achieve it, for a while you're elated, and then, oh, you can see it has a huge downside. Not that fulfilling at all.

So in other words, doing, acting, manifesting, creating, is not enough. It's only one part of the equation. It's only one half of the whole.

What's the other half? If doing is only one half and your life will remain unfulfilled because you're not aware that there is another dimension other than the doing, then you get lost in the doing, consumed by the doing, consumed even by thinking and lost in your thinking because thinking is also doing. So what's the other part?

So we only have one half, it's the doing, the other is the being, being. If you lose awareness of being, then you are basically lost in doing. And only if you become aware of being, which is present, then you can act, you can do from that foundation of that rootedness in being, then an intention can arise, you can delight in creating something, enjoy doing something rather than being excessively focused on the outcome, what you want to achieve through the doing.

When you're rooted in being, then you can act while you're in connectedness with being and then the action is joyful, it's invigorating. In other words, you begin to enjoy the journey, every step of the journey, it's all the journey. The arriving is relatively meaningless and then you can create, you can manifest whatever it is that wants to be manifested through you, but you become a powerful manifester.

And why are you powerful? Because you're not needy anymore. You don't need whatever it is that your intention is to manifest.

You don't need it for your happiness. You don't need it for your fulfillment. You don't

need it to be who you are because you already have access to the dimension of being, the timeless dimension of consciousness itself, which is inherently fulfilling.

That's the only true fulfillment. And that arises whenever you experience a cessation in the stream of thinking. For example, now, you don't need to think while, when I finish one sentence before I start speaking again, there's a gap in which you can be conscious, fully conscious, without any mental noise, without any thought, but just presence, just awareness.

For example, now, that's the portal into being, the dimension of being. So there's nothing happening there. There's no doing in being.

There's just being. We're only interested in one thing here for our live meditation, and that is to sit together, not physically together, but nevertheless together in presence. Thinking is not important here.

As much as possible, let go of thinking without any effort and realize that you are more fully yourself when you're not thinking. And when you're not thinking, you can realize what being is, what it means to be, and you can sense the being that you are, which can be expressed as the first person singular of the verb to be, I am. So you sense, or you are, the presence prior to thinking, the clear space of presence.

That's why we're here, to be that, to realize that we are that. I don't think as I sit here. The words just come out of the stillness.

There's no thinking prior to the words, and as soon as a word has been uttered, there's just presence or stillness. So you can join me in that. As I don't need to think, you don't need to think right now, but just be present.

The great teacher Ramana Maharshi, who taught during the first half of the 20th century in India, was once asked by a visitor to his ashram, this question, how do I know whether I'm making progress on the spiritual path? And he said, the degree of absence of thought is the only true criterion for your progress on the spiritual path. The extent, in other words, to which you are free of thought in daily life, still able to use thought whenever it's needed, perfectly, more efficiently than before, more creatively, because you have access to the unconditioned intelligence itself, which is presence.

How long you can sit in meditation, formal meditation, is not a good criterion for progress on the spiritual path, but to what extent presence comes into your daily life, which initially may just mean little moments of presence in between all the doings of your life, little moments of being, awareness, alertness, alert stillness, conscious, consciously looking at something, consciously listening, consciously walking across the room, consciously washing your hands, which does not mean when you walk across the room you're thinking, I am now crossing the room, or when you look at something, I'm

now looking at that tree, that you're not present yet.

It can be an intermediate step, but the actual presence is when there's no background commentary. And when there's virtually no background commentary throughout your life, that is the awakened state. There may still be fragments of thoughts saying this or that, but basically or fundamentally free of the involuntary, compulsive background commentary in your daily life.

That's an enormous evolutionary leap to live like that. But you don't need to have that as some aim, I want to be totally free, just be free of background commentary now, that's easier, than to say throughout my life I want to be free of that, well, just do it now. Renounce unnecessary thinking, be present instead.

Then the ego diminishes and eventually cannot survive in you when you're present. People have practiced traditionally all kinds of renunciations in spiritual life, in Christianity and Buddhism and Hinduism and so on. And they're still being practiced in many cultures to some extent.

Renunciation of possessions, renunciation of your name, let go of your old name, adopt a new spiritual name, renunciation of physical comforts, exposing the body to discomfort. All these can be helpful, but if the most basic renunciation is not known, then the most basic attachment will still be there, and that's attachment to your thoughts, you haven't renounced unnecessary thinking. Then setting aside a period for being present is traditionally called meditation.

So you could say that's what we are doing here, although we are not really doing anything. All we are doing, which is not a doing, is realizing our presence, realizing presence. Right now, in different parts of the planet, little points of consciousness waking up, where before there was only a person, there's now conscious presence arising.

Different parts of the planet at the same time. Chip, chip, chip, chip. And this, of course, has no form, and there's no time.

Past and future become irrelevant in presence. And that's an amazing realization that who you essentially are, your feeling of identity, of essential identity, does not need the future to complete itself. It is already complete.

It does not need the past. So you don't need past to know who you are. That's a delusion.

That's a story. You don't need future to finally arrive at some more complete version of yourself, because presence is already complete. You are already complete in presence.

One could say presence is the cream, and whatever happens in time, and whatever happens in future to you, is the skimmed milk. But once you know the cream and have

the cream, then skimmed milk is not that important anymore. So as more presence arises, you lose the fear of death, which, of course, arises, because you unconsciously think you need more time to be fully yourself.

Of course, the truth is you need to get out of time to be fully yourself. So we are here relaxed and alert at the same time. Alertness does not require tension, and to be free of tension does not mean that you are going towards sleep.

And at this moment, who are you? With no reference to your story, the space of presence, not a person. You still look like a person from the outside.

So with this shift, the person recedes, and presence arises. You don't lose anything real in this. But what about my personal identity?

I don't want to lose that. If you look more deeply, at the bottom of what you feel is your personal identity, there's the fact that right now you are conscious. That's the foundation of what you sense and call your personal identity.

Consciousness is your personal identity. It gives light to the story of who you are, which consists of thoughts and your past. Past is thoughts.

The consciousness is the light behind your story. Without it, there would be nothing. Let's close our eyes for a moment and just continue to be present without any visual perception.

If thoughts interfere, take your attention into the inner body. Feel the aliveness inside the body. Be present with every cell of the body.

Presence, of course, transcends the body, but it shines through the form. Open your eyes. Look around the room, wherever you are, and stay present.

Be the awareness behind the perceptions. Innocent, fresh perception. Alert perception.

And back at the screen. As we finish our meditation, you may want to sit a little longer in the stillness. And when you then start moving again, start doing things, carry that presence as much as possible with you.

As I don't have my bell with me, I will now simulate the bell as best I can.

[Speaker 6] (2:48:59 - 2:49:00)

Bing!

[Speaker 1] (2:49:16 - 2:49:18)

I think once is enough.

[Speaker 6] (2:49:21 - 2:49:21)

Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (2:49:47 - 2:49:50)

Your latest book is Lost and Found.

[Speaker 1] (2:49:52 - 2:50:34)

This is a very interesting challenge that came into your life not that long ago. The challenge was mercifully provided by one of your, or perhaps your most important spiritual teacher, whose name is Bhagavan Bernie Madoff. And he mercifully took away from you 30 years of savings, all their life's savings, to help you experience the essence of who you are.

[Speaker 6] (2:50:34 - 2:50:34)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (2:50:35 - 2:50:40)

However, you did not immediately experience the essence of who you are.

[Speaker 4] (2:50:40 - 2:50:42)

I'd say that was an understatement.

[Speaker 1] (2:50:43 - 2:51:11)

And you describe it in the book, how it starts, and that's wonderful, I believe it's chapter one or two, beginning the incredible amount of the reaction and the fear that comes when you lose all your life's savings. And you describe what it did to your state of consciousness, wonderfully explained and illustrated. I don't know if you want to talk briefly about it.

[Speaker 4] (2:51:11 - 2:51:12)

Sure.

[Speaker 1] (2:51:12 - 2:51:14)

And then something happened.

[Speaker 4] (2:51:14 - 2:55:13)

Yes. For those of you, those few of you who might not know who Bernie Madoff is, he ran a Ponzi scheme and actually all over the world, and ended up stealing $65 billion of

people's money. And as my husband is very fond of saying when he tells his stories, and not all of it is mine.

So we did have our life's savings in there, and we got a phone call, or I got a phone call one day, my husband was away. We believed it was very safe. A friend of ours was friends with Bernie Madoff, whose father was friends with Bernie Madoff, and anybody could put, in our particular fund, anybody could put anywhere from $600 or $1,000 to whatever amount you had in this fund.

And we just kept on putting all of our money in there because our friend had been in it for 30 years. And also, as my husband says, that you start believing in gravity when every time you throw a ball up in the air, it comes down, every time for 30 years. So we absolutely believed it was safe, and then it wasn't.

And then we got the phone call saying it was gone, and I was shocked, and in terror, I think. First I was shocked, and then hysterical, and then in terror, and then I called a couple of very dear friends and teachers who I would say, we've lost all our money, and this was very soon after the phone call, and two of them said to me, you've lost your money, but nothing of any value is gone. And I said in that moment to both of them, now is not the time to be spiritual.

I was convinced, you know, like, don't give me that. We've lost our money. What are we going to do?

We're going to be homeless. We're going to be out on the street. And what are we going to eat?

And it was such a panic. And I started very soon realizing that it was going to be unbearable to live inside my mind, that I could not, absolutely could not live inside the mind that was telling me, what did you do? I can't believe you did that.

What's the matter with you? How come you didn't diversify? Even a four-year-old knows to diversify.

And I started blaming, of course, everybody, and then myself. And the ranting and the raving was so intense that I understood pretty immediately, within a day, that unless I brought myself back to what I had, not what I had lost, to what I could find instead of the money that I couldn't, what was already here, which is that animating aliveness or that indwelling aliveness that I've heard you speak of, unless I could bring myself back moment to moment to moment, every single time my mind wandered, then I was going to be lost.

[Speaker 3] (2:55:13 - 2:55:16)

I was going to be living in abject terror.

[Speaker 5] (2:55:38 - 2:56:26)

Because when people say to me, you know, how have you lasted so long as being this sensual, sexual? I say, you know, I'm a good listener. That's what's gotten me by all these years.

I'm really just a good listener, because what reads on screen as some kind of sexual attraction or chemistry, whether it's between someone of the same gender or a younger person, an older person, that's not really what determines it. What determines that chemistry that reads on screen is when the audience believes that those two people see each other in a way that nobody has seen them before. And they make a connection that way.

And they listen to each other. And you see that they feel that they're seen. And they feel that they're listened to in a way that they haven't experienced before, whatever the story is.

[Speaker 1] (2:56:26 - 2:56:39)

That's amazing you should say that, because last night I was looking at my notebook where I occasionally write down something that I read that's interesting. And I actually then scribbled it. I brought it to read to you.

It connects with what you just said.

[Speaker 5] (2:56:39 - 2:56:39)

Really?

[Speaker 1] (2:56:41 - 2:57:02)

And this is from an interview with Richard Gere. And he was interviewed, and he talked about acting. And he said, movie acting is primarily listening.

If you're really engaged, that's all a movie audience wants to see. They want to see you processing what's happening in your world.

[Speaker 5] (2:57:03 - 2:58:09)

Oh, that's interesting, because we just played husband and wife. It hasn't come out yet. But I've known him for a long time, so that's a good...

Maybe our essence have communicated somehow over the 20-some years we've known each other. That's funny. Well, I think it's true.

And that's why acting is such a great job. Because you're trained, if you're going to be good at what you do, to listen. You're trained to be present.

You're training to be somehow authentic, and at the same time, to be open to whatever the other person feeds to you. Really, the good actors have an idea of the boundaries. But within those boundaries is the freedom to react to whatever happens.

And when you're really... What's addictive about acting is when you're with somebody like Richard and something happens that's unexpected, and everything gets quiet, and you're there in that moment, and it's actually working. Now, whether or not anybody gets it on film is another question, but that exchange is so strong that you want to find that.

[Speaker 2] (2:58:30 - 2:58:37)

What's a day like in the life of Eckhart? It sounds like a bad reality TV show.

[Speaker 1] (2:58:38 - 3:00:10)

It's not terribly interesting. It's very ordinary. Unless when I'm traveling it gets a bit more interesting, because there's a plane to catch, and there's a hotel, and so on.

But when I'm not traveling, it's extremely ordinary. I love being, so there's always set aside time for just being still or walking in nature. And I'm notorious for not meeting deadlines.

everybody knows when they say this needs to be done, this thing needs to be done by so and so. Well, we'll see. And I love night times, so I sometimes don't go to bed until 1.30 or 2, and sleep about 5 hours. And I like little things, going to a cafe, have a coffee somewhere. Nature, as I said, love walking in nature, reading occasionally, being, doing whatever needs to be done, people call, there's always things that need to be done, I do them quietly. Some things don't get done at all, and then they disappear.

[Speaker 5] (3:00:12 - 3:00:14)

Laughter Easier for you, right?

[Speaker 1] (3:00:14 - 3:21:26)

Laughter Are you still able to go out in public, though? What? Still able to go out in public?

Well, that is interesting, I go out usually with a baseball cap, which I never really liked, but I've been wearing them for years now. And the, because I love privacy, I love to be invisible, I love to be in a room and being able to just observe what goes on in the room without anybody being aware that I'm there. That's more difficult now, so often people come up, even with a baseball cap, they come up and usually it's lovely, they say some, that it's been so wonderful, my life has changed, it happens almost every day.

And that's wonderful, I prefer not to be recognized, but the moment it happens, I'm happy, and I respond, and it's a loving interaction. But my preference is not to be seen. I'm an introvert by nature, so even to go out and give talks was a very strange thing for me.

I knew that this is what the universe wanted me to do, or the universe acting through me, so it's things, one surrenders into things, and then they're fine. It's not my nature to go out on stage and talk. And so every situation brings its own challenges, the loss of privacy and so on, could be seen as a challenge, and requires then surrender, to see in this world there are polarities, you gain something here, you lose something there, in the world of polarities, on the surface level, you experience polarities.

The gain here has to be paid for something. So the fact that the teaching has gone out to so many people, that's wonderful, of course then, yes, privacy is lost, you need to accept that. Before I had privacy, but very few people were reached by the teaching.

I did workshops in the 80s and early 90s, there was one evening talk in England that had been scheduled, nobody turned up. I was alone, I just sat there. But I had my privacy.

And then I had a workshop once scheduled, usually I had about 7, 10, 12, 15 people for little workshops, one workshop had been, somebody had organized a workshop for me, and I arrived for a weekend, Saturday and Sunday, one person turned up, waiting at the door, and said, OK, let's do it. So not that many people were reached, but wonderful privacy. So that's how it is, it's simple, I don't live in an ashram, where some spiritual teachers live in ashrams, where they're surrounded by people who go, and that can be, of course, comforting for a while, to the ego, if you still have an ego, hopefully not the spiritual teacher, but it's not, I prefer to be in normal, everyday life, and go to the supermarket, so it's not interesting, unfortunately, and not even glamorous, except occasionally when I visit Oprah, then suddenly it's, ah! Driving into the big, the gates open to the big mansion, and you drive in, oh! But otherwise not that much glamour.

Teach the child to be aware of their pain body, not while it happens, because nobody will be listening to you. You cannot make even an adult, you cannot make them aware of their pain body in the middle of a pain body attack. That does not work.

The human ego has to, at that point, the human ego has to develop and grow. Unfortunately, the way it is for most humans on the planet so far, is the human ego should be a limited time period when it grows in a human being, let's say up to the age of 20, 25, at the most 30, let's say mid-20s. Then the, you cannot prevent the arising of ego in a child and an adolescent, nor should you want to prevent it, it's not possible.

They need to develop a sense of separate identity that is part of the evolution. The tragedy is, unfortunately, if people get stuck with that ego for the rest of their lives, they never go beyond it. So, for a parent to begin with parents, it's to observe the growth of

the ego in the child, which already starts with, may start at the age of two or three, when the child begins to, well, the child learns his or her name, and then the child learns that it is possible to possess something.

It learns the concept of mine fairly early, and so it possesses a toy, and it learns the concept of my toy, that's the beginning of ego. And then, also the beginning of the suffering that comes with ego identification, because if the toy is lost or disappears or somebody takes it, enormous suffering arises. Oh, my toy, mine!

This is the early suffering of egoic consciousness. The next step would be for the child to assert that it is better in some ways than another. I can jump higher than you.

Can you jump this high? No, you can't, look at me. I can do it.

And parents say, you're great, you're doing it, and that's fine, if you don't overdo the praise. Give praise when praise is deserved, but don't just praise anything, because then there comes an inflation of praise, and that can create a narcissistic personality, which is an overblown ego. Many parents these days do that.

They say, everything you do is so great, you're the greatest, you're wonderful. It feels good for the child, but, you know, when you print money, when you print money, it loses its value. It's called inflation.

I know that, but many politicians these days don't seem to know it. And they probably have a degree in economics, but that's on the side. So you are there to gently guide them, you observe the growth of their ego, has to gently guide them, and school, ideally, should prepare children for adulthood, and should also prepare them, perhaps, for the transcendence of ego.

Perhaps they can even, just when I said 25 years old, just a number came to me, could already be at 21. Ego is something that needs to be overcome, but something that is necessary for a certain stage of human development. So schools should encourage children not to excessively identify with concepts.

And there are a few alternative schools, I believe, that already, to some extent, do that. There are, perhaps, I don't know, Montessori schools, or Rudolf Steiner schools, and so on. To some extent, they encourage children not to be excessively drawn into conceptualization at an early age.

That is very dangerous. Also, to be given the devices at a very early age has a very detrimental effect on their development. I know it's an easy thing to do for parents, to keep them quiet, but it is not good for the growth of their consciousness.

Children need to remain in touch for as long as possible with nature. Some way, they need to be taken out into nature. Even if it's just a park, but preferably out of the city,

periodically, where they are encouraged to interact with nature, leave all the devices behind.

Every school should do that, take them out in groups where they spend time connecting with nature without their devices. These are all important things. Also, to teach even abstract subjects, like mathematics, and so on, at too early an age is also detrimental for their development.

So, there are many things that I know, I have met quite a few teachers over the years who are already bringing that into their classrooms. But so far, it's mostly on an individual basis. It's rare that it has become, for it to become already part of the official curriculum, that's still relatively rare.

Although there are some schools now also, I don't know what schools they are, they may be private schools, that teach mindfulness, so-called. I don't often use that term, but basically, mindful is to be present in what you do. I don't use that term because it implies that your mind is full.

So, I'd rather not use that. But they teach mindfulness. So, for a parent to encourage the child not to get lost in conceptualization, to encourage the child to continue to interact with nature.

If you can't have an animal in the house, that is nature too, a cat or a dog, to encourage the child to look after the animal, to relate to the animal. Very important. Animal presence can be very important in a home, especially for children.

So, it requires teachers to finally establish the teaching of presence as part of the curriculum, and that implies also, it signifies help children to become aware of their emotions. That's one of the most vital things. And if it's not taught at school, the parents have to do it.

Well, the parents should do it anyway. Help the children to become aware of their emotions, because the emotions can wreak havoc with the child's life, and sometimes they get amplified in the teenage years, when many adolescents become very hostile, and they're consumed by negative emotions, by self-hatred, by hatred of others, by hatred of everything. Very destructive emotions.

So, the most vital thing that a child already at an age of four or five, needs to begin to be taught to observe his or her emotional field, rather than be always taken over by it. Many children, almost all children, already have pain bodies. Some stronger than others, and that's another important point here, where when you observe the tantrum, earlier, in the previous session today, somebody said their mind sometimes feels like a toddler's tantrum taking place in their mind.

Yes, the tantrums of toddlers can be quite violent. They may throw themselves on the

floor, and scream, or throw, and that is the pain body. So, I would highly recommend, and this should be done at schools, as part of the curriculum, and there should be children, there are a few children's books that teach that also, teach the child to be aware of their pain body.

Not while it happens, because nobody will be listening to you. You cannot make even an adult, you cannot make them aware of their pain body in the middle of a pain body attack. That does not work.

Because the only person you'll be speaking to is the pain body, and the pain body won't like it. But afterwards, the next day, you talk to the child, what happened yesterday when you threw yourself on the floor? What was that?

What was that thing that got into you? Do you remember that? What was that thing?

What did that feel like? If you had to make a drawing of it, what would it look like, that thing that got into you? What would that look like?

What color is it? Encourage the child to place attention on the emotion. In other words, there's a presence there of rather, instead of being the emotion, the child can begin to become aware of the emotion.

This does not necessarily prevent the next pain body attack. But then you do it again. Next pain body, and then the next day, that happened again.

Was it the same thing? Did it feel the same as before? Was it the same little grumbling there?

But let the child use the terms. Yes, it was the same, okay. Encourage perhaps the child to make a little painting of it.

And the next time it happens, then you can say in the middle of it, or at the beginning of it, the tantrum is starting to happen, then you can say, ah, there it is again, isn't it? And that can bring in awareness even while it's happening, but you need to prepare the child first, otherwise it won't work. And that may not necessarily stop it, it will probably continue, but at least a little bit of awareness will have come in, there it is again, isn't it?

No, it isn't, it's not. Laughter Laughter So, I also remember as a child, there was a time in my early teens, I had very negative emotions, very self-destructive, violent emotions. I didn't act them out, fortunately, but they were, I was almost consumed by very destructive emotions, and of course nobody had any idea of presence or mindfulness at that time anywhere, would have been unheard of, and virtually all parents were very unconscious.

At least nowadays there are, there's a certain percentage of parents that are relatively

conscious and bring up their children consciously as much as possible, but even then, you will find the difficulty of dealing with the child's emotions, so very important at an early age, begin to teach the child to be conscious of their emotions, rather than being taken over by the emotions. The worst thing you can do is when the child has a pain body attack, allow it to trigger your pain body, which unfortunately happens quite a lot too, because the energy of this, of the pain body is so raw, and so, there's such aggression in it, that an unconscious parent will be drawn into deeper unconsciousness, and then react and start shouting, Stop it! Stop it!

Of course it won't stop it. So the pain body has spread even to the parent. So that's, these are all important things to bring presence, so that the teenage years then become a little easier.

Another important thing that also should be practiced at school, but at home environment is very important, how do the parents live? When you bring up children, the greatest teaching is how the family relates to it, how the parents relate to each other, and so on. That's what the children absorb, rather than what they are being told.

That there should be the household, there should be presence in the household, in the family environment, and a very important aspect of that is to listen to the child. It's amazing that this should be practiced also at school, but more importantly at home, for the parent to listen to the child, and you would be amazed how many cases it doesn't happen at all, because the parents are so lost in doing, they have a busy life, they are lost in doing, and the only way they interact with the child is either telling the child what to do, or what not to do. So as you can guess, I'm in the summer, the southern hemisphere, we just finished our retreat here on the sunshine coast of Australia.

It's very warm, but a cooling breeze coming from the ocean.

[Speaker 2] (3:21:37 - 3:21:42)

So let's settle into the present moment.

[Speaker 1] (3:21:49 - 3:24:42)

Access the stillness that's already within you, even though you might not have realized it. Even with people who have the most turbulent and chaotic minds, there is stillness underneath it. And to find that, it is vital to find that stillness within, because otherwise you are at the mercy of your mind, and you are lost in that continuous noise.

So here, it's helpful for you to, as I'm sure you know already, to become aware of the silent spaces between the words, rather than just pay attention to the words. In fact, be more interested, so to speak, in the silent spaces than the words. The silent space on the external level is when I stop speaking, so the sound is no longer produced.

There's an absence of sound, and that's what we call silence. Maybe not complete silence here, because there are some background noises, or perhaps you can hear birds and the noise.

[Speaker 2] (3:24:43 - 3:24:56)

But, when I don't speak, there's the absence of noise, except for the birds.

[Speaker 1] (3:25:14 - 3:25:44)

And when you're aware that there is an absence of noise, there's a silence, which is an external thing. Simultaneously, something happens inside you, and that's why it is so wonderful to be aware of external silence. You may know this already, but whether you've heard this before or not, it doesn't matter.

[Speaker 2] (3:25:44 - 3:25:47)

The important thing is to realize it now.

[Speaker 1] (3:25:48 - 3:27:57)

So, when you pay attention to silence, what is it you pay attention to? Nothing in particular. There is no content to silence.

When I speak, the words, the sounds are the content. When I stop speaking, there's no content. And if you're new to this, you might even ask, what is it that I pay attention to when I pay attention to silence?

And the answer is, nothing, really. Well, then the question arises, how can I pay attention to nothing? Well, you pay attention to that space of no content.

And then something happens inside you simultaneously. You might notice that when you pay attention to just the fact that there is a silence, you can do it when you're alone in a room, you can do it in the middle of the night, you can do it out in nature, you can do it in a church, preferably when it's empty, or a temple, anywhere where there is some silence, you become aware of it. Don't overlook the silence and don't always look for the noise.

[Speaker 2] (3:28:01 - 3:28:08)

So, what happens inside you when you become aware of that absence of noise?

[Speaker 1] (3:28:10 - 3:28:28)

Thinking subsides and you become still inside. The moment you become aware of silence and pay attention to silence, you become still inside.

[Speaker 2] (3:28:29 - 3:28:39)

The ceaseless stream of thinking subsides and what's left is only that alert space.

[Speaker 1] (3:28:45 - 3:29:07)

You may not be able to sustain it for very long by yourself, it doesn't matter as long as it's there, only for a few seconds, good enough to start with, and here perhaps you're able to sustain it perhaps during the entire duration of our meditation.

[Speaker 2] (3:29:09 - 3:29:33)

In other words, let go of thinking without falling asleep and just be here present as a presence, conscious presence.

[Speaker 1] (3:29:44 - 3:30:01)

Now, the words I speak are so simple that you can't really think about them because there's nothing to figure out. So, to understand what I'm saying, you don't need to add some more thought to it.

[Speaker 2] (3:30:09 - 3:30:28)

So, the best way of being here with me is to embrace the state of thoughtless awareness. No need to think.

[Speaker 1] (3:30:39 - 3:41:13)

And you haven't disappeared. The essence of who you are is not only still here, the essence of who you are has emerged more fully now when you are still. Largely, most of humanity has been trapped in the egoic consciousness for thousands of years.

And it has produced what we now know as human history. If you doubt that the human, that the normal state of consciousness of humans has a strong element of insanity, if you doubt that, you really need to read a book about, don't even go into distant history, there's too much of it, just read a book about the first half of the 20th century, that wasn't that long ago. Read a book about the first half of the 20th century and what happened in Europe, in Russia, in China.

Just read that and your mouth will drop open if you read it and see that actually is insane. That is, cannot be other than insane. So much suffering created not by natural disasters but by humans creating so much suffering for other humans and so many people, millions upon millions killed not only in warfare between nations but killed by their own governments.

Germany, Russia, China, in smaller places, Cambodia, just dreadful, unbelievable things.

So there is a strong element of insanity in what is called the normal human consciousness because all these atrocities, these millions upon millions of people killed, they were not killed by psychopaths but the people, the number of people killed by criminals and psychopaths is very, very small compared to the number of humans killed by normal humans. Normal.

And this is why I've been saying for years, normal equals insane. It's a slight exaggeration but there's a lot of truth in it. So it is vital that we and this is why we are now again at a situation where you can see the same unconsciousness arising again in the collective going in the same direction as before but what is different here is there's a certain segment of the population where a new consciousness in whom a new consciousness is arising.

So that could save us but I cannot guarantee that it will. In the long term it's all beautiful. I know that the evolution of consciousness will proceed.

The only question is are we going to experience a regressive period for a while? That could be but no gain in consciousness is ever lost so what is happening here will become part of the collective human consciousness and even if humanity has to go through a regression as it did for example after the collapse of antiquity, after the collapse of Greek and Roman civilization which was relatively advanced humans had to go through the so called dark ages for several hundred years some people say it was a thousand years but a thousand years is very little in the whole of history. So it's not important what is important is that there is an awakening that is spreading still a lot of it is underground it is not visible on mainstream television newscast you will very unlikely that you will find an account tonight in the situation room of CNN about our gathering here this is a situation room there was a meeting at the Beacon Theater today and these people claim that it is possible to lead a peaceful and sane existence. What do you think?

And now let's go into the really good news which is what is this transcendent dimension now as a concept it's just that just a concept but what is the reality of it is it possible to experience or to know or perhaps at least to have a glimpse of that transcendent dimension not at some point in the future but here and now here and now where so what am I talking about what is the transcendent dimension let's so what we need to do now obviously is take our attention to the present moment because that's the only place where you can find the transcendent dimension of consciousness because it is timeless there is no past and future to it it is only by taking your attention deeply into this moment that you can encounter the transcendent dimension in yourself and the transcendent dimension in yourself is also who you are beyond the personality beyond the so called person and then you realize that you exist both on the level of humanhood you are a human as I call it you are a human which is your existence on the level of form physical form mental psychological form of who you are that is your temporary existence of a person and you also exist in the transcendent and that is the being human being

human is who you are on the level of form body and mental form now for most people that's all they ever know about themselves that they are trapped in that level and that is what produces human history that is what produces what you can watch on TV in the newscasts tonight politics that is that dimension of consciousness then the being dimension is who you are beyond the stream of thinking step out transcend your life situation and I use that term in the power of now instead of being immersed and carrying around your life situation a burden a continuous burden some sense of self instead of that be the life you are life you are not just a life situation you are life you are an expression of the one life that manifests as the universe underlying the universe there is the oneness of life you are that one life that was there before the big bang if there was a big bang you are the one life the one out of which the whole universe came and not only out of which the whole universe came out of which the whole universe continuously comes continuously brings forth life new forms and you are that and so isn't that a much more satisfying way of being in this world than a walking problematic life situation you are life so and here on this retreat it's the recognition that you are a manifestation of the universe of the consciousness that underlies the universe and you are that universe experiencing yourself or the universe experiencing itself and you go

[Speaker 3] (3:41:13 - 3:42:14)

it's all so wonderful so the true meaning of retreat is

[Speaker 1] (3:42:15 - 3:54:08)

the retreat from your usual self from your usual mental mentally constructed mentally emotionally constructed self and if everything else is really happens on the surface of life now what happens on the surface of life can be very helpful and this is why we're here it can be very helpful it helps you to begin to let go of your identification with your usual self and then realize and of course many of you have already started or are well into that process of disidentification which we could also call the awakening process most of you are already engaged in the the awakening process has become initiated in you and then you are here in order to deepen it and some of you may not yet even know, there may be a few who may not even know at this moment what I'm referring to when I say awakening but you will unless you run away tomorrow already just give yourself a chance so we are there is the surface self that is the usual self that everybody has and for many people who are not yet awakened that's all they have or all they think they have it's very it's like saying you have an enormous amount of wealth but you don't know it so it's as if you didn't have it so when I say they don't have it, it really means they don't know that there is a deeper dimension to who they are and that is the real meaning of that is really true deprivation of really not knowing who you are on the deeper level of your being so there is the usual self and there is the deeper self and we are here retreating the purpose is to retreat from the usual self and discover who you are underneath the usual self who or what you are and that discovery does not happen

conceptually after this retreat on the last day you may not be able to say much more about your real self your true deeper self than you are now and yet you might have experienced it very deeply and been in touch with it very deeply but what can you say about it what can I say about my deeper self it's hard to say anything because it's not it does not live in the world of conceptualization and you first encounter it in a moment of stillness alert stillness like now where you don't need to know your name you don't need to remember what your name is right now in order to be here fully you don't need to remember your personal history right now in order to be here fully and be fully yourself you do not need to remember your personal history in order to get that sense of being fully present and being fully yourself and that's quite amazing so you can sense something there is a sense of aliveness or presence that has nothing to do with your personal history or your name or your background or whether in the eyes of the world you are a huge success or a huge failure nothing to do with that because there we move deeper and so it's intangible you can never say I have found it now I have found my deeper self no you can't, it doesn't work like that, it cannot become an object in your consciousness because when you say I have found something there must be something that arises in your field of consciousness as an object in consciousness, you see something you hear something, you think of something a sense perception arises as something in your field of consciousness, I'm looking at the table, I have found the table or an idea comes into your head, I have found the answer as an idea but the depth of who you are that we could also call the transcendent dimension can never be experienced in that way as an object to your perception or consciousness because it is the eternal subject it is the I so you cannot know yourself in a subject object relationship you know yourself as consciousness not conscious of something but conscious and that's the sense of the deepest sense of beingness or I that you can sense within yourself right now why not now, why wait until the last day of the retreat and say oh finally I've got it get it already it does not take time to be who you are quote from A Course in Miracles or if you want the complete quote it has taken time to misguide you so completely but it takes no time at all to be who you are and this is why I go to already in the introductory session to the very core of what this is about instead of saying just wait on day two I will get you closer and on day three you get just wait, you'll get there it's always it's always here now, you are always here now, let's go back to this strange thing of in order to sense your own presence which is not your own, we just call it your own temporarily nothing is your own in order to sense your own presence you don't need to remember your past in fact if you think about your past it takes you away from sensing the fullness of being of your own presence because you drift off into and you can see you're not here you're in dreamland a kind of hypnosis, hypnotized by your mind or in the middle of the night it goes, my problems me and my problems and many people define their identity primarily as a set of problems that need to be solved and one day they hope they will arrive at that point when their problematic self has become resolved but it never does you are not a set of problems that you need to resolve so let's go back to that beautiful very simple realization that you don't need to remember anything about what your mind

tells you, who you are it doesn't mean that you now have lost all your memories, no they are still there if you need them they come back whatever analogy you want to use I used to say the filing system, when you need it you can pull it out but they don't use it anymore so it's a computer analogy you use now it's there somewhere in your computer it's all still there when you need it, of course it's still there but does it have to be there always when you don't need it that continuous problematic self talk does it need to be do you need to be burdened and walk around every day of your life burdened by the problem making well it's pretending to be problem solving but it's really problem making of your mind and to carry around with you the heavy entity, the me which goes and you're trying to get to a point at some future point you think I'm going to be liberated and free of all that and then I will start living and many people even if they don't verbalize it as I do right now the underlying mindset is when I can free myself from all these problems then I can start living and of course when you're 25 you can still believe that when you're 35 you say yeah it can still happen and you become 45 and 50 ok maybe I'll really start living when I retire and then you begin to live for the retirement ok only another 3 years now and finally the day comes and then on the first day of your retirement you sit at home and say

[Speaker 6] (3:54:13 - 3:54:14)

what now

[Speaker 1] (3:54:15 - 4:16:28)

who am I without my function my social function but nobody is telling me who I am anymore what am I going to do now and then you try golf and you drive around in the golf buggy and for a few weeks it feels good and you can drink and so and then that dissatisfaction returns the same mindset and it's still there despite your retirement in fact you become more aware of the dissatisfied mind now that you don't have that many external problems anymore and yet there's still the heaviness of the mind and the discontent so that's not the way to go so the wonderful news is there is a dimension in you that we could call the dimension of depth or the transcendent dimension where you as the person becomes something else where the person can only really often compare the person that you are to the ripple on the surface of the ocean that's the person but the ripple is one with the totality of the ocean if the ripple doesn't know that its existence is problematic fearful you fear every other ripple or you want to incorporate them into your life maybe if you come with me together we'll be a bigger ripple marry me laugh and you will make me happy and I will make you happy it has been tried many times laugh so to lead a satisfying existence as a ripple that only knows itself as the ripple and not as the ocean is very frustrating you can't it doesn't work so the ripple needs to realize that it is much deeper than just the ripple there's a depth to the ripple where it's no longer a ripple where it's connected with everything and with every other ripple where it's connected with the heart of the universe not just on a human level and that is

true awakening and after that and when that is realized and the ripple can sense that it's a stillness in you a presence that has no particular content then the ripple becomes relatively happy it doesn't mean in the world on the surface of ripples things still can go wrong still things can disappear and break down and ripples never last for very long that continues and yet you feel you can actually enjoy your ripple identity and enjoy the surface of life also it's actually quite nice here look at all those little ripples and ripple means whatever you perceive in this analogy ripple means whatever life form is there in your perception including yourself and whatever whether it's humans or whatever you perceive in this existence it is the manifestation of life of the one life that has manifested as a multiplicity of life forms and each life form is inhabited by the one life manifestation of the one life or the one consciousness and when you realize that the beginning of that realization is to sense the I that has nothing to do with your past or your future or your name or anything your mind is saying your simple presence that means the ripple is becoming aware of something much bigger and suddenly we have a relatively happy ripple and you can enjoy every moment of its ripple existence in a sense of wonder because it's no longer demanding that things that are not permanent should be permanent and it's not demanding anymore that the surface existence of things should satisfy me, you're here to satisfy me, you're here to make me happy you're here to fulfill me the surface of the ripple can't do that the conditions in your life they can fulfill you for a while and then it's no longer fulfilling this happens to relationships this happens to jobs that you find, activities unless you go deeper nothing is fulfilling for very long thought going a little bit beyond it there's such a thing as a collective mind many humans live virtually with a mind that has taken possession of them pretends to be them and they're stuck with it many thoughts are not your thoughts really they arise in the collective mind they are energy fields or energetic entities if any question comes into your mind right now please realize that it is irrelevant and please realize that it is an attempt of your mind to obstruct your practice of presence occasionally I may say something just to point you back to it because there is always a possibility that you may drift off into thinking it's also quite helpful as you are aware of being conscious to be aware at the same time that you are breathing to feel the breath going in and out and at the same time be the consciousness the presence thoughts are not important right now even if they pretend to be don't be concerned if an occasional ripple of thought floats around the surface of your consciousness not a problem so when you go into a meditation like this it can become very deep so that there is consciousness left pure consciousness and then as you open your eyes again, listen, look around begin to perceive externals again it's still in the background

[Speaker 3] (4:17:22 - 4:17:23)

welcome to our

[Speaker 2] (4:17:25 - 4:20:44)

meditation if that's what it is I said if that's what it is because it's a word that can also be misleading and cause you to believe that there is a separate activity in your life a regular activity that's called meditation and that is the rest of your life what is conventionally called meditation is more than just a practice it's a state of consciousness or it's a question of semantics you could say that meditation is a practice towards a state of consciousness it already becomes problematic because you are now working towards something so what is conventionally called meditation is not an activity it's not a doing so you can't do a meditation the very idea that you are doing a meditation is already the obstacle to true meditation and true meditation is ultimately not trying to get somewhere but already realizing that you are already there it's the realization of being which is prior to all doing and it's always there it's usually for most humans it's not realized simply becoming aware aware that

[Speaker 3] (4:20:45 - 4:20:49)

you are right now

[Speaker 2] (4:21:00 - 4:21:13)

and it's not concepts not thoughts you are not a thought so any idea you have

[Speaker 3] (4:21:13 - 4:21:21)

in your mind about who you are is ultimately false

[Speaker 2] (4:21:34 - 4:21:54)

becoming aware that I am here and now and that's the arising

[Speaker 3] (4:21:54 - 4:22:03)

of spaciousness inner spaciousness

[Speaker 2] (4:22:15 - 4:22:51)

and the strange thing is that's always there but if you are not aware of it it is as if it were not there in an analogy one could say

[Speaker 3] (4:22:52 - 4:23:02)

you are a wealthy person who doesn't know it and you are then poor

[Speaker 2] (4:23:04 - 4:23:24)

I use the analogy of the somewhere in a book of now maybe a man sitting on a box a beggar sitting on a box for years has never looked inside the box and the box is full of gold it's his

[Speaker 3] (4:23:26 - 4:23:27)

but he didn't know it

[Speaker 2] (4:23:46 - 4:24:39)

or you could have another amusing analogy and say that you it's like the analogy when we use an analogy we use something from the physical world to point to something that is beyond the physical so we talk about gold because it's something precious in the physical world that's how analogies work so you could also say you are destitute and you don't know that you have a bank account in Switzerland with 100 million dollars or you've forgotten a number of your bank account, well nowadays

[Speaker 3] (4:24:39 - 4:24:48)

Swiss bank accounts are no more popular anymore but just using an analogy

[Speaker 2] (4:24:48 - 4:25:35)

it's overlooking something that's incredibly valuable you can't even mean to say anything, nothing in the physical world would even compare although in analogies we use those things Jesus used the pearl of great price and so on again things from the physical world point to something beyond just becoming aware of

[Speaker 3] (4:25:36 - 4:25:44)

yourself not as somebody

[Speaker 2] (4:25:44 - 4:26:07)

as a person but becoming aware of yourself as one could say nobody, so you are both, everybody knows they are somebody but not that many people yet except those who are awakening

[Speaker 3] (4:26:08 - 4:26:22)

know that at a deeper level they are nobody nobody would also

[Speaker 2] (4:26:23 - 4:26:37)

be called no form on one level you exist as form, physical form and psychological form as the personality and the body

[Speaker 3] (4:26:40 - 4:26:47)

on another deeper level you

[Speaker 2] (4:26:47 - 4:30:38)

are the consciousness that's prior to form but not separate from form so spiritual awakening is the becoming aware of yourself as just that spacious formless presence the light of consciousness and that realization is inseparable from the present moment and you could even say that what you are or who or what you are in your essence is the now, the present moment not what happens in it but the space of now the most dreadful fate is to be trapped in your personality not knowing there is anything beyond that no transcendent dimension complete unawareness of any transcendent dimension within yourself and then you carry the burden of a personality all your life the burden of yourself troublesome anxious angry, depressed

[Speaker 3] (4:30:45 - 4:30:46)

fearful

[Speaker 2] (4:30:49 - 4:32:28)

dissatisfied always a sense of something missing always looking to some other moment in the future for some kind of fulfillment and then reaching the end of your life and it wasn't very enjoyable and you never really found yourself every life is problematic occasionally briefly brief periods may arise in your life

[Speaker 3] (4:32:28 - 4:32:38)

when you feel everything is great and then very quickly

[Speaker 2] (4:32:40 - 4:33:43)

new challenges new problems arise it's more normal for life to be problematic than to be free of problems in fact externally life never ceases to be challenging almost as if some screen writer script writer or writer author in the sky infinitely creative would always come up with some new

[Speaker 3] (4:33:43 - 4:33:57)

obstacle to put in your path whatever form it may take

[Speaker 2] (4:34:13 - 4:37:06)

and if you solve one problem another one comes up somewhere else or the very solution the very way in which you solve the problem if it was done without wisdom creates two new ones that are both worse than the original problem and I just said in the absence of wisdom you try to solve a problem without this essential element that is not ultimately intelligence to not intelligence that is measured in IQ tests but something because that's a limited form of intelligence the IQ intelligence there is more to intelligence the real intelligence is wisdom and that can only arise if you know the transcendent dimension within yourself if you're aware of that that inner spaciousness that stillness in the

background while you're talking while you're perceiving while you're walking or driving you can sense the beingness that you are the I am the spacious stillness in the background in the foreground you deal with things you think you do but you're connected to the transcendent dimension which is the essence of who you are if you're connected to the transcendent dimension you will still be faced with challenges but the way in which you meet those challenges is very different from the way in which you meet those challenges you are underway on that dimension the way in which you respond to those challenges is very different what those challenges do to you you're not aware there's a lack of awareness

[Speaker 3] (4:37:07 - 4:37:08)

then

[Speaker 2] (4:37:09 - 4:38:17)

usually when you try to tackle your problems deal with the challenges of life you do so in a way that is ultimately not intelligent but is reactive and creates further problems also when you're unaware of the transcendent dimension you tend to magnify problems by your reaction to them you overreact but you don't know that you think it's a very adequate reaction

[Speaker 1] (4:38:45 - 4:39:20)

no need to think right now there's nothing to add to this moment by thinking about it so all that thinking would do is obscure your awareness your awareness of the present moment which means obscure your awareness if you have problems waiting for you you can think about them when we finish

[Speaker 2] (4:39:31 - 4:39:33)

and even then

[Speaker 1] (4:39:33 - 4:39:59)

I would suggest and recommend that you set aside brief periods when you think about your so called problems if they are real in other words the real problem is a situation that you need to deal with either right now in the moment when it arises

[Speaker 2] (4:39:59 - 4:40:09)

in which case it's not a problem it's a challenge or something that tomorrow you may have to do or next week or next month

[Speaker 1] (4:40:09 - 4:40:17)

and you may have to think about what you're going to do to the extent to which it's possible to plan

[Speaker 2] (4:40:18 - 4:40:21)

and set aside a period of time when you do that

[Speaker 1] (4:40:25 - 4:40:49)

and then when that's done come back into present moment awareness so the worst fate is for your mind to be occupied

[Speaker 2] (4:40:49 - 4:41:16)

continuously with past and future and as you know past and future exist in the mind remove the mind

[Speaker 1] (4:41:20 - 4:41:39)

thought there is no past or future past or future exists for you as thought it's indispensable for dealing with

[Speaker 2] (4:41:39 - 4:41:45)

the practical aspects of life but it's a huge obstacle

[Speaker 1] (4:41:45 - 4:42:53)

for going deeper within yourself deeper into reality a huge obstacle to finding that state of connectedness with a deeper reality a huge obstacle to knowing who you are so right now all you need to do and there's no doing just use the word all you need to do is look at the image on the screen listen to the words

[Speaker 2] (4:42:53 - 4:43:33)

which are all pointers signposts and as you look at the image on the screen and listen to the words be aware also of yourself as the still space the still presence

[Speaker 1] (4:43:43 - 4:44:06)

without which you would not be able to look at the image on the screen or listen to the words it's only because there is that light of presence that receives the sense perception of seeing and hearing

[Speaker 2] (4:44:08 - 4:44:11)

that there can be seeing and hearing

[Speaker 1] (4:44:43 - 4:44:49)

the moment you start thinking about past and future the moment

[Speaker 2] (4:44:49 - 4:45:13)

you start thinking some of your consciousness incarnates into form the incarnation

[Speaker 1] (4:45:14 - 4:45:44)

I believe incarnation comes from flesh the word incarnation is to become form, to become physical form but it's not necessarily physical you become a psychological form, every thought is that so some of the consciousness incarnates into mental

[Speaker 2] (4:45:44 - 4:45:51)

formations and that's ok

[Speaker 1] (4:45:51 - 4:46:03)

there's nothing wrong with that it's a good thing that you're able to think it's not a good thing to lose yourself

[Speaker 2] (4:46:03 - 4:46:32)

in the thinking why is it not a good thing? because it makes your life miserable and if you make your life miserable

[Speaker 1] (4:46:32 - 4:46:59)

you make other people's lives miserable without even knowing what you're doing that's the essence of unconsciousness the really unconscious people which is still millions, billions on the planet

[Speaker 2] (4:47:00 - 4:47:07)

they don't know that they are making their lives miserable and other people's lives miserable

[Speaker 1] (4:47:26 - 5:52:56)

so whatever it is realize that the primary factor in any situation is your inner state so there are quite a few people who are joining us from other parts of the planet I don't know where they are, I think it's over there now all of you here luckily have escaped the polar vortex especially if you're from places like Chicago you'll be very grateful to be here, however if you are in Chicago or similar places be grateful that you're experiencing a one in a lifetime weather phenomenon but don't forget to dress up warm enough when

you go out be grateful for whatever your experience of this moment is and if you cannot be grateful at least allow it to be because it already is you might as well now if you did this little thing it sounds very little and it is very little allowing your experience of this moment to be the way it is just this little thing would remove oh well it's hard to put it in percentage terms let's say 95% of the suffering from your life I don't know about the rest the 5% we'll get to that sometime that would already remove a gigantic chunk of unhappiness in whatever form unhappiness is the most generic term one could use, the Buddha called it suffering suffering and so for the next 6 months then that obviously is one of the practices not to internally resist your experience of this moment now of course many times possibly you forget that and that's fine the moment you realize that you forgot it it's there again and then you can accept the experience of this moment as the unhappiness that is arising in you because you forgot to accept your experience of this moment and so you feel this unhappiness arising in you and you say, where does that come from? Oh I forgot to accept my experience of this moment and then you accept the unhappiness and the weird thing with unhappiness is when you completely accept the unhappiness it cannot survive very long it doesn't like it cannot actually coexist with acceptance so the weird thing then arises that you say something like okay I'm unhappy it's okay, I don't mind being unhappy and then the unhappiness goes what's going on? that's not supposed to happen the unhappiness cannot survive for very long with the acceptance even the acceptance of unhappiness not indulging in unhappiness but the acceptance now the acceptance of unhappiness presupposes that there's an awareness there that knows that you're unhappy now that might sound like something very natural but it isn't because the most unhappy people and there are still millions and of course they have reasons for being unhappy and it's not necessarily the people who you'd think would have the most powerful reasons for being unhappy it's often those who you would think there are many millions who have it worse than they but these are more unhappy than those it's often the case so the unhappiness is something that when it's recognized as unhappiness and accepted something happens to it it begins to dissolve but the really unhappy people are so identified with the unhappiness which is a combination of certain recurring thoughts in your head, a certain narrative that is not pleasant whether it is about my life whether the narrative says my life dreadful thing, my life dreadful why did it all go so wrong so wrong, wrong and now it's nothing I can do or whether the narrative is about somebody else you know what he did what she said and did and what the narrative may be about something that hasn't happened yet and it goes on and on or something that happened in the distant past or not so distant past so there's a narrative and then there are emotions that are a reflection of the narrative, the narrative is thoughts certain types of thoughts certain thoughts that have a certain frequency and then that awakens the emotional frequency because the body thinks the narrative in your mind is reality, that is the reality that you're experiencing so the body reacts with an emotion simple example at night you can't sleep because you're extremely worried about what's going to happen to you or somebody close to you or even the world and it all sounds very critical there's a crisis in your head not outside your

head, there's a pillow and there's a blanket or even something big and fluffy and soft down duvet and there's no unhappiness there and if you look around the bedroom also, where's the unhappiness?

the plant is okay it's not unhappy no, it's all happening in here and then the body says that is the critical reality that you inhabit, you are there is a crisis in your life the body doesn't know the difference between what's actually happening and what's happening in your head, what's happening in your head is taken to be the absolute reality and then you experience the emotion that goes with that kind of narrative and so there's no awareness and when you're trapped in that you don't even really know that you're unhappy because you are the unhappiness the unhappiness has become your identity so when you become the unhappiness you don't even know that you're or suffer, let's use the Buddhist term suffering when you are in this deep suffering you don't even know you're suffering because the suffering is a gigantic, huge chunk, part of your sense of self, you are a suffering entity and as all therapists know that once the patient or the client or whatever they call the people that come to them according to their school the they reach a point where there's a possibility of going beyond the deep seated patterns, unconscious patterns and there's a huge resistance very often because the person is afraid of losing a very important piece of their identity and sometimes it's the most important part of their identity, if they have lived with an unhappy sense of self for years and perhaps even decades they don't want to let go and again they don't know that consciously, they never say I do not want to let go if they could say that, that means there's already some awareness so lack of awareness, lack of presence, that is the unawakened state that still unfortunately millions of humans are trapped in that but the moment you know, you recognize your inner state that means there is an awareness, there is another dimension of consciousness that has emerged in you through you a deeper dimension of consciousness that is not the conditioned thinking so we can call it awareness, we can call it presence you can call it the unconditioned consciousness and then the beginning of freedom the possibility of freedom arises and it's from there that you recognize your inner states as they arise, from there that you recognize your unhappiness you can feel the unhappiness but the moment you become aware of suffering or unhappiness in you you're no longer feeding it with your thoughts as long as you're not aware, you're feeding it as a vicious circle, you're feeding it with your thoughts, with your narrative and you're trapped in the vicious circle, your narrative creates more unhappiness, the unhappiness creates more thought and you're trapped in that so for the next six months and hopefully beyond because it's a much more pleasant way to live you make it your practice to be aware of your inner states and meaning no matter what situation arises in your life, whether it's little things, big things difficult situations difficult people challenges, problems because the next six months are not going to be free of challenges and problems so whatever it is realize that the primary factor in any situation is your inner state because that determines how you respond so no matter what it is your primary responsibility is to be aware of what goes on inside you

and that means whatever arises in your life is actually to be used in your practice so that you do not become dependent on what's going on externally in your life so your inner state gradually is no longer determined, perhaps still a little bit, yes but not completely determined by outer events, people situations and so on inner freedom arises that's awakening so there's a dis-identification from the movement of thought and the fluctuating emotions there's a stepping back, you're not repressing anything, you're allowing it, but you can only allow it because there's an awareness and that awareness is you, ultimately that is what I sometimes call the deep I as opposed to the surface I the surface I meaning not this I, but that I is interesting too, it's an analogy for consciousness, the I of awareness but now I'm talking about the pronoun I, first there's the surface I which is the conditioned person, the entity that you are for a while and there is the deep I which is the consciousness my usual analogy, which probably you've heard me say, mention quite a few times the ocean the surface of the ocean the wave or the ripple is the surface I and the ocean, the depth of the ocean is the deep I and an awakening human is a ripple on the surface of the ocean that until recently had been completely identified with its ripple existence on the horizontal dimension of the surface of the ocean looking at every other ripple as another other another other, another ripple not me, it's another and always you have to be very careful with the others and the ego actually likes the others to be as other as possible and then the little ripple begins to realize that it is the there's a depth the moment it stops thinking about its ripple existence yes and that there's a thinking subsides and something else remains, something else that is very deep has no form is just a a presence if we can even call it anything a presence well, I think an empty chair works just as well as me sitting in it because all meditation is about accessing the spiritual dimension within you which the Buddha called emptiness not the best translation perhaps of the original term I think spaciousness would have been better translation or would be a better translation than emptiness so finding that dimension within you, accessing that dimension and living your life with the awareness of that dimension which means living your life with awareness rather than just with the mind so usually people think that when somebody believes in God or angels or the afterlife that they are spiritual, it makes them spiritual but that's not necessarily the case and there are millions of people in this world who believe in God and have no access, have not found within themselves access to the spiritual dimension so we are here in the case of some of you who are perhaps new to this so to speak we are here for some of you to get perhaps a glimpse of it as you sit here and watch and listen and I will endeavor to put you in touch with that depth within you without which your life is frustrating and without which everything you undertake every endeavor and every activity ultimately becomes frustrating and for others we are here just to deepen it to provide a reminder on a conceptual level but to deepen the dimension that they already have access to within so that it can be sustained in everyday life one thing is accessing the spiritual dimension in a meditation setting like here and now that's already a good thing if you are able to do that when you sit still become still inside another thing is to carry that with you so to speak so that it is there when you lead your life when you

do things talk to people interact even when you think to have that in the background so we have the two steps one could almost say first is you realize that within when you are not being disturbed like now, hopefully you are not being disturbed externally although you may be disturbed as you sit here by your mind that's quite possible who says what is he talking about because the mind doesn't understand it the conceptual mind alone is not sufficient to make this a satisfying experience for you this 30-40 minutes here so for this to be a satisfying experience you need to have at least a glimpse of what it is that I am pointing to and a glimpse also of that which underlies the words and that's ultimately not in me but ultimately you can only glimpse that in you there's a stillness behind the words as I speak within myself and there can be a stillness in you as you listen to the words and that would already be a glimpse of the spiritual dimension the realization that on the one hand on one level you have the auditory perception you are listening to the words you have the visual perception you are seeing this image and on another level you also notice that there's some stillness inside you now where the mind is not active you don't need to think right now to add something to this experience so you can just let it be as it is and so the dimension of stillness which is the spiritual dimension begins to arise in you or the way we can put it you become aware that it's there now it's always there that's the strange thing it's always there all pervasive and yet most people still don't know that of course that's very much like telling a fish that there's something that's called water and the fish says where?

I don't see anything called water where is it? can you point it out to me and say where? I can't see it so this is my task is to point out the water that you're swimming in and the water inside you and that's the end of that analogy as I pointed out at the beginning the Buddha called the spiritual dimension emptiness which would be better translated as spaciousness and Jesus called it the kingdom of heaven which translated into modern terminology if you change the word kingdom which is an old fashioned concept to dimension which is a more modern concept the dimension of heaven and you can even translate heaven into a more modern concept to make it work for you as a pointer so what is heaven? ah in some words heaven and sky are the same word in some languages what is the sky of heaven is spaciousness the dimension of spaciousness is the kingdom of heaven so the Buddha calls it that Jesus calls it that and time magazine calls it mumbo jumbo that's also true from the perspective of the conceptual conceptualizing mind because if you're totally trapped in concepts thoughts then it makes no sense and the only thing you can conceive of as spiritual is some belief system you say oh these people have belief systems these are spiritual people have all kinds of weird beliefs and of course it's not that at all so it's already there it's already present within you the strange thing is it's continuously overlooked because your attention is drawn into sensory perceptions experiencing with your senses reaching out with your senses listening, touching, smelling seeing everything demands your attention and then your attention is drawn to even more strongly the the interpretations of your mind in other words thought activity which actually can make you forget a large part of sensual

perception in modern humans contemporary humans there's more thought activity in them than sensory perceptions so you're being drawn into yes sensory perception even more so into mind activity and then also drawn into emotions that accompany mind activity so your life consists one could say basically of the three levels sense perceptions thoughts and emotions and what's overlooked is the deeper dimension within which all these the three others exist that's the spaciousness within you it's always there it's just a question of redirecting your attention to it but that's not absolutely right to say that but unfortunately language works like that as you sit here let's just go through it again you're aware of sense perceptions especially visual and auditory, yes there may be some thoughts arising in your mind now whatever thoughts arise in your mind here and now obviously are quite irrelevant but that's another matter there may be thoughts arising in your mind from time to time so you're listening and you're thinking what's it driving at? when are we going to start our meditation? etc mumbo jumbo thoughts come and go and you may have emotions restlessness perhaps or a thought about tomorrow what's going to happen when I go there tomorrow and you have an emotion associated with that so as we sit here notice there are these levels operating in you and then you could ask yourself who or what is it that notices these things who or what is it in me that notices that there is sense perceptions what is it in me that is aware of sense perceptions aware that there are thoughts aware that there is an emotion and that's who you are at the level of the deeper level of the transcendent or the spiritual dimension the awareness of all this the still spacious consciousness in the background so to speak you could call it just to briefly use an analogy you're aware of the canvas on which your life is drawn painted an ancient question in spirituality is the question who am I and if you look closely you see that you're not your thoughts you're not your sense perceptions you're not your emotions they come and go what remains is consciousness awareness that's the water that the fish didn't know about as far as you're concerned and it's an amazing thing to realize that there is a greater depth in you than your surface life that consists of sense perceptions, thoughts and emotions they come together in different forms so every human has a somewhat different story of coming together of sense perceptions thoughts and emotions the coming together of sense perceptions thoughts and emotions form the human being the person and they come together in each person in a slightly or sometimes very different way so it's a it's a coming together of this that this creates the temporary form that we call the person but that can only exist in the light of consciousness without that there's no nothing there so your life is a little bit like this you're watching the screen let's say another analogy, cinema screen all kinds of things happen there of course the screen is inside you so okay let's imagine that there's a screen inside your mind and on that screen your life is being enacted with thoughts and emotions and things happening drama, this and that oh wow it's so interesting or it's so dreadful or I can't stand it anymore or I want more of it I haven't had enough yet and so on and suddenly you realize that there's a screen that's inside you and you are the projector you are the light of the projector and that changes of course fundamentally the way in which you relate to the events on the screen how does it do that?

well you can see for yourself if you see that you are the light of the projector it adds this dimension of awareness to what you are witnessing on the screen it gives you a certain detachment from what happens because you realize that there is something much more essential or fundamental in you than all the things that are going on in that screen and if you don't know that you are totally drawn into the events on the screen and for most people sooner or later the events on the screen turn into some kind of drama nothing lasts for very long, there's no real security in my life why do things always have to be so frustrating but then you always look for more on the screen, you look for some kind of solution on the screen it's never there, pseudo solutions come from time to time and happy moments and then again that's because you don't know who you are or what you are it doesn't matter whether we call it who or what, who or what you are essentially which is the light of consciousness, which is the projector which can be sensed within you at any moment like now as an aware presence now this pointer is very significant it points to the essence of who you are that is deeper or higher one could say than your form identity if somebody when I was in my twenties had told me I had a big ego more on the unhappy side the victim ego side but anyway big if somebody had told me like say I had gone to a psychic and the psychic said you will be one day a great spiritual teacher my ego would have gone wow yeah I'm going to be significant now if the psychic had been a good one he would have added but you have to die first and it's not going to give you any personal satisfaction what? that sucks what do you mean I have to die first well perhaps he would have explained your entire conceptual identity has to go so when you become a spiritual teacher you are not going to be proud of being a spiritual teacher so on that level it's not satisfying and so I probably would have said I don't know if I still want it laughter so the we have the my life and it's a conceptual identity in the head and it's a huge limitation to be trapped in it again you can honor your history it's coming back to accepting and honoring who you are that's part of who you are on the level of form it's fine you can remember your past you can look at the photos you remember stories what happened but there's no longer a sense of getting your sense of self from that so how do you not identify now we come to the core of it how do you not identify with your form identity your conceptual self well here we come to the ancient Greek dictum again know thyself know thyself at the deepest level now interesting fact is at the temple of Apollo in ancient Greece there was that inscription know thyself but of course most people didn't know what to do with that well they went to the oracle at Delphi and asked questions about am I going to meet the right person and then the oracle would say I lost this ring where did I leave it and then the oracle would say please tell me where I'm going to be in 20 years time these are all very superficial things that people were seeking and this is why there was this inscription know thyself but they had put a key there a secret key on this building in order to show people how to know themselves and that secret key for several hundred years nobody knew what it meant the secret key in ancient Greek it was the letter E in Greek and just one letter on the building what does that mean several hundred years later the philosopher Plutarch explained it in one of his writings it's the second person quite simply it's the second person singular and it means

you are you are and that is the secret key to the saying know thyself what does that mean you are so when somebody reads that somebody reads that it says you are so how would you when you say to yourself of course you say oh I am yes you are I am I am what now the interesting thing is nothing was added to it it just said you are it doesn't say you are Greek you are a man or a woman or you are this or that or you are a democrat or republican it just said or you are rich or poor or old or young or whatever it said you are this is a pointer it's a pointer not an explanation or anything it's a pointer so when you read you are you translate it as I am I am what now this pointer is very significant it points to the essence of who you are that is deeper or higher one could say than your form identity and let's go through this now right now we are sitting here you are sitting here ultimately there is only one I and it's sitting there and here there is only one I you are sitting here you are aware of your sense perceptions that's part of the present moment you are aware of this room you are aware of the lights, the screen man sitting on a chair talking, you hear the voice you hear the background noise boom, boom, boom, boom I think it's they call it music boom, boom, boom, boom boom, boom, boom it's noise, it goes with the beer fest that's fine you perceive the totality of this room and yourself the body you are sitting on a chair and that's the present moment one would say but it's not the depth of the present moment, it's the surface of the present moment the surface of the present moment is sense perceptions hearing seeing if you are if one of your sense perceptions is missing either you don't hear or you don't see that's fine, you have the others and so you are aware of sense perceptions, you are aware of what you hear what you see, what perhaps even what you touch and is that all there is to this moment is that all there is well you would say yes, haven't you forgotten something? no just a second how is it possible for you to perceive these things how is it possible for you to have these sense perceptions you might also have a thought may come into your head what am I going to have for dinner later how much longer do I have to sit here I don't understand a word of what he is saying laughter laughter or what you had for breakfast this morning thoughts can come and go sense perceptions, thoughts I mean your entire life consists of a mixture of sense perceptions thoughts and emotions that's basically, you mix them in a particular way that becomes your life you mix them up in a pot sense perceptions thoughts, emotions, my life is there more have you forgotten something yes, of course you have forgotten something you have forgotten that if you were not conscious right now there would be no sense perceptions there would be no thoughts there would be no emotion if you were not conscious at this moment none of this would be and if there were nobody here no perceiving consciousness would there even be a room that's debatable or would there just be certain molecules and atoms floating around in space it only becomes a room when the perceiving consciousness makes it into a room so you are the consciousness without which there wouldn't even be a room here you are the consciousness without which there wouldn't be a man sitting on a chair you are that that is the essence of who you are is consciousness now here we come to the you are conscious right now this is one way of putting it but it would be more accurate to say you are consciousness that's the

essence of who you are if I say you are conscious I have created a duality there's you and consciousness is something that is added to you but the essence of who you are is consciousness and when you are aware of yourself as consciousness then you become self-aware awareness arises awareness is when consciousness which is who or what you are in your essence when consciousness becomes conscious of itself that is the miracle of awakening and that's the arising of awareness and in that arising of awareness you have transcended thinking you can't come back to thinking and think much more effectively and creatively when you access a dimension but you have transcended thinking when you realize experientially like right here and now the silent realization that who or what you are is this conscious presence and underlies everything and that you sense as yourself that you sense as your own presence I call it your own but of course it's not your own it's the presence of the light of the world you sense your presence this underlies this underlies everything it's a little to give an analogy I could give two analogies let's say there's a painting the painting is painted on a canvas and let's say you are whatever is painted on the canvas that you as a person and when the thing that's painted on the canvas, the picture is totally identified with the form of the painting that is unconsciousness and ego but let's say what's painted on the surface becomes aware of the canvas on which it is painted strange analogy but it works for a moment, it might work if you are the painting you become aware of the canvas without which the painting could not be and that means you have become aware of the substratum in yourself the consciousness without which nothing else would be wow you are that now instead of canvas I prefer to use the expression space you are the space of consciousness the inner space but ultimately there is no division between inner and outer the inner space of consciousness consciousness pervades the entire universe but of course it becomes focalized for example through the human brain which is an instrument that consciousness uses to express itself through and to create this dimension that we inhabit this was already the philosopher one of the last philosophers of antiquity Epictetus already the main thing he perhaps his main teaching is you are not unhappy because of what is happening, you are unhappy because of what you are telling yourself about what is happening and once you realize that it is an enormous breakthrough first comes the realization then you have to verify it in your daily life because it is not enough to sit here and say wow isn't that amazing okay and then you carry on as if nothing had happened then you have to verify it in your daily life which includes the retreat situation and see whenever upset or unhappiness arises where does it come from is it the situation or is it my reaction which is a mental emotional thing to the situation and in most cases you will find it is your reaction and then at that moment freedom the possibility of freedom comes into your life the freedom to choose not to be in that reactive state towards what is happening in the present moment not to be antagonistic towards whatever is going on in the present moment for you but to come to a friendly way of being with the present moment after all there is nothing else so if you don't become friendly with the present moment in whatever form it takes that is a profoundly dysfunctional state it creates continuous unhappiness and many people are

in a very minor way in opposition to the present moment there is always some complaining voice of something, this shouldn't be happening and that shouldn't be happening so as particularly let's use this retreat setting here or if you are at home you can do it in the next few days in your daily life and use this for self observation I am not saying eliminate mental commentaries why not just be aware of mental commentaries and how they are related to your well-being or how they interfere with your natural well-being and once you see that when something that has been or is very unconscious when it is recognized it tends to drop away so you don't have to use your willpower to eliminate negative thoughts from now on I will not think anything negative but just be alert be alert so that you know what's going on inside you so observe the ways in which your mind complains for example and this is one of the favorite ways of the egoic self to sustain and strengthen itself is complaining either internally or out loud if somebody will listen you will be very happy to complain to happy in your unhappiness to tell somebody why you are complaining in the hope that this will get reinforced by the other it works beautifully on the internet too so much so that a new species is arising through the internet which are the perpetually aggrieved they are just looking out for the next thing to be upset about and angry about the ego loves that offend it that's a big thing it's a very fashionable thing it seems these days to be offended even at universities students are practicing it they are getting very good at it every age has certain ways in which ways of being unconscious that are popular and this is one of them these days so here you observe your mind and once you realize how unhappiness arises more through the mind than through the situation you have a choice of okay you can ask what would this situation be like if I did not judge it and then you experience okay for a moment you are facing a situation without imposing the judgment on it mentally suddenly you experience a moment of opening a spaciousness where it's neither good nor bad you are not saying this is good because the positive thinking has its place but this is not about positive thinking let's say you are caught in the middle of the rain and get totally drenched this is so good unless you are really enjoying it which is possible you just refrain from labeling it, it is and when you do not judge a situation then it doesn't mean you no longer do anything about it you don't, okay I'm not judging getting drenched therefore I'm staying here and not removing myself from the rain I've become paralyzed because I'm not judging it so there is another way of taking action, responding to a situation that's not based on some kind of negative judgment and another thing that this guy Epictetus said the philosopher I don't know, I'm not good at quotes but something like true wisdom is learning to wish that all things should happen as they do I think I got that right true wisdom is learning to wish that all things should happen as they do that does not condemn you to inactivity that's a misconception and a misunderstanding of what that means it does also not mean that you, all the things that are happening when people inflict suffering on other humans that suddenly you say that's a good thing, no primarily it should be practiced with reference to your life, your daily your interaction with people and things and life situations, that's the primary practice and so not to it means no longer being in opposition to the present moment the unfolding of the present moment

not to internally oppose it, that changes everything, that changes your entire the way you are, that changes you, that removes the ego, the entrenched illusion illusory identity that loves that opposition it sustains itself through boundaries, through condemning the other, it loves the otherness of others and emphasizes the otherness of others so that's a practice for us here especially on this retreat so that we observe our own mind and reach the place of freedom and if you're not part of our retreat, you're listening watching this from somewhere else you can practice it tomorrow when you're lining up at the supermarket or you're stuck in a traffic jam and you think it's bad or you're going somewhere at the airport and the flight is canceled or even worse they overbooked and you're booked but you can't get on they don't have a seat for you and then to notice that you actually can face these situations without the judgment and be totally free internally that gives you enormous power not egoic power the destiny of human consciousness is to pass through the thinking stage which we've been trapped in for several thousands of thousands of years to move through the thinking stage, not to abandon it completely but to transcend it so that we are no longer trapped in the thinking stage so that we no longer derive our sense of identity from the thinking stage, where thinking can become a beautiful tool without becoming the foundation for who we think we are so we rise above thinking and that is our destiny as each of us is an expression of universal consciousness and in particular an expression of human consciousness so we are rising above thinking so that we are and this is why we are here and this is what is really the essence of being here to discover in ourselves the ability not only to think you have that already but to rise above thinking where you don't need to think all the time where you discover there can be gaps in the stream of thinking there can be spaces in the stream of thinking where you are very awake nothing to do with a sleep state where you go you are alert you're bright you kind of light up and that is so you discover the ability to have these moments of no thought so if you discover within yourself that a lot of the time you are in a state of lack of insufficiency of not enough and you feel that the answer to the remedy is to be active in this world and achieve and do as much as possible then you'll probably find that ultimately that is not the answer to your state of lack in order to transcend to go beyond your state of lack of neediness of not enough spiritual practice and spiritual realization is necessary focus on the realization of being it's only there that you can go beyond that state of lack which is ego go within and discover who or what you are beyond the person

[Speaker 2] (5:53:22 - 5:53:24)

the essence

[Speaker 1] (5:53:24 - 6:01:20)

of this teaching is not doing but being there are certain teachings that emphasize and focus on developing your ability to do and there is a place for that but the essence of this teaching is to realize the depths of your being to go into the being dimension because

there are these two dimensions every human being embodies the human level which involves doing and thinking and experiencing and acquiring and gaining and so on and every human being also embodies the deeper dimension of being and that's why you are a human being I emphasize the importance the primary importance of getting in touch with the being of you which is inseparable from the big being of the entire universe get in touch with the being realize the being and that is primary and that is the foundation for everything but there still remains the human dimension so on the human dimension you feel you still want to be active you want to achieve something as a human you have this most humans have a desire to contribute something to create something to do something to participate in the infinite creativeness of the universe to become a part of that so you have that and that is not to be denied it's just that in this teaching it focuses on the very foundation which is primary without the being no matter what you achieve on the human it will not satisfy you and ultimately it will create further difficulties for yourself and others in the absence of conscious being so conscious being is primary once you realize conscious being from there you can look on how to align your doing with being and then you can practice what is conventionally called manifestation techniques and you can create from the depth of your being so if you discover within yourself that a lot of the time you are in a state of lack of insufficiency of not enough and you feel that the answer to the remedy is to be active in this world and achieve and do as much as possible then you'll probably find that ultimately that is not the answer to your state of lack because your state of lack although you will experience temporary relief occasionally through doing and experiencing it will not go away through just doing in order to transcend to go beyond your state of lack of neediness of not enough spiritual practice and spiritual realization is necessary and that is not any doing as such that is focus on the realization of being it's only there that you can go beyond that state of lack which is ego you have to find your true identity who am I, who are you are you the historical person and are you that entity, that me with a past and a future and then comes the end, are you that or is there more to you than meets the eye is there more to you than your physical body and the thoughts that go through your head and the emotions that you feel is there more to you than that is there more to you than the story of you from your life, your past your life, is that your identity or is there a deeper dimension and it's only if you find the deeper dimension to who you are that is beyond ego that you can become free of that state of lack and neediness and it's only then when you've become free of that state of lack and neediness then your doing can be fruitful because it is no longer a self-serving doing until that realization happens, ultimately all you're doing is self-serving even if you even if you are even if it's altruistic and you're full of compassion for the world and you just want to help everybody and everybody ultimately if you look deeply it's this self-serving there, you want to be better in your eyes, you're not good enough yet in your own eyes and it may well be and it's not it is more than likely that a lot of your doing will have unwanted side effects that produce the opposite of the original intention so don't look for freedom from this sense of lack in the realm of doing and of activity go within and discover who or what you are beyond the

person and that is spiritual dimension within you that's the being and that's what this work and this teaching is all about only there can you be free of the sense of lack and once you're free of that then you can engage in joyful creativity joyful creation, joyful manifestation, enjoy every moment of it and not feeling that unless you reach the desired outcome you continue to be incomplete and you're not really enjoying the journey because you're so focused on the desired outcome that you can't enjoy the journey because the destination has taken precedence over the journey so you're obsessed with where you want to get in when you get there you won't be satisfied for a moment you say yeah I made it but the mind pattern in you that devalues the present moment and cannot honor the presence, the aliveness of the present moment is still in you and no matter where you go and who you're with or what you achieve you carry with you this mind pattern that makes it impossible for you to be aligned with the present moment so you carry with you the sense of lack and you would still suffer from it when you become a billionaire and so the way then is to go within and engage in this spiritual practice and spiritual realization

[Speaker 3] (6:01:20 - 6:01:21)

there's no other way

[Speaker 1] (6:01:34 - 6:05:24)

some people are still coming in finding their seats hopefully hello to everybody half a kilometer away at the back a good spiritual practice while we're waiting for everybody to settle down why not start with a good spiritual practice especially for people in the back rows and it may sound a little bit funny but it's actually a very powerful spiritual practice and that is to become aligned with the present moment obviously this is I'm mister now so I'm talking about the present moment become aligned with the present moment and uh refrain from complaining for example that you are too far away mentally a very powerful spiritual practice so then you become okay with the isness of things and the isness of things happens always in the present moment you might have noticed nothing ever happens that's not now one could almost say the word happen must imply present moment and most people completely underestimate the incredible importance of the present moment and of living in a harmonious relationship with the present moment and you would be surprised how many people in this world live almost constantly in an antagonistic relationship with the present moment and that of course causes a lot of unnecessary suffering and unhappiness so one of the most important things in life to be aware of is your relationship

[Speaker 3] (6:05:25 - 6:05:26)

so

[Speaker 1] (6:05:26 - 6:05:33)

to speak with the present moment and this is now

[Speaker 2] (6:05:34 - 6:05:38)

of course is the present moment

[Speaker 1] (6:05:44 - 6:08:34)

welcomed or appreciated or at least accepted for the way it is because it already is the way it is that's the weird thing about the present moment it's already the way it is no matter how you argue in their mind with it the isness of things is already the case and that's all there ever is in your entire life your entire life this is not something to just understand intellectually but to grasp at a deeper level your entire life unfolds in the present moment that's all there ever is that's all there ever is is this moment and most people live as if some future moment whether it's a minute from now or tomorrow or next year they live as if some future moment were always more important than this moment that isn't implied they don't tell themselves oh the next moment is more important than this one no it's an assumption an underlying assumption it's a mindset and that mindset is a form of conditioning cultural conditioning that mindset by implication if not literally always says there's something more important coming and I'm on my way to it and that is a dysfunctional way to live because you're never fully alive you never feel at home you're always looking for your home in some future moment or when you get old enough and you realize there's little future left then you think about the past more than the next moment which is why many old people talk continuously about

[Speaker 2] (6:08:34 - 6:08:44)

the past so coming into alignment

[Speaker 1] (6:08:44 - 6:40:04)

with the present moment brings about a shift in consciousness and this is so simple and yet so profound now this shift in consciousness is what our evening here together is all about it is about a transformation of consciousness in you and the reason why you're here most of you is that this transformation of consciousness is already happening it's a process for most people it's already happening in you and you're here because you know that this or you hope that this is an opportunity for for deepening this shift in consciousness or accelerating the shift in consciousness there are other terms we could use we could say it is about an awakening of consciousness it is about a spiritual awakening and this is a term that in several spiritual traditions is used and has been used for a long time the term of awaken which implies that the ordinary the normal state of consciousness of most human beings is a kind of dreamlike state it is a kind of sleep but people, if you tell that to somebody what are you talking about dream? I'm

completely awake this is just nonsense welcome to our live meditation and a special welcome to those of you who've joined us through Sounds True it's best not to have any expectations about the form of this meditation just allow this moment to be as it is and you'll notice that we've started already with our meditation meditation is really all about becoming still without going to sleep let me correct what I just said it's not so much becoming still but being still becoming would imply that you have to go somewhere or do something being is already here and now and in a sane life a conscious life a harmonious life there needs to be a balance between becoming and being becoming is doing things getting things done and so on in this world dealing with things creating things achieving things and being is about being aware of the present moment which after all is all you ever have whatever you achieve through becoming in the future eventually turns into the present moment so as I speak to you the meditation if we even want to call it that it's perhaps best to forget about the word as I speak be aware of the silence or the stillness between the words being aware means just notice that it's there it's very simple so you notice that in addition to the words there's another dimension that is easily overlooked and that's the dimension of stillness which we could also call space space or spaciousness so when you notice that there are two so to speak two dimensions here dimension of words words which you hear and which then become thoughts in your head and the dimension of no thing spaciousness so you just notice that's all that's required that there is that dimension also present so you notice it in between words and even behind the words so to speak now when you notice it what happens inside you what does it mean to notice the stillness be aware of the stillness it means you have become still inside it means you're conscious of the stillness but at that moment at this moment you're not thinking but you're alert present completely here but not thinking so that's the realization of the dimension of depth within you and without that realization your entire life is a surface phenomenon you run around on the surface of being never satisfied for long frustrated almost always feeling there's something important missing in your life and of course there is but you can't find it on the surface of your life the horizontal dimension looking here and there you have to not become still but realize that that dimension of stillness is already in you and another word to describe it is to say it's this alert presence that you can sense right now and you may find the mind wanting to come in from time to time and say something about it or even deny it or say I don't understand it or say what's the point I have other problems to worry about and I'll become still when I have solved all the other problems but why people experience, many people most people experience their life as a succession of problems and ultimately a frustrating experience is because they haven't discovered that dimension the most vital thing or no thing to discover within yourself that stillness is also power it's the source not only of yourself it is the source of life and nothing creative can ever come into your life if you are not connected with that whenever you feel joy for a moment perhaps in your daily life or a moment of loving interaction with another human being or an animal or when you suddenly see beauty somewhere and you go now without you necessarily being aware of it there has arisen a moment of stillness in you if only three seconds or

perhaps a bit more and it's only there that the joy of life arises or the ability to really connect with another human being without it without the stillness you have only your conceptual mind thinking, thinking, thinking and you relate to the world through the conceptual mind judging, thinking, judging interpreting continuously the inner self talk, the monologue which may become a dialogue in your head you're no good says one voice, the other one says I'm trying, I'm trying whatever the voice in your head is doing and then you try to relate to another human being through that and before long concepts come in judgments come in so there's always a sense of insufficiency of lack of not enough there's always conflict arising when the dimension of stillness is not at all operating in your life or very briefly it's not enough yes, it's good if you can occasionally experience joy and a sense of aliveness and see beauty and a loving feeling towards another human being not the egoic love but a flowing, a goodwill flowing out towards another human being yes, it's wonderful, but if it's only brief moments, then yes at least that keeps you going but it could be much deeper, it could operate in your life continuously so that you never lose touch with it but the first step is realizing it's there, always it's already there it's already here I wrote in the little book called Stillness Speaks I said you are never more truly yourself than when you are still and you might think that's a strange statement most people when they talk about myself talk about their personal history and their personal problems and their life situation when they talk about myself, that's what they refer to they refer to my relationships my work situation my financial situation my home situation my health that's me and my life and of course all that, yes, that is the case but is that who you really are our purpose of course, just to remind you is not to become still then you create a problem but you discover that you're still already underneath the thinking your sense of identity your sense of who you are derives from the stillness underneath the thinking that's the essence of your sense of I am or your sense of being most people don't know that because that essence shines through the veil of thinking and emotions you could also call it the light that shines through the essence of who you are I am that sense of I am and most people don't know that it derives from that which is deeper than thinking in you and they think the thinking and the emotions are who they are so they confuse the I am with what happens in their minds and that's the state we call ignorance nothing to do with education how much or how little as I speak really every word every sentence is a pointer to that dimension but as we sit here together be aware of the gaps between the words that's more important than the words because that's what the words point to what is that gap it's stillness space the light of consciousness itself formless spirit nothing in it to understand nothing you can work out to get closer to it work out conceptually mentally by asking another question and waiting for another answer you have to give up trying to understand spirit God even understand yourself so as we sit here thinking is not important if it arises allow it to arise but be the presence behind the thinking be the deeper I am that you are already otherwise the I am gets lost in the thinking and then the thinking assumes the pseudo identity of I am dreadful condition normal

[Speaker 2] (6:40:04 - 6:40:05)

of course

[Speaker 1] (6:40:17 - 7:10:30)

so as we sit here we have the courage with a little bit of help we have the courage to embrace the state of not knowing there's no knowing no judgment it's a wonderful liberation when you no longer need to look to mind activity to tell you who you are and that's why we are here to access that state of connectedness with being the depth of being you are this formless light that shines through anything that arises in your life it's formless so there's always at any moment now there's always that which happens in your life here very little happens just the words that are being perceived peripheral sense perceptions where you are sitting perhaps the periphery you're aware of that a little bit maybe some thoughts come patiently so there's always that which happens and then there's always something more vital and that is we could say the light the light in which that which happens appears that is also the only thing that is, that cannot be doubted you can doubt the reality of whatever is happening around you and of course it has a dreamlike quality it comes and goes but you cannot doubt because it's immediately obvious that you are conscious or that there is consciousness that there even if it is a dream there is a light in which that dream appears that's the timeless consciousness and knowing that you can be awake in the dream because things continue to happen in your so-called life but you can be aware of the dimension of depth aware of formless consciousness itself like now and this is the meaning of what you read in the New Testament where Jesus says you are the light of the world and that is to know yourself as that not conceptually but directly to know yourself as the light that underlies everything to know yourself as consciousness is liberation from the world liberation from taking the apparent reality as something that is absolutely real it is not absolutely real it is borrowed from the light of consciousness it's like the light of the moon the moon has no light of its own it looks like that but it's the sunlight so the world has no life of its own you have no life of your own there is no such thing as my life you are an expression of the one life so I don't have a life I am life not my life just life the moment you say my you create a duality me and life and so they become truly effective the moment they become a field of awareness or presence rather than a person sitting with the other in case people don't need when he says I have been a frequency holder some of you may not know although I mentioned it somewhere in a book the human being the human being have different callings and different destinies whatever they do as a person frequency holder I call somebody who is not called upon by a desire or a destiny to do something big, to create a big enterprise, to have a big impact on the world, to set up some big structure, to manifest something big but somebody who is happy doing small things with great care, love and most importantly doing small things in a state of presence so a frequency holder could be somebody who is mainly does gardening or does a handicraft job and gives this person then embodies the presence in his or her

work or might come into contact with people in a limited capacity and whoever this person comes into contact with comes into that field of presence so this person holds the frequency of presence and these people are very important too there are a number of you who perhaps could consider themselves to be frequency holders frequency holders have a hard time in this world because our civilization is not geared towards giving them an officially recognized place in medieval times middle ages of course a frequency holder would become a monk or a nun or a hermit and that was there were millions of them and so it was a very recognized calling but nowadays it's not many many monasteries are closing down so frequency holders have to kind of carve out a niche for themselves where they can hold the frequency of presence and a human being who is present affects not only those humans who come into contact with him or her but a human being who holds that frequency of presence even if what he or she does is no longer important the consciousness behind it is what matters and this human being affects far more people than is obvious on the surface of things because whatever happens to one affects the totality because all humans are connected at a deeper level there is such a thing as a collective human consciousness oh yes what was the question oh yes he's becoming now a life coach which is a step it's a little bit of a step beyond being a frequency holder and is a little anxious and nervous but at the same time also grateful and joyful the question often that arises am I ready for this am I ready to help these people come with problems to me and if you think you are ready you probably are not and if you think you are not ready you may be ready if you know how to step out out of the way out of your own way become an opening a pure awareness when you sit with someone I assume you sit when you sit with someone you become a pure you give total attention to that person you become pure awareness you might have learned certain approaches in your training becoming a counselor or a life coach you've probably had training and there are certain modalities they vary there are different modalities of psychotherapy and counseling so whatever modality you were taught of course you will attempt to apply this modality but if you only have that you are not going to be very effective you may have some limited success and the question am I ready if it refers to have I mastered the modality that they taught me then that's a justifiable question and you might say well I am ready because I know exactly how it works but the real thing in a situation like that it is not the modality that you have learned and you applied not necessarily saying that you should not use it at all you can use it but realizing at the same time what is much more important it was underlies the modality that you use and this applies even in highly structured and intellectual and mental modalities like psychoanalysis which is very psychoanalysis you analyze you take this and this and this and it goes on for years but even there it happens that certain psychoanalysts who start off by practicing their modality and then the years go past and then gradually the good ones gradually without knowing it they develop the capacity of just sitting there and giving complete attention to the others they gradually step out of being totally identified with the modality and sometimes they might not even use it anymore and so they become truly effective the moment they become a field of awareness or presence rather

than a person sitting with the other so that needs to shine through the modality that you use and you may find that after a while you use relatively little of what you have learned and you realize that you don't have to do it if you are fully present the right words will come up you will ask questions just like Socrates asked he always started with asking questions, not because he already knew the answer, it was a beginning of an attempt a joint attempt to find the answer through accessing the dimension of presence or awareness so if you can be there as a pure awareness while you sit with this some people call it client, some call it patient some call it anything so you sit and then you listen and then you ask a question and then you listen and then it can happen, if it works that the other person can join you, even without you actually explicitly stating this, there is no need for that the other person, without knowing it joins you in the state of presence and then you you share this field of presence while you sit there and out of that healings and the answers, if answers are needed, realizations healings arise out of that and this is why I said if you think you are ready you probably are not, because then you think it's now I know enough and I can do it that sounds great that you have this self confidence but no matter how much you know no matter how much you know this does not make you into a great counselor or therapist, knowledge alone does not do that it can be helpful but the true transformation and the true healing happens through embodying presence and yes it can be helpful to know a few approaches there are certain modalities that actually make presence or they may not call it that the main part of the modality those are very spiritual approaches to psychotherapy it's been many years since I read these books but I believe for example the modality created by Carl Rogers is one of them where you the main work with the patient is to give attention and unconditional acceptance unconditional means you don't judge you don't put labels on the person or their condition it's all based on attention now I have met a few people who have gone through Rogerian I think it might be called therapy and some of them said it was very boring because the therapist never really said anything so that seems to show that even though they can even you can't really teach it as I believe there are some Rogerian therapists who do embody it and others learn it as you have to have conditional they still are not able to enter the state of presence while they are with someone and then of course there is a modality you just listen and you don't judge okay time is over when is our next session this is also of course in any capacity and quite a few of you are already spiritual teachers in your own field maybe not formally or in your own field but you are already spiritual teacher and many others probably will become spiritual teachers in one form or another and so it's it's important that the no matter through what kind of form you do your spiritual teaching whether the entry point is body work or the entry point is counseling or something else or nutritional advice even there that can quickly become a spiritual teaching always realizing what the foundation for it all you need to access the power of consciousness while you are with someone and you don't need to be fully awakened or enlightened in order to be effective, it helps but you can be effective I've met quite a few people who are effective in the situation in the helping situation they are totally present when they go back into their normal private life

less so and sometimes the people who work with them when they happen to observe these people or accidentally overhear something on the telephone talking to their bank manager or something and getting really upset and then there's this great person who I thought was so enlightened and is giving me all this advice gets so upset when he talks to the bank manager just only a tiny example he gets upset in many other situations even more and yet in the teaching situation you can be very effective so there are people, many in that area they can enter presence and then in their daily life sometimes they can and sometimes they can't the ego reasserts itself there are spiritual teachers also who do spiritual teaching sometimes even on a large scale can be very effective but if you saw them in their private life you would say oh my god why is the bird so alert? because he needs to be alert because otherwise a thing could suddenly pop up and eat it so the bird goes this is a wonderful beginning of freedom inner freedom when you separate the interpretation from the actual thing it could be a person, it could be an event or just a simple sense perception and suddenly you experience the very same thing that before was an unpleasant experience as actually not bad at all let's go back to the simple you're standing in a line up in a supermarket and it's just not moving and you get very irritated seeing all the things that you should be doing and you shouldn't have come at this time and why are these people so inefficient and suddenly you're just standing there and you're breathing and you're looking around, is that so bad? No it's no longer bad because your mind isn't telling you that it is bad it is as it is now you might say that's very little but what happens if something really bad happens?

What happens if you come home and suddenly see the house that you live in has gone up in flames what happens if you suddenly lose your home and you sit on a park bench what then? it still applies the same still applies are you adding a narrative to it or are you taking this one, oh there's the house it burnt down, now this of course is an advanced more advanced lesson but you have to master the simpler lessons first then you get to the more advanced lessons because you will experience, everybody does, big loss at some point in your life of whatever kind whether it's loss of a relationship loss of a loved one financial loss loss of your job loss of reputation who knows it's easy for the internet these days to lose your reputation, one wrong tweet can destroy your whole life so you could experience all that and you will, all these things will happen, as you remember life is not meant to make the world is not meant to make you happy it's meant to make you conscious, by challenging you, and by challenging you at first the challenges become unhappiness then you begin to realize most of the unhappiness is derived from unconscious thought processes and then suddenly, gradually you awaken and then the mind, the world continues to challenge you but now challenges actually help you and they intensify the awakening they no longer bring unhappiness, occasionally you might still fall back into unhappy reactions but you're no longer drawn into continuous unhappy reactivity the world is here not to make you happy and that's, oh my god that's so good to know because if I hadn't told you that maybe you would have gone through the next 40 years thinking the world would be here to make you happy and it didn't happen very

frustrating the world is here to, the world challenges every life form continuously its life is precarious and challenging even for a blade of grass that grows it's challenging for a tree, it's challenging for an animal, it's challenging for the cat for the deer, for every life form is continuously being challenged so it needs, but what that does for example to a bird it brings about an alertness in that life form, the challenge brings about an alertness have you observed how alert a bird is? A bird goes, there's an incredible alertness there, why is a bird so alert? Because it needs to be alert because otherwise a thing could suddenly pop up and eat it so the bird goes enormous enormous alertness and this is how gradually consciousness grows through being challenged and the more you suffer 90% coming from your mind then gradually you are being forced into awakening because you can't stand yourself anymore you can't stand living with this unhappy self anymore and then you realize what the Buddha was talking about when the Buddha said the self is the illusion the self is the ultimately is an illusory entity and the Buddha said there is no self, it's just an illusion and as long as you live as long as this self what in Buddhism is called self which is the conceptual self, the mind made self, as long as you derive your identity from that life to again called the Buddha life is suffering all life is suffering so the basic teaching for example of the Buddha is life is suffering but the second part of the teaching of the Buddha is the possibility of the end of suffering that's the whole of Buddhism is there in that so the Buddha said I teach suffering and the end of suffering which means I show you how suffering arises and I show

[Speaker 3] (7:10:30 - 7:10:53)

you how suffering can end without presence

[Speaker 1] (7:10:53 - 7:23:47)

to keep a life interesting you need to look for something extraordinary so that's why you're always somewhere else because usually in the present moment if you're not present it's not that interesting so for today I have chosen a book again to talk about and this book I've had for many years it's been on the shelf occasionally picked up somehow it's one of those books that didn't get lost during my many travels in the past 30 years and I've always loved this little book when you take a book that you've had for a long time you take it off the shelf and you notice that the edges are turning yellow it means you're getting old so I looked and I said have I had this for such a long time wow it's turning yellow so so this book is by a spiritual teacher Krishnamurti whom some of you will be quite familiar with and some of you may never have heard of him and despite the name he has nothing to do with Hare Krishna or anything like that in fact Krishnamurti was not aligned with any religion or school whatsoever he was Indian but he didn't teach Hindu philosophy or anything like that so quite neutral teaching he was born in 1895 and passed away in 1986 he has an interesting life history which I won't talk about now that would take too long but he traveled around the world for 60 years talking, giving spiritual talks he was brought up mostly in England for early years he was in India where he was

born and then in England for many years and later on his home base was Ojai in California there are many books by Krishnamurti most of the books were not written by him they are skillfully edited transcripts of his talks there are only about two books that were written by him and one of those books is the book we are just going to look at today it's called Krishnamurti's Notebook and in 1961-62 the impulse came to him to get a notebook and write every day a few small short entries into his notebook every day and he did that for a year and a half or so and then suddenly stopped and that was it and the entries I'm going to read a few to you today and comment on each one they are all about the way in which he perceives nature so many descriptions of nature nature perceived through his state of consciousness of stillness so to read that to read those brief passages can also take you into stillness and as we read them here some passages together that's an invitation for us to enter the same state of consciousness through which he perceived what he describes and then he also speaks about his own state of consciousness and he would often go into very deep states of stillness or presence although he doesn't use the word presence so he would talk about his state of consciousness at that moment and basically those are the two types of entries in the notebooks observations of nature against the background of intense presence and direct observations and descriptions to the extent to which it's possible of his own state of consciousness Krishnamurti was not an ordinary human being he went through strange transformations and processes for many years he had intense pain in his spine and in his head which he attributed to a process some consciousness was doing something to him, transforming him, he never sought any medical help for it so as we look at some of these passages, oh by the way there's another book called Krishnamurti's Journal which again he did a little bit late, a few years after that, he also did this again, they're both good but I think the notebook is deeper and probably better if you want to read one of them and this is definitely not a book for continuous reading, this is a book you can open anywhere and read a page or even half a page and that's enough he is in different he traveled continuously so he was always in each place for a month or six weeks and sometimes less so some of the places he describes, he never says exactly where he is but from the way in which he describes what he perceives you can gather whether he's in Switzerland or in India or in Ojai or in England, wherever he happened to be or Paris, I think those are the places that are described here so I don't know where we'll start, I went through last night and marked a few passages let's start with something very simple well it's all simple but here he is in Paris staying somewhere in Paris where he gave a couple of talks and he suddenly looks on a piece of grass, a lawn and a rose bush somewhere in the middle of the city, a little park a lawn, but he was brought up in England where traditionally it's the old fashion, they say that a lawn needs to be tended and cared for for a long, long time that's the traditional British belief and it's only after 100 years or so that the lawn really becomes perfect so you have to cut it and roll it and look after it and so this kind of, what he also talks about so here he is somewhere in the middle of Paris and suddenly he looks at this little piece of lawn and a rose bush there was a beautifully kept lawn not too large and it was incredibly green it was behind an iron grill well

watered carefully looked after, rolled and splendidly alive sparkling in its beauty it must have been many hundred years old not even a chair was on it isolated and guarded by a high and narrow railing at the end of the lawn was a single rose bush with a single red rose in full bloom it was a miracle the soft lawn and the single rose they were there apart from the whole world of noise, chaos and misery though man had put them there they were the most beautiful things far beyond the museums towers and the graceful line of bridges they were splendid in their splendid aloofness they were what they they were what they were grass and flower and nothing else there was great beauty and quietness about them and the dignity of purity it was a hot afternoon with no breeze and the smell of exhaust of so many cars within the air but there the grass had a smell of its own and one could almost smell the perfume of the solitary rose so something that is ordinary one would completely overlook because if you are in Paris there are many more interesting things to look at than a little piece of lawn and a rose bush but instead of focusing and writing about the spectacular things that you would usually focus on and look at in Paris, he never describes anything spectacular of that kind he looked at this little seemingly insignificant lawn and the rose bush and perceived it against his inner stillness and saw that intense aliveness which he's attempting to put into words and it's as presence arises you don't necessarily look for the spectacular you see the extraordinary in the ordinary through presence without presence to keep your life interesting you need to look for something extraordinary so that's why you're always somewhere else because usually in the present moment if you're not present it's not that interesting unless you're having some drama so you're looking for something bigger, something greater some big thing to come into your life, continuously missing all the little things of which your life really consists it's all little things but if you continuously ignore the little things then you ignore something very vital, the miracle of life all around you

[Speaker 2] (7:24:13 - 7:24:49)

what's the most important thing in your life it's to discover

[Speaker 1] (7:24:49 - 7:25:13)

the unconditioned dimension of consciousness the unconditioned dimension to who you are

[Speaker 2] (7:25:14 - 7:25:18)

you, the unconditioned you, the unconditioned I

[Speaker 1] (7:25:25 - 7:25:34)

which has nothing to do with your past or your physical body

[Speaker 2] (7:25:43 - 7:25:44)

or your

[Speaker 1] (7:25:45 - 7:28:53)

personal personality and the unconditioned dimension is not something that you achieve because it's already here it's something you just discover here and now achievement, if you think in terms of achievement and associated achievement with spiritual awakening enlightenment, realization or achieving the unconditioned consciousness if you use the word achievement or if that's the underlying assumption that it is an achievement there's an implication that it's in the past because you need to achieve it, sorry there's an implication that it's in the future because you need to achieve it, there's something to achieve you're pushing it away out of the present and so you miss it again because you're trying to achieve it and continuously as long as you're trying to achieve that spiritual realization or whatever you want to call it then it's always one step away from you or a hundred steps or a hundred miles or a million miles, it doesn't matter whether it's one step or a million miles it's not here that's the underlying assumption and so you cannot discover it because you think it's something to achieve the thought that there's something to achieve in the future prevents you from discovering what's in the present, on other levels of your life, achievement is fine, it's good to achieve certain things, to learn something new, to bring something into manifestation, to create something, even to have goals, but when it's about finding out the deepest reality of who you are the very foundation for your

[Speaker 2] (7:28:55 - 7:28:58)

life your existence then

[Speaker 1] (7:29:05 - 7:29:38)

the idea of achievement is a hindrance so the unconditioned dimension of consciousness

[Speaker 2] (7:29:41 - 7:29:51)

is to be discovered, it is

[Speaker 1] (7:29:56 - 7:30:49)

one could almost say, hiding or concealed covered up, behind and in between your thoughts behind and even within all sense perceptions and so to discover it you need to find that space in your consciousness

[Speaker 2] (7:30:50 - 7:30:52)

in consciousness

[Speaker 1] (7:30:52 - 7:31:46)

where you are not thinking, so to stop thinking may not be the best way of pointing towards it, although I might have used that expression a few times to stop thinking again implies that there's some active doing involved it might also make you believe that thinking needs to be forcefully pushed out of your consciousness which is not

[Speaker 2] (7:31:49 - 7:31:50)

how it works

[Speaker 1] (7:31:59 - 7:33:04)

it's to discover that that space of not thinking is already there between when one thought subsides before the next thought comes there's a space of pure awareness without mind activity you can do it here because this is a live meditation whenever I'm not speaking which is part of the time here be aware that I'm not speaking so we have the gaps between one sentence and another sentence between one word and another word the moment you become aware of the gap like now

[Speaker 2] (7:33:09 - 7:33:20)

you're not thinking it's very subtle and very simple

[Speaker 1] (7:33:35 - 7:34:04)

and yet that's the most important thing in your life to become familiar with that dimension conscious without thought, spacious still but alert not the stillness of moving towards sleep but alert

[Speaker 2] (7:34:04 - 7:34:05)

stillness

[Speaker 1] (7:34:25 - 7:34:34)

so in daily life become aware of that space that inner space of alert stillness

[Speaker 2] (7:34:36 - 7:34:38)

as much as you can

[Speaker 1] (7:35:00 - 7:43:08)

my name is Eckhart Tolle and I'd like to invite you to my first Google Plus Hangout which takes place on the 21st of July which is a Saturday and I'll be particularly happy to answer questions concerning spiritual awakening consciousness disidentifying from your mind dealing with the pain body and similar topics to find me use the hashtag Ask Eckhart on Google Plus whatever hashtag is I hope you know and I look forward to

speaking to you on the 21st bye for now I find myself fluctuating between the path to spirituality and wanting more material wealth are these paths mutually exclusive your feedback is much appreciated fluctuating between the path to spirituality and wanting more material wealth are these paths mutually exclusive if material wealth becomes your primary aim then one could say they are mutually exclusive but if you engage in some activity that you truly first of all truly enjoy enjoy the doing and secondly if that activity that you engage in and enjoy doing makes some contribution some positive contribution to this world to the planet to other human beings adds something valuable to life increases perhaps consciousness on the planet then if those two things come together then you may find that as a byproduct of that activity some material wealth also comes to you and there is no reason why you cannot enjoy certain forms material forms whatever it is that come to you and you enjoy that you may give away some of that and that's enjoyable too and you mean if beautiful things come or bigger things come the enjoyment of a beautiful thing or a house or even a car is not necessarily non-spiritual the attachment or the excessive preoccupation with it with the attainment of it that is not compatible that takes you away from reality the truth of who you are from awakening but you can be quite present and in touch with that which is beyond form and nevertheless enjoy forms that come to you not in an obsessive way of wanting to accumulate as much as possible of this or that but enjoy what comes without identification with the forms that come the house, the car, whatever the material thing may be so in that sense they are not incompatible renunciation which traditionally is recommended as a path to awakening is not, the true renunciation is not really renouncing material things it's renouncing attachment or identification with because many people traditionally in many cultures and religions who have renounced material things didn't realise that they had not renounced desire in their mind so they suppress they try to suppress desire and by having no possessions and refraining another part of renunciation would be celibacy for example, refraining from sexual activity as part of renunciation without realising that they have they spend large part of the day thinking about sex so that outer renunciation is not really the main thing the true renunciation is attachment to which operates on an inner level so you can have a very poor person being attached to their few possessions very strongly and seeking identification through that you could have a very wealthy person not being attached to anything of course the other way round can also be the case so it's the inner that matters and whether or not you are attached to some material thing you can usually often you may not be able to really tell it until you lose it or it breaks so it's always a little test when something leaves you or is stolen or breaks or destroyed if then upset arises anger or whatever then, oh, I was attached, I thought I was not but when you can let go when things come and then things go, perhaps things come to you and perhaps after a while you give it to somebody else to enjoy that's appreciating beautiful things that you the sense of ownership also begins to disappear so you look after something for a while and then

[Speaker 3] (7:43:08 - 7:43:11)

it's handed on to somebody else

[Speaker 6] (7:43:38 - 7:43:44)

is the ego the source of our thoughts or are our thoughts generated elsewhere

[Speaker 1] (7:43:44 - 7:44:51)

and pass through the ego oh thank you there is no ego apart from thoughts the thoughts identification with thoughts is ego but the thoughts that go through your mind of course thoughts are linked to the collective mind of the culture you live in humanity as a whole so they are not your thoughts as such but you pick them up from the collective most of them and so you identify with thinking and the identification with thinking becomes ego which means simply that you believe in every thought that arises and you derive your sense of who you are from what your mind is telling you who you are opinions, viewpoints that's me some people talk to themselves oh you are so good

[Speaker 6] (7:44:52 - 7:44:52)

laughter

[Speaker 1] (7:44:53 - 7:47:10)

why doesn't the world recognize you or the mind says you are no good same thing you are no good at all you fail at everything don't you again and then you believe in it and then you suddenly have a low view of yourself why do you have a low view?

because you believed in your thoughts and why are you thinking those thoughts? probably you picked them up somewhere maybe in childhood maybe your mum was so stressed out that you said you are no good and so you pick up certain thoughts and they get stuck in your head thoughts that you hear in childhood they are little energy forms like entities and they get stuck in your head and don't refuse to go and the more you believe in it the more deeply lodged they become in your mind and so some people are stuck with very hostile entities I'm saying entity not in some spooky way but every thought is an energy form and as such we could call it an entity and there are many people in this world who are stuck with hostile life denying continuously critical and attacking entities that they carry in their head and they believe that is who they are and they are continuously attacking themselves and if they are not attacking themselves they attack others around them let me tell you who you are of course what they are really saying is let me tell you who I am so they project the famous you know the famous saying we don't see things as they are we see them as we are which means you look at reality through the screen of your thinking and your judgement which is conditioned by the past a dreadful prison to live in it's like blinkers, worse than blinkers it's like looking at reality through heavy veils ooh looks so dark here

[Speaker 6] (7:47:10 - 7:47:11)

laughter

[Speaker 1] (7:47:12 - 7:51:21)

is that a human being or laughter so and so the identification with thinking believing in your thoughts having no space outside of the movement of thought again here we come to the vital thing lack of space inside that is the unconscious condition, spiritually completely unconscious and then you are burdened with a heavy ego you are the ego which is not an entity apart from thought it is thoughts that you have identified with and the first moment of freedom comes when you realize that certain thoughts have been going through your head for years perhaps and that they are only thoughts and that you are not the thought you are the awareness in my case I became aware that I had a thought for example it started in childhood one of many negative thoughts I had bad things always happen to me bad things always happen to me and that was when I saw people around me ok they have got all these nice things and always there would be bad things happening and of course your perception then becomes selective when you have a thought like that you notice much more because in everybody's life in daily life things go wrong you miss a bus you get stuck in a traffic jam or you lose some money this is normal but if you have a thought bad things always happen to me you are extremely aware of those things and they confirm to you that the thought is correct this is the selective perception of reality through the screen of thinking so the reality will confirm to you not only that that thought or any thought of that kind actually attracts bad things negative things or if you believe people are basically bad and that's a deep seeded belief and you don't realize it's only a thought in your head or a belief not only do you would you single out where you observe unethical or bad behaviour in others you would ah there it is not only that you actually are much more likely to encounter people who manifest that kind of behaviour because you attract it and so that's just incredible how people create their their world through that so freedom comes from stepping out, encountering first of all a little bit of space inside your presence and then from there you realize certain thoughts as repetitive and just a thought bad things always happen to me, oh there it goes again I thought that before so that's the to become free of ego means becoming free of thought identification with thought that's the end of the ego it may reassert itself from time to time but at least that's the awakening what about your thoughts habitual thoughts do you

[Speaker 6] (7:51:22 - 7:51:30)

probably that I have to get everything right figure it out and get it right it rules me

[Speaker 1] (7:51:31 - 7:51:32)

and if it's not right

[Speaker 6] (7:51:34 - 7:51:42)

I escape I just won't do it I pretty much predict it ahead of time so I won't try a lot of times

[Speaker 1] (7:51:43 - 7:53:23)

yes some people are afraid of not succeeding in whatever they do because they have a self their self image which is derived from thinking would suffer if I fail at something then my self image will be injured and therefore I'm not even going to try and again that's to do with deriving your identity from thinking and even the thought I have failed is a lie I am a failure is an even greater lie you have not failed you can simply reinterpret and say I have learned something here this is not for me for example so but why believe the lies that your mind produces so as you know many people live with a very hostile mind but those people the motivation their motivation would probably be very great I would hope to get out of their minds but first they need to realize that their problems are self generated mind generated not world generated thank you

[Speaker 2] (7:53:50 - 7:53:54)

because you won't really enjoy the fruit of your labors

[Speaker 1] (7:53:56 - 7:54:20)

if habitually you cannot be present in the moment no matter what you achieve the enjoyment will be short lived because of the habitual pattern of dissatisfaction in the background it's always there some obscure sense of lack and often it comes into the foreground as real unhappiness

[Speaker 2] (7:54:20 - 7:54:30)

frustration and then if you realize that there's always

[Speaker 1] (7:54:30 - 7:55:29)

this waiting for the next thing which is thought when you're waiting for the next thing you're trapped in thought because that's where future happens now the realization that this is happening to you is very important first step is the beginning of something else arising and in all of you that has already arisen or that occasionally it still gets obscured perhaps probably I assume something else has arisen that's not thought that is beyond thought the ability to recognize thought the ability to recognize certain patterns that habitually arise in your mind your mental emotional field the ability to witness that which arises in your mental emotional field that's an enormous leap in consciousness another dimension one could say

[Speaker 2] (7:55:29 - 7:55:44)

has arisen we could call it presence we could call it awareness it's not thought but it's intelligence so intelligence is not confined

[Speaker 1] (7:55:44 - 7:55:48)

to thought there is a dimension in you

[Speaker 2] (7:55:49 - 7:55:54)

that is far greater far more

[Speaker 3] (7:55:54 - 7:56:05)

intelligent than any intelligent thought it's the place from where all

[Speaker 2] (7:56:06 - 7:56:18)

intelligence arises a place of where all creativity arises so there's the ability to suddenly

[Speaker 1] (7:56:18 - 7:57:04)

be aware of your inner states to be aware of what your mind is saying the narrative the habitual narrative that you're telling yourself you're having a monologue or many people have a dialogue with themselves where they split themselves in two and then this one argues with the other why aren't you good enough why did you do this why do you never get anything right he shouldn't have said that yes but on the other so you can have a dialogue in your narrative where you can have a monologue says I am such a miserable creature because a lot of the time the narratives the unconscious thought processes tend to be more negative than positive for

[Speaker 2] (7:57:04 - 7:57:13)

many many people so to be aware that this is happening

[Speaker 1] (7:57:13 - 7:58:04)

that's an enormous gain in consciousness it's the beginning of awakening spiritually speaking something arises that is not part of the conditioned mind patterns so there's the ability to observe your inner states and that's a wonderful little pointer to ask yourself frequently what's my inner state at this moment and then look at it direct your attention to it the narratives what have I been telling myself and the emotion that accompanies the narrative what am I feeling what's the emotion so in addition to being a story in your head and an emotion there's a knowing

[Speaker 2] (7:58:04 - 7:58:14)

behind it there's a space behind it sometimes I call it inner space there's an inner space

[Speaker 1] (7:58:14 - 8:14:35)

from where you can be aware of what's happening on the level of the person the personality because that inner space, the awareness is not part of the personality but it's the being the knowing that is inherent in the being so the mental projection towards future creates the stresses between I'm here but I want to be there and for many humans that is their predominant state so you need to realize most humans have this inbuilt dysfunction they cannot acknowledge the present moment unconsciously they regard the next moment whether it's a minute from now or an hour from now or two years from now always regard it as more important whenever you are impatient trying to get somewhere waiting for something impatiently what's the next thing I have to do and I have to do that and you're pulled in all kinds of directions what's now, oh now I have to do that and that and that and there's always a pull towards the next thing that is, I call that sometimes you lose yourself in doing doing is necessary obviously you need to do but to lose yourself in continuous doing is a serious dysfunction but it's so normal that nobody realizes it so what, if you lose yourself in the doing, there's always another this is how stress arises stress is the gap in the gap between now and later the projected then now and then in that gap arises the stress arises so the mental projection towards future creates the stresses between I'm here but I want to be there and for many humans that is their predominant state they are always they are here but they really want to be there either there in space or time it's amazing and even you, awakening beings may still sometimes or often find yourself in that state where you suddenly realize that the whole day you've been stressed about this, that and that this is what makes so many demands upon you you need to deal with this and this amplified by the gadgets that we now use which is an amplification of the dysfunction through this and you lose yourself in the doing you become completely un-centered and basically lost there are many it happens even to children already at an early age these days and many children are suffering from attention deficit disorder and so on, which means their mind is being pulled away from the present moment lost in doing lost in doing really comes back to lost in thinking thinking underlies doing so you are lost in your thoughts about the world and then you engage in all kinds of activities propelled by thought that now I need to do this now I need to do that so the basic condition still for most humans on the planet so fundamentally yes, they are lost in doing they lose themselves in doing but basically it means they are lost in their mind in the movement of thought now you identify then, they identify with every thought that arises many thoughts are about future or the past not that many thoughts are about the present moment and if they are about the present moment, then it is an interpretation of the present moment that is completely determined and colored by your past conditioning so very interesting to observe in oneself this tendency to deny devalue disregard reduce the present moment to a means to an end it's always a means to an end but it's never recognized for what it is in itself and often it is more than a means to an end for many humans this is a very dysfunctional way of being for many humans the present moment is actually regarded

unconsciously as an obstacle that they need to get beyond there is a continuous underlying unease and what's the next thing that's going to go wrong I know it's going to happen lost in the mind lost in thought there was an Indian teacher who described the essential human condition as lost in thought and of course that's how it is this is then this movement of thought gives you your sense of identity the unease the uneasy narrative the problematic narrative of me and my life I have to think about this when I wake up in the middle of the night and I carry this heavy burden of my problematic life for many humans their identity is unconsciously regarded as a problem to be solved I am a problem that I'm looking for a solution to this problem that I am and of course then you go to a therapist now if the therapist is good he might be able to take you beyond that depends if he or she is not good then you get more deeply entrenched and 15 years later you are still undergoing psychoanalysis and find ever deeper layers of complexity in your past and there's no end to it so the present moment is devalued not recognized regarded either as a means to an end or an obstacle that is for many humans that is their predominant state of mental emotional state and as I said their identity is derived from that so it's the the error lies in identification with thought now the question arises who or what is it that identifies with thought if I am not the story that I tell myself about who I am if I am not ultimately that then who or what am I and what is it in me that identifies with the story what is it that creates this sense of identity that is mostly exists mostly in a state of unease or very often discontent because it cannot acknowledge the present moment that is the ego by the way that's what we call it the egoic sense of self there is a very simple spiritual practice to get you to the realization of who or what it is that identifies I suggest at this moment that observe yourself internally right now to see if there is any lingering emotion in you perhaps from earlier today or an hour ago or yesterday or the past two years or the past ten years can you feel for example is there an irritation somewhere is there some kind of anxiety is there kind of heaviness a certain heavy mood a despondent mood perhaps is it lingering there is there anger big thing some residue of anger from what happened earlier is that in you and then normally humans would say I am angry or they would say I am anxious, I am fearful I am in a bad mood now there is already a delusion when the moment you say I am angry or I am anxious that indicates already that you have identified with the emotion of anger or the emotion of sadness or the emotion of fear you have identified, you equate I with what arises in your field of consciousness so you say I am angry it would be more correct to say I am angry there is anger in me right now now it may sound a trivial difference between saying I am angry and there is anger in me but there is a significant difference which goes beyond mere syntax how you put words together because when you say I am you equate I with whatever condition is there in you this applies to emotion and it also applies to thought when because anger is often not just the anger as emotion, the anger also exists as angry thoughts and then they reinforce each other, it is a vicious circle when you are trapped in irritation or anger the emotion feeds the thought and the thought feeds more energy to the emotion it's a vicious circle and you don't want to get out of it you might notice when you observe an angry person or a despondent person or

an anxious person they don't really want to be free of the anger they don't want their if you suggest it to an angry person you can be free you will not get a pleasant answer and you've seen angry people they are in the grip of anger or irritation they cannot help it then they shout at you and then they leave the room and a minute later the door opens they come back because they thought of something else to insult you with they are in the grip of it there is complete identification with thought and emotion they are lost in thought they are lost in emotion but who or what is it that is lost if I am not the thoughts and the emotion, who or what am I?

I just ask you to just have a look inside yourself and see what it is if there is anything there that's jarring and doesn't feel good but it's there and I'm not saying try to get rid of it no acknowledge the present moment, the present moment is what is externally or internally that's what is but there is a huge difference now you've already, by recognizing that there is, let's say, irritation anger or anxiety in you an additional element or dimension has come in and that dimension we could call awareness or we could call it presence and the moment awareness comes in you are no longer completely identified with it, one could say I sometimes describe it as let's say, there is the anger and as awareness of the anger comes in there is a little bit of space around it that's the awareness, the awareness knows that there is anger the anger may still be there, it may not immediately disappear but the awareness knows it's there or whatever else it may be the arising of awareness is spiritual awakening the disidentification that happens when awareness arises that is the spiritual awakening or the arising of the transcendent dimension of consciousness, transcendent because it transcends who or what you are as a person some people don't know that there is even the possibility of taking responsibility, that's why you are so important anybody who realizes it you are the beginning of the transformed world the hardest word that I'm having trouble with right now is responsibility and I have a hunch that most of the things I consider responsibility

[Speaker 2] (8:14:35 - 8:14:45)

are just my ego telling me things I have to do but I also, when I think about the future of the earth and human evolution and stuff like that

[Speaker 1] (8:14:45 - 8:32:52)

sometimes I have big emotions of responsibility I'm just curious about the right relationship to the word responsibility ok thank you it's a strange word, it has been pointed out that if you look at the word it seems to be talking about the ability to respond so to take responsibility for what is it that you can take responsibility for primarily it's taking responsibility for your state of consciousness which determines what kind of world you create you, because you are humanity humanity is an abstract concept it doesn't exist, humanity is the human being you are humanity so for humanity to take responsibility you need to take primarily responsibility for your state of consciousness

because only a diseased or dysfunctional state of consciousness produces a diseased and dysfunctional world out there by world I mean the human made world that has been imposed on what's already there the planet, which is potentially of course a paradise the planet pristine unbelievable jewel the being of great intelligence we are not separate from it but the being is going through a transitional process and every transitional process is critical it may or may not work in which case the being will go some other way but the your state of consciousness determines what kind of world you create what kind of action you take and what consequences your actions have so here this is why my main work is to address the cause of dysfunction which lies in the human mind the dysfunction of the human mind or as it is sometimes called in Zen the sickness of the human mind so as I see it and I don't think anybody who reads history can doubt it there is a deep seated dysfunction in humans has been there for thousands of years and if we if there is no shift in that then the dysfunction will destroy us it probably won't destroy the planet because the planet has enormous resources but it will take a while it will take a while for the planet to recover all you have to do then is primarily take responsibility for your state of consciousness now now and this is what the entire teaching really is about what is my state of consciousness at this moment am I generating disturbance am I generating negativity am I generating conflict and suffering for myself and others am I generating inner pollution am I polluting my beautiful the beautiful being that I am with continuous absurd movements of thought producing negative emotions producing an entire entity that is illusory that I call the me so to take responsibility it needs to be just of course an awakening where you can say ok I will take responsibility now some people don't know that there is even the possibility of taking responsibility that's why you are so important anybody who realizes it you are the beginning of the transformed world I don't know who first coined the famous phrase you hear it quite often these days you need to be the change the change that you want to see out there you need to embody that and that's not primarily what you do there is something more primary than what you do it's who you are who you are is your state of consciousness whatever you do flows out of that so that's the primary is that the change is the transformed state of consciousness now that is your responsibility once you have seen that that's your responsibility now you know it people who are not yet at that level don't realize it and that's fine you can't expect the whole world already to be at that state it's enough for you to take responsibility knowing there are still a few millions others who don't know that they can take responsibility because they live in such unconsciousness that they see the entire evil in others what they see as evil it's all in them and they make half the world into their enemy it's all out there they're still that's fine only those are required to take responsibility who are up to it but even those who are totally unconscious still on the one hand they don't know what they're doing obviously they as Jesus said on the cross they know not what they do in other words they are in the grip of unconscious forces or unconscious mental emotional streams they don't know what they do they cannot be held responsible and people say well they should be held responsible, no they can't they don't know what they do, however the fact that they are not responsible because they

can't be responsible does not mean that they do not suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness so they generate suffering and eventually suffering is the fire in which the ego gets burned up the collective ego and the personal ego that's the long way the slow way the painful way and then there is a shortcut which is any spiritual teaching it cuts through that the painful way the long way of waking up more and more suffering the planet might not endure such a long learning process for humanity so if the learning process of humanity does not become shortened it is doubtful that the planet can allow humanity to learn through further suffering for another 500 years or even 200 years or even 100 years so that's you are responsible for all that most of the time there is a voice in your head that comments and has opinions and viewpoints and interpretations about what's going on in your life, I call that the voice in the head for most humans that is completely involuntary they don't even know that they have a voice in the head that never stops talking most of the time silently in your head and at other times it may even shout something out, so it wants to be heard and so if you walk in the street you will find most people look fairly sane, they are not talking to themselves it seems, because they are not talking out aloud, but if you listened into everybody's head you would be amazed of how noisy the inside of every human is, it's like you know these radio stations where the people talk in an excited voice, they go on and on, if you go to a foreign country and you don't know what they are talking about, you might think this must be extremely important but if you can understand what they are saying, you realize it's completely meaningless, it's just noise so a significant part of what happens in your mind the larger part is actually just superfluous noise thinking is a wonderful ability a wonderful tool if used rightly it is an instrument that causes dysfunction and misery for millions on the planet unhappiness for millions on the planet if thinking is not used but if you are used by thought so when humans say I think in most cases that's actually not true because they have no control over their thinking it's compulsive and involuntary and they are so identified with the thought processes, they don't even know that they are in the grip of their thought processes because they are so identified, they become their thought processes so whatever comes into your head you completely believe in it and then you, yeah that's how it is Leon just mentioned I don't know if we were talking this morning or yesterday about when I was struggling to survive on a physical plane I often ate baked beans on toast, I was living in England this is there's a little bit of relevance here too and that could have been a very unhappy period in my life not being able what to live on the next day or day after and again now I'm able to have good meals occasionally and I haven't had baked beans on toast in a long time now but Leon gave me a can yesterday now when I was reduced to eating baked beans on toast and again that's a wrong way of putting it, it could have been very unhappy, I was already in my thirties and so my mind my mental commentary, the involuntary thought processes would normally have said this is your complete failure you can't afford the rent you don't know, you have no income you've made a mess out of your life this is what I'm reduced to baked beans on toast, look at your contemporaries that are driving around in their BMWs they've got all that and so this is what life has done to me or what I have done to mess up my life I

could have had many kinds of narratives accompanying what was happening in the present moment that would have created unhappiness and I wouldn't even have known it and this happens just a small example of how a narrative that you have that accompanies something that you are doing causes unhappiness and you can do the same thing without the narrative and you're free of unhappiness you're eating baked beans on toast and actually doesn't taste that bad at all and it is nourishing and you don't even have to say that, you can simply enjoy the sensory perceptions associated with that without building a sense of self around it the sense of self that you build around it arises through involuntary and compulsive thinking me and the Buddha was already talking about that so and this, I'm saying this now in case you need to leave early or want to go across the street if you only take this away from this evening but hopefully there will be much more, if you only take this away, if you look at whenever you feel unhappiness this is a generic term unhappiness in whatever form, unhappiness can arise as irritation can arise as anger, can arise as even boredom is a form of unhappiness sadness all kinds of states, they don't feel pleasant, unhappiness and usually they are attributed to a life situation something that's going on in your life so for example waiting at the airline counter and of course how often things don't go well there let's hope they don't drag you out of the plane but that could happen too whenever you feel irritation arising anger arising, upset in whatever form, ask yourself is this caused by the situation or is it caused by what my mind is telling me about the situation and in 95% of cases you will find that the mental commentary that argues and complains about something that's going on but should not be going on but it is, but shouldn't be and the gap between what is and what the mind says should be or should not be that gap is the arising of unhappiness and misery or as the Buddha called suffering it arises in the gap between the isness of things in this moment and the arguing with the isness of things in this moment imposing a narrative on it that says no this should not be I'm not talking about situations where you can take action to change it there are certain situations where action is possible and necessary of time, but even if action is possible and necessary at this very moment it still is as it is then you can take action but this moment is as it is so when you allow this moment to be as it is because you recognize the inevitability of is this seems so obvious but it's not obvious to most humans the inevitability of what is already the case now, and if you can internally align yourself with this inevitable now the next moment is a different thing but when the next moment comes it's now of course there is no next moment except as a thought in the head where is the future? you've never experienced it, you can't impossible and yet humans think about it more than the present moment they want to get to the future because they don't want what is they believe some kind of liberation or fulfillment will come next always missing the isness of things so if unhappiness arises examine does it come, is it caused by the situation I'm in or is it caused by how my mind is interpreting the situation

[Speaker 3] (8:32:54 - 8:33:13)

and you sense it very strongly

[Speaker 1] (8:33:13 - 8:46:56)

in other words you sense yourself also as this vast presence not just the person you are the wave on the surface of the ocean or let's better the ripple on the surface of the ocean and the ripple if it only knows itself as the ripple it leads a very limited life if it knows itself as the ocean then it leads a more fulfilled life even though on the surface of course things come and go and have their imperfections but you are then in touch with something that transcends the imperfections of your surface life and to some extent also changes your surface life makes it a more pleasant experience without saying that it will be of course there will be imperfections there will be gain and loss this is all part of your surface life in the physical dimension you can't live without gain and loss you lose something, you gain something hot and cold up and down a good thing, a good experience and a bad experience but you are no longer totally trapped in the outer form of the experience and even if it's a so called bad experience and particularly when a so called bad experience comes you can sense your connectedness with something that transcends that particular experience something that is deeper and this is how people have awakened spiritually, you've been in prison or in dreadful situations or close to death or are told that they only have a few more months to live and or have experienced great loss, people around them suddenly died in an accident or they lost everything they had and suddenly an emptiness appears in their life and that emptiness is at first perceived as a dreadful thing and sometimes the point comes when that hole in your life suddenly which was so painful suddenly you don't resist it anymore and you just go, well that's what it is you become completely present and suddenly that spaciousness that was always there in the background of your life, in between your thoughts, behind your thoughts, the ocean you're going to call it or the space is there and you sense it very strongly in other words you sense yourself also as this vast presence not just the person the person has come out of that vast presence in the same way that a little ripple seems to come out of the ocean it looks around and it looks in the mirror that's me takes a selfie me and tries everything to strengthen its identity as the me and there's nothing wrong with, let's say whatever way, there are many ways in which the little ripples try to strengthen their ripple identity and whatever the ripple whatever is closest the most salient factor in your ripple identity is what probably the ripple will focus on most if it's a physically strong ripple it will identify with physical strength if the ripple looks particularly beautiful it will identify with its appearance and try to enhance that even more and for a while that works but only for a while or if the ripple is particularly clever it can work things out with its ripple mind which is only a pale reflection of the one mind of the ocean but it can work out things with its ripple mind and then it gets a very clever ripple so much more clever than all the other ripples or the ripple has had a hard time and since it was born as a ripple and feels it's been a very disadvantaged ripple and it starts to complain a lot about what other ripples did to it and in that way it can also build

up a very strong ripple identity as the victim of other ripples and can think and talk about it for a lifetime and it gives them a very satisfying ripple identity and so it will say things like you have suffered let me tell you about my suffering so it can build up that so even ripples that fail can have very strong ripple identities, it's not just the big ripples who have the big egos I'm actually talking about ego here it's not just the egos sometimes people think big egos are those who they drive big cars and they go around displaying either their wealth or their strength or their knowledge or whatever it is they identify with or they talk in a very loud voice and are always mainly concerned about themselves yes that could be part of it there are people like that, quite a few and who think they are better than most and then there are others who have the reverse of that they think they are they've been treated unfairly by life they have not had a chance or they love also making some people wrong it could be your parents it's all their fault I'm not saying there are no unconscious parents, some parents are dreadfully unconscious and some of you might have had a taste of that but it could be their parents, it could be a group of people that they identify as those that cause my suffering and then they go on the internet and start putting things in about that group of people who are doing it to us or to me so whatever, you can create an enemy there and then that strengthens your identity and if you have more enemies your sense, your rebel identity gets even stronger because now I really know who I am because I'm not that could talk for a long time about that but it's ordinary existence for all rebels that haven't recognized who they are in their essence so it's vital to know that other dimension in you and that always starts, it's always there it doesn't start it's always there in the present moment which is now now the question is whether at this moment you can know or sense within yourself that underlying presence that is deeper than the person and it's very hard, it's very intangible it's very elusive you can't say it's here or it's there it's all pervasive it's your own presence and if you're thinking very much you can't sense it not while you're engaged in thinking about it, okay where is the presence I'm trying to find it but I can't I wonder if I'm doing something wrong well the only thing you're doing wrong is you're trying to find it through thinking so if thinking subsides for a moment what remains seems like nothing at first a spacious just a space but in that space which at first seems like nothing and certainly doesn't seem interesting that space if you don't immediately run away from it and then gradually you begin to sense that there is a depth there and a peace and there is more to it than one could ever put into words to that emptiness and if that connects you with something that transcends the thinking mind but without which there would be no thinking that is the ripple becoming aware of its own depths where it is more than the ripple and then the ripple continues to be a ripple for a little while but the way in which it experiences the world the surface world actually is different because it senses a deep connectedness with something that cannot be named really something deep and vast and it can sense that as the foundation for its life at the very essence of its life and then it can actually enjoy the short-lived play of ripples and it actually can also enjoy the way it looks as a ripple its identity no longer comes from its external form and then it can enjoy oh, this ripple looks in the mirror and says oh, this looks I look good why not? You

honor the form and then says I'm going to wear something nice then I look even better and I'll enjoy that why not?

If that's not where you get your sense of self from, in which case it becomes obsessive and you lose yourself in that you can honor the world of form or you can realize that you have a great, a very good mind and you can which may be better than other people's minds and you can work things out then why not enjoy and cultivate it if it doesn't take you completely out of the deeper connectedness and then if there's a deeper connectedness and you have a good mind, then it becomes really a creative mind There are ripples that have a good mind without the connectedness and they can do limited things in the realm of analysis and compiling bits of knowledge and so on, that's fine they are not creative but if the ripple has a mind a good mind and has a connectedness with a depth, which means in between using your mind and even sometimes while you use your mind or while the ripple uses it because you are the ripple you can sense an underlying stillness an underlying presence so then you the ripple learns to think you thinking, applying thought to something hmm and then there's a train of thought, then you come to an end, doesn't go any further and then the ripple withdraws into alert stillness hmm hmm well you don't try anything, you don't go into alert stillness as a means to an end, it's enjoyable, you go into alert stillness, spaciousness opens up there is no thought now and that feels good how long that takes or lasts, we don't know could be 10 seconds it could be 5 minutes it could be 20 minutes depends so you go out into thought and you go back into stillness and then thought becomes inspiring, inspired

[Speaker 6] (8:47:29 - 8:48:01)

more than a question I'm seeking a little guidance I have a deep intention to transcend and to dissolve the illusion of separation and I wonder how that is a tricky way that the ego is a tricky way that the identification itself is keeping me as not thinking that this moment is enough by seeking that, does that make sense

[Speaker 1] (8:48:01 - 8:48:11)

yes, can you say what is it you're seeking, transcendence yes, I'm seeking to experience

[Speaker 6] (8:48:11 - 8:48:18)

a greater disidentification with the form and it seems that somehow in the seeking

[Speaker 1] (8:48:19 - 9:01:31)

I'm not fully resting ah, thank you, it's good good question, yes it's true that the great obstacle for especially the spiritual seeker is the fact that they're seeking for something now, of course everybody is seeking in this world they're seeking some kind of relief greater aliveness even the egoically dominated people they want to feel more fully alive more fully who they are they want to be themselves more fully and so they seek it

through this, that or the other, identification with this with that or the other ultimately always with some kind of thought they seek it there's a seeking and the seeking pattern, even when people become disenchanted with the usual things that people seek their happiness through in this world you realize it can't be found there, it's not in the it's not in what you possess, it's not in what you achieve ultimately you can't find true and lasting peace, aliveness you don't find yourself ultimately there, in things in thought it can't give you that the deep sense of rootedness in being of being at home within yourself and then you become a spiritual person the spiritual person already knows the spiritual person is no longer looking for a job on Wall Street perhaps I'm not saying that somebody cannot suddenly turn spiritual that's fine but the people are seeking it's a mind structure and when you see that you can't find it there, you think okay, now what I really need is spiritual realization or whatever you call it awakening, I don't need, I know that the car is not going to do it the big house is not going to do it the great job is not going to do it the bonus at the end of the year is not going to do it because you might have tried it already or you have the maturity that tells you it doesn't work or you've seen others who are unhappy who have all these things and are completely unhappy and then you say okay what will work because you read spiritual books, you listen to spiritual teachers, you see there is such a thing as enlightenment or awakening and that's going to work this is where I find myself finally, which of course is true but you carry with you the mind structure of seeking now the mind structure of seeking you then take it from the worldly things into the spiritual and so you become a spiritual seeker seeking implies of course that there is something there that you seek which implies future because you're not seeking it, you know that you're not going to find realisation by seeking in space you're not going to come look around this room and say I'm seeking awakening in this room so it's not the seeking that looks in space well some people think if I go to India I might find it they can try that you won't find it in any particular place so the seeking isn't a seeking in space it's a seeking in time it's a seeking in future in other words seeking implies you need the future to be who you truly are that's the belief the spiritual seeker needs future he might try India but then finds well I didn't find myself there either so you really it's not a place but it's the seeking implies future the next moment let's call it the next moment maybe I'll get it in the next moment but you can't because realisation is present moment realisation it has nothing to do with time or future and who you are does not require time everything else requires time learning to play an instrument requires time, learning a language requires time building a house requires time acquiring knowledge requires time making a cup of coffee requires time crossing the street requires time but knowing, being yourself knowing who you are does not time stops you from realising it future stops you from realising it so it's going into the present moment and finding a new attitude towards the present moment which is one of openness rather than of using it as a stepping stone to the next moment that's the fallacy that's also the spiritual seeker's fallacy, is to use this moment as a stepping stone to the next one so you devalue this moment because you're thinking you're going to get there in the next one but the next moment what is that, what existence does it have? It's

a thought in your head because there's no otherwise it has no existence it never comes the next moment always remains as a thought in your head it's never actuality it can't be because actuality and the present moment are indivisible they're one so you're still relying on thought when you look to when this moment is made reduced to, devalued reduced to a stepping stone to the next which is going to promise fulfilment then you miss it continuously because the next moment is a thought no more it doesn't exist in conventional terms it does but in absolute terms it doesn't exist if it did somebody would have seen it or touched it I've never encountered the future it's never the moment it comes it's the present there's only this so don't be a seeker or let's say if you have to seek then seek to be open to this moment be say yes to whatever arises whatever form it takes any form that arises in your life at this moment say that's what is you don't impose judgements on it it is what is already it already is then you have arrived you are and then you realise that you are the space for it you are not what happens you are the space for it you are not the thought you are the space for the thought you are not the emotion you are the formless space of consciousness itself which is no time has no time to it and so that's the end of seeking. You don't don't seek an experience.

Some people have spiritual experiences but the experience comes and goes. Some people have great spiritual experience like fireworks and it lasts and it lasts for a while and then because it's a form and then it dissolves or I had such a great experience three years ago, five years ago. I wish I could have that again.

I'm trying to have it again but it's not working. It's not an experience. It's the, you know, become aware of the the background to all experience, the space for all experience, the stillness behind all experience which is always there.

It's only covered up by mental noise, thoughts. Become aware that that's who you are and then that's it. You then you embody that.

You become an opening for that and that's all. That's your, the fulfillment of your life here is to be an opening for that and then perhaps your realization deepens of that. It's not an experience but it's the the sense of spaciousness deepens and more and more the balance changes between perhaps at first you are a person 90% of the time and the little 10% of space.

So you're not a person who is totally identified anymore. So you see some space and that's fine. It's already is a big improvement in your life and then as gradually there's more space that comes in between the thoughts, in between the emotions.

And then you're 70% a person, 30% space and perhaps eventually 50% person, 50% space and you're already a beautiful spiritual teacher. And that's fine if 50% form, 50% formless. I'm quantifying something it cannot be quantified.

It's a little silly but balance the dance between form and formlessness in your life. And as

you grow old perhaps when you reach the age of 80 there's more and more formlessness. Or there may already be 90% formlessness and you sit and you might then decide to travel to India because only there will they fully appreciate it.

And you can sit under a tree and only occasionally you say a few words. That's the 10% of the person still there but basically you are an opening for consciousness to come through as was the sage such as Ramana Maharshi in India. Just sit there.

And in India as you sit there for long enough in that state people will come and live next to you. One, two, three, four, ten, twenty, thirty. And then before you know it you sit in the middle of an ashram.

I must admit I feel tempted sometimes to do that. But there's still a lot to do in the West. Every thought is an energy formation like you could say a little entity and attracts associated thoughts and becomes a bundle of thoughts.

They may arise from your personal but very commonly they arise from the collective.

[Speaker 3] (9:01:36 - 9:03:22)

In this world you have to be careful with what kind of thoughts you absorb from the collective because there's so much unhappiness in the collective energy field of humanity. So it's very easy to get drawn into that if you're not careful and participate in the suffering of the collective fear, anxiety, anger that's everywhere. It's also very easy to be affected by certain thoughts that can take over your mind that come from the collective thoughts and thought patterns.

Anybody who is not sufficiently present, sufficiently aware is susceptible to being infected by certain thoughts.

[Speaker 2] (9:03:23 - 9:03:46)

The mind, certain thoughts become lodged in your mind that every thought is an energy formation like you could say a little entity. Thought gets lodged in your mind and attracts associated thoughts and becomes a bundle of thoughts.

[Speaker 3] (9:03:47 - 9:04:01)

And without awareness you identify with the thoughts and then you're being possessed by certain thoughts.

[Speaker 1] (9:04:01 - 9:04:28)

They may arise from your personal but very commonly they arise from the collective. In your personal life you could develop some kind of thought that of an obsessive nature that occupies your mind and you can't get rid of it.

[Speaker 3] (9:04:31 - 9:05:06)

It could be the thought of one directed to one particular person, very negative thoughts. Even at the simplest level some people have you can have a melody that you can't get rid of in your mind.

[Speaker 1] (9:05:06 - 9:05:13)

You can have a whole day or two days and you can't get rid of some this thing that's in your mind it repeats itself again and again.

[Speaker 3] (9:05:16 - 9:06:00)

You can have certain assumptions about this world like they may be totally absurd and irrational or there may be some truth to it but only there may be an aspect of the truth. You might think that the most absurd thoughts could be there. You might think that the the extraterrestrials are already here.

[Speaker 1] (9:06:00 - 9:12:24)

Well they may be but and every other human is actually an alien and you just have to look at them carefully to figure out whether they are aliens or humans and that could I'm not excluding the possibility that some aliens may be here but I'm talking about obsessive thoughts that are probably not correct. And then it covers your subsequent perception of reality gets totally colored by the obsessive thoughts and it can explain everything in those terms. All the evils of the world have suddenly one explanation.

Another one that's also in the collective you can have a thought that the entire world is divided into oppressor and oppressed. Any human being either belongs to the oppressors or to the oppressed. That was an idea in communism in economic terms in terms of social power.

They divided humanity into oppressors and oppressed and then they look at you can look at any human being and to me he's oppressed he's an oppressor. Now the thing is of course oppressors and oppressed have existed and to some extent and some areas still exist. But to take one fragment of truth because the totality of human life is much vaster than that this is one aspect but if you take one aspect that then occupies your mind because of lack of awareness you are possessed by a thought and this thought that's the entire world this is just one example could give many examples.

The entire world is either the essential identity of any human being is either they are oppressed or they are the oppressor. Now of course if that is the thoughts that dominate your mind then obviously you would probably regard the oppressed as the good ones and the oppressors as the bad ones so that then that simplifies life enormously. You immediately can decide who is good and who is bad and you are probably good

presumably.

Even if you if you are an oppressor traditionally you're you're you now recognize your sins and you will atone for your sins of being an oppressor and you side with the oppressed and therefore you become one of the good people. Okay so we had the same phenomenon in very extreme form we all know about Soviet communism we know about Chinese Mao Zedong cultural revolution quite a crazy time period we know national socialism in Germany all these the evils perpetrated by all these collective delusional systems that divided people into good and bad entire groups gave them an identity. I was in Cambodia a few years ago and visited the the death camps of where Cambodians are it's a small country so not many people are familiar with the recent history of Cambodia but they had a an extreme communist regime under a mad dictator called Pol Pot and in that risk extreme communist regime and Cambodia experienced dreadful suffering one third of the population was killed by their own government because they were the oppressors. An oppressor was anybody who could read and write because obviously they were exploiting the peasants.

Anybody who wore glasses he could would immediately like that's right oppressor they would be sent from the cities into the countryside to work on the fields where they didn't have enough food and most of them starved. A total lack of humanity total lack because of the entire country was dominated by one absurd and obsessive thought that that made them made it impossible for them to relate to any human being as a human being. They relate them through the conceptualization that they that thought had created for them.

They couldn't sense the humanity the being of the other human anymore the moments that imposed the conceptual identity on them. This is an extreme example of what can happen to you when you're taken over by certain thoughts in your mind. This is not to mean that of course oppressor and oppressive existed and exists but it's not not the entire explanation.

There are many other facts in this life but I'm saying all this because you need to be very alert so that your mind is not taken over by certain thoughts that are not that invade your mind and color your view of reality and there are there are certain irrational thoughts that are floating around in the collective at the present time so it's very easy to for you to absorb some of them and being possessed by certain thoughts and maybe it's so irrational that it's unbelievable but I'm

[Speaker 2] (9:12:24 - 9:12:32)

not giving any examples but you have to find it out for yourself with awareness you can and

[Speaker 1] (9:12:34 - 9:15:08)

be be very careful with observing your mind be there as the witness of your mind so that you don't get taken over by certain thoughts that your mind does not get taken over by certain thoughts and then you cannot perceive reality anymore as it is everything is colored by the veil of irrational thinking so when you nowadays these things can spread very quickly and easily these irrational things in the past they were confined to either one country or one area in a particular country but nowadays certainly rational thoughts can go through the entire world through the technology we have and can quickly affect millions of humans all over the world so in the past you had it as I said limited let's say the the the hunt for witches in the past totally absurd and irrational it's a mental disease that affect certain countries or areas in certain countries and this mental disease then so there were some places in in Europe there were villages and towns in Europe in the middle ages during that time of collective insanity there there were almost no women left in in some villages in towns at that time because they're all being burned or drowned because they were called it as witches absolute in great absolute insanity so don't underestimate how insane humans can become and the only antidote that you have against that is awareness so that your mind does not get affected by mental virus the awareness the awareness is aware of what your mind is doing so that your mind does not get occupied by one particular way of thinking which is probably irrational anything that's one-sided that does not see the totality of a situation like oppressor and oppressed if you don't see that the many factors that

[Speaker 2] (9:15:10 - 9:15:22)

make up a human being's identity so very be very careful with what you consume in the media

[Speaker 1] (9:15:23 - 9:49:59)

the media that brings the news to you be very careful with what you consume so that you take do not take on without knowing it unquestioningly certain ways of looking at the world realize that you're being how manipulative most of the mainstream media has become you need to watch that if you watch it knowing how you're being manipulated and they're they the people themselves are being manipulated too so it's they are in the grip of unconsciousness and they want to draw others into unconsciousness so they're not they're not the evil ones they just don't know any better as you know stillness is the essential ingredient in our life meditation the important thing is to become aware of it notice it it seems strange at first to become aware of stillness almost impossible because what is there to be aware of you can be aware of noise that's easy but still there seems to be nothing there so at first some people may find it hard or not even know what it means to be aware of stillness now stillness of course is just a pointer and usually in normal usage what stillness means is the absence of noise another word is silence stillness but when we use the word stillness here as a pointer it's not just the absence of noise but the also the presence of something and that's of course the wrong word

already because it's not something let's use it anyway knowing how limited words are it's also the presence of something no not really the presence of something but the presence of presence now don't try to figure out conceptually what that means but use this opportunity to experience it firsthand to realize for yourself the meaning of this presence of presence you become aware in other words of let's put it like this for a moment you become aware of your own presence not the presence of the person you as the person but the presence of something deeper whatever almost as if the person that consists of whatever you experience externally and whatever you experience in the mind or whatever you experience in the emotional field those things coming together is usually becomes the what one experiences as the person and for most people that's their what's that's their life consists of that but that really is a surface phenomenon like ripples on the surface of the ocean maybe even waves on the surface of the ocean but no matter how huge or little the waves are on the surface of the ocean they're nothing compared to the depths of the ocean so to become aware of the presence of presence or to put it slightly differently to become aware of yourself as the presence is like the ocean becoming aware of its own depth and to become aware of yourself as presence or the presence of presence it's helpful if the mind activity of the activity of thinking subsides for a moment and you realize you're still there the essence of who you are which you cannot define in any way what is that that's left when i'm not thinking about who i am when i'm not thinking at all perhaps now this great opportunity to experience the state of thoughtless awareness when i'm not thinking at all who am i presence so there is something left that is vital and essential the most vital part of you is to do something that usually humans are unaware of because they're only aware of the surface of their lives and when you're only aware of the surface of your life the tendency is for life to become quite frustrating and never really satisfying, because it's in the nature of surface phenomena not to be satisfying, except for brief moments. So, in conventional terms, we have heard the word superficial as applied to humans, and in conventional usage, a superficial human would be somebody who is only concerned with external appearance, or what other people think of me, how I look to others and myself. That's conventional usage.

But in a deeper sense, anybody's superficial is anybody who is unaware of that which underlies all their experiences, all their experiencing, sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions. And they are so drawn into every sense perception, and especially thought and emotion, and those get mixed up in a bowl, the bowl of your experience. So you can't even distinguish anymore between your mental interpretation of an experience that you're having, and the actual external facts of that experience.

So you bring your conditioning into the way in which you perceive the world. Situations, events, people, are always then immediately interpreted as the perception of them happens. The perception is colored and distorted by the conditioning of your mind.

And you don't know that. So that's all the unconscious state. And in a wider sense, you

are superficial then, when that depth or spaciousness in you that is presence is lacking.

So that is the wider meaning of superficial. It's not just being concerned with the external appearance. Really, superficial means there is no spaciousness in you.

In other words, you are trapped in the person or the personality, the conditioning of all that, with nothing else. Or maybe occasionally little glimpses of spaciousness that come, and then they're gone again. But those glimpses that come occasionally in many people's lives, are enough to keep them going and prevent them from falling into complete despair.

Because occasionally they have little awakenings. And they don't even really know it. They just think, oh, this life is good right now.

It feels good to be alive. Because suddenly there's a moment stillness has opened up, a sense of aliveness, of just presence. For some people it happens when they're engaged in strenuous physical activity that can bring about, temporarily, that opening into spaciousness.

Unless the ego becomes involved in it, you want to win. That's a different matter again. Some people have to fall ill, and when they are ill they become a little bit spacious.

They haven't got enough energy to keep the egoic conditioning going, the continuous thinking, the continuous compulsive mind activity. And so, for some people, illness is an opportunity to experience a little bit of that spaciousness. Usually it doesn't last, or you're getting close to death, or you think you might die soon, and that can bring about that opening.

But why wait for some illness, or for you to climb a mountain, for your mind to stop, or approaching death? This is the opportunity for realizing that there is a dimension in you that is the essence of it all. And that really is the secret of what traditionally, in many spiritual traditions, is called detachment.

That really means there is a spaciousness, and that spaciousness in you enables you to be not totally drawn into every thought that comes into your head. That's not detachment, that's attachment. Really, attachment is when your attention, or your consciousness, is continuously absorbed, not just by things that happen, but for many people, primarily as their mind activity, every thought that comes in, sometimes fueled by emotions that go with thoughts, totally overpowered by the continuous stream of thinking, and in many cases, emotional thinking.

It's a complete dream world compared to being present. You are immersed in your own dream world. And that's how drama arises in people's lives.

That's attachment. So attachment really means to be completely identified with every

emotion and every thought that comes. And detachment means there is a spaciousness around the thoughts, or the emotions, or any experience that you have.

There is a space around it, one could say. That space, of course, is in you. You're aware, in other words, not only of what's happening externally and internally, but more fundamentally, you're aware of yourself as the space in which whatever is happening is happening.

And when you live your life like that, there's always a sense of peace or spaciousness in the background, even while you're thinking. You're not totally drawn into every thought. Thought happens, and yet you're still aware of the consciousness that gives rise to every thought.

Ultimately, the thought is not separate from the consciousness in the same way that the wave is not separate from the ocean. It just looks for a moment as if the wave had a separate existence. And especially if you give it a name, if you say, oh, there comes wave, that's wave John, and that's wave Mary.

This wave is called Mary, was born 10 seconds ago. Wonder how long Mary is going to live. And then Mary comes rolling in.

And before you know it, it's gone. Oh, now Mary's dead. So ultimately, the mind activity is not separate from the consciousness, the presence.

It's just consciousness has assumed this temporary form. And you could say that even all sense perceptions are ultimately temporary forms, that consciousness appears as the tree, the chair, the dog, that human, that noise, sky, whatever appears in your consciousness, because the entire world becomes a world in you, in the consciousness that you are. I need my story.

All the things that I've been telling myself in my mind about myself and other people and my parents and my relatives and my co-workers and my ex-wife and my ex-husband, and what people did to me and what I did and shouldn't have done, failed to do. Who am I without that? I can't let go of that.

I need to think about this more. So it becomes a habitual place, the habitual place of the mental noise, where you feel, that's me. And so every therapist knows that you always reach a point with your clients, patients, whatever, depending on the school of therapy, depends whatever you call your clients, your patients, whatever.

There comes a point when you hit that resistance, they don't want to be free of their problems. And that the big challenge is, is this person going to overcome that barrier? Because that barrier is not just becoming free of my problems, but also becoming free of a very limited and ultimately fictitious sense of identity, the me.

So that is what I've described is the next step, one could say, in the evolution of human consciousness, is stepping out of self-talk, which is the conditioned mind, and realizing there is much more to who I am than this conditioned content of my mind. And that is the beginning of awakening. It's not those words, not that you need to believe that there is much more to who I am than the self-talk in my head, because that is still self-talk in the head.

I believe there's more to who I am. And you better believe it too. It seems almost redundant, or pity, having to add words to our beautiful stillness.

When we were just doing the meditation, I became aware of the air conditioning sound that keeps us cool here, sometimes too cool. But right now it seems perfect. And of course, one might think, if you start thinking, wouldn't it be nice if we didn't have to listen to that sound, because then we would have this beautiful, complete stillness, and maybe even with some natural sounds, if we could open the windows and then we could hear some birds or the air, leaves.

Yes, it's helpful to have that total stillness when you can find it. But ultimately, stillness is not ultimately an auditory phenomenon, or there can be the beginning of it. Stillness, when you become aware of it, when you pay attention to it, makes you still.

So when you pay attention to outer silence, it's only through your inner stillness that you can pay attention to outer silence. So the moment you notice it's still here, you are still. There needs to be something in you that corresponds to that, and stillness is absence of sound.

When you listen to stillness, there might be a few sounds here and there, but mainly there's no sound. So you're listening to nothing. And that's the key, that's why it's so helpful, because you suddenly become aware of nothing.

And when you become aware of nothing, what's left? Just the awareness, which also is nothing, formless in other words. So whenever you encounter stillness, maybe where you live, or when you go for a walk in nature, or at night when most people have gone to bed and the noisy collective mind isn't surrounding you anymore, then use it, notice it, and then notice that in the moment of noticing, you become still.

But here, of course, there's not complete external silence, but that doesn't matter. Anything that arises can be helpful. So this sound that's continuous in the background, you can ask yourself, who is hearing this?

How is it possible for me to perceive that sound, to hear that sound? And then you notice your own awareness. I call it your own, it's not really.

You notice the awareness. And that's the stillness. So you don't need the external silence, although it can be very helpful.

But when you don't have it, you could be in the middle of a noisy city, can stand there or sit or walk and be aware of yourself as the awareness that perceives all the noise and all the movement. And then when you perceive all the movement around you, and you become aware of yourself as the perceiving awareness, then you have the stillness in the context of movement and noise, external noise. So there's no need to demand that external conditions should be perfect so that you can become still.

In fact, it's sometimes the case that it's precisely when external conditions are seemingly unhelpful, that can sometimes be a greater opportunity to find that true stillness. And especially that is the case when external circumstances have the appearance of actually being a hindrance, something disturbing, something happening that upsets the status quo in your life. And those are great opportunities because then your motivation for going deeper as you suffer, when things happen in your external life that, quote, unquote, not be happening, then you begin to suffer.

And as you suffer, the motivation eventually arises of going deeper, of finding the place where there is no suffering. And you could still suffer a little bit on the external level of your life. So sooner or later, we find in our life that life does things to us, seemingly putting obstacles in our path, seemingly having bad intentions towards us.

We experience diminishment in some form. Of course, the ego says, or the egoic self says, that's terrible. I don't want any diminishment.

Diminishment meaning loss of something that had become part of your sense of self. It could be loss of possessions, could be loss of a relationship, loss of a loved one, loss of a healthy body, diminishment of physical health, loss of your persona, of what other people think of you.

Eckhart Tolle Talk YouTube 01

[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 9:22)

One day they tell you that you're the greatest and the next day they tell you, you're awful. Diminishment of whatever kind is abhorrent to the ego itself. There's a beautiful saying, I believe it comes originally, I'm not sure, but it doesn't matter where it comes, it comes out of consciousness, so it doesn't really matter.

But I believe it comes originally out of Sufism. And that is, when the ego weeps for what it has lost, the spirit rejoices for what it has found. And those people who, there's no human, by the way, who does not experience this in life several times, sooner or later, the next one comes.

Some people experience it even very early in life. Some children have experienced loss of a parent, of both parents. So diminishment comes sooner or later.

How do you meet it? Recognize it when it comes, not as a monster or the work of some malevolent deity or demon that wants to sabotage your life, but as an opportunity also. Now, you may not be able to be grateful for it in the moment of it happening.

That would be perhaps too much to ask. But you will find that later, a year may pass, two years, depending on what it is, suddenly realize that it has taken you deeper into the essence of who you are because something was removed from you that you thought you were, but it was a fiction ultimately. You had identified with something that ultimately is not who you are, it's a temporary thing.

Possessions, not status, great physically strong body, good looks, relationship. And then retrospectively, very often you are able to be grateful for the loss, for the diminishment because it drove you deeper. It brought out the essence of who you are beyond any form.

Now, it does not do that to all humans. It's for everybody. Diminishment is only a potential deepening.

The possibility is there. And many, many humans are not able to use it because nobody has told them. The knowledge, this kind of spiritual knowledge is still very limited.

It is not part of mainstream culture. People are dying every day without having any true assistance. People who are approaching death, who are getting old, our mainstream culture still knows nothing.

It's just, let's prolong life as long as possible, even if it's totally pointless and it creates a lot of suffering. Let's just, because we don't know what to do with death. That's one of the reasons why the foundation will hopefully be able to reach people to use the

opportunity of this greatest diminishment, which is death, the greatest, when as you approach death, an enormous opportunity for spiritual awakening, realization.

But many humans, of course, miss the opportunity of that diminishment and with the result that the ego becomes even more hardened through it, or in the words of Brother David, shriveled, shriveled up to an even harder, lifeless thing. Then either you carry continuous anger or resentment or despondency for years, which becomes part of your egoic identity. And the ego loves any kind of identity.

If it's a miserable one, doesn't matter, I'll have it. Just give me a strong identity. I take miserable any time over being nobody.

So the opportunity of diminishment is missed. Often you see when people, they're wealthy people and suddenly something happens, they lose their money and then they jump out of the window because the entire sense of self was associated with their possessions. There are people who lose their reputation.

You remember, of course, the case of Mr. Madoff. He is a few years ago who had this scheme, fraudulent scheme and people lost millions or billions of people who was investing with him on Wall Street. They lost, it was a pyramid.

It was a Ponzi scheme, I think is the word. So he was deceiving all these people and they lost all their money and he had accumulated billions and then finally it all collapsed. Now he's in prison and his sons couldn't take it.

One of his sons, apparently the sons didn't know what was going on, I don't know if that's true, but they were also working in his firm, in his company. I think, believe one died of cancer soon after and the other committed suicide. Would have been a great opportunity if only somebody had told them, you've lost your money, you've lost your reputation.

This is a great opportunity. And find yourself, the opening is there. But it's just lack of information, nobody told them.

I hadn't actually thought of this until this moment because we want to bring the teaching to places where it otherwise would not be, go or would not reach. And I just thought of Wall Street. Yes.

Yes. Yes. Yes.

Yes. We will donate books and CDs to Wall Street. Yes.

Yes. So we'll have to call Goldman Sachs tomorrow. See if they agree.

Now, they won't be very interested perhaps at the moment, but they may become interested in the future. Just wait. And then it has often happened.

And I personally know of people who had genuine abilities and then they couldn't produce them all the time. They only, the ability came when it wanted to come, healing for example.

[Speaker 3] (9:27 - 10:18)

I love your teachings and I have a small practice I do every day, I meditate. I feel it's helped me tremendously in my life. I feel that all of the questions basically come back to the same thing, obviously being present.

But in my spiritual journey, I've come across certain ideas that I don't quite understand and I'm wondering if you could comment on them. And those would be things like a manipulation of reality and I don't just mean the power of intention, which I feel that I have employed in my life consciously, but things more like lucid dreaming or functioning at a higher frequency, that phrase, or octaves of the multiverse or seeing auras.

[Speaker 1] (10:20 - 17:43)

Well, all these things are different levels functioning at a higher frequency is the one expression that I can relate to most because this is another way of putting what this is all about, so we are learning to function at a higher frequency. There are many other, there are other expressions that have come to people. Some of them who have gone very deeply, perhaps the person who came up with function as a higher frequency, maybe went deeply and then this is the words that came to somebody else who goes to the same deep place.

Different words may come because what words you use to describe an inner reality, a deeper reality depends on the conditioning of your mind. So you will use different words, but also what people consider important also is a reflection of their state of consciousness. Seeing auras is a wonderful thing.

It's not the ultimate thing that will transform your consciousness. It can come as a by-product of a certain development of consciousness. Sometimes it does, sometimes it doesn't.

It is not something to be sought as the ultimate thing to achieve because even if you see auras, you're still in the same state of consciousness, which may be egoic. In fact, you may become so identified with your ability to see auras that your ego gets even bigger. Then there are, as consciousness evolves, it sometimes happens that certain abilities arise that are considered some almost miraculous.

To some people, they come, and to some people they come and then they go again. In India, those abilities that arise spontaneously as a by-product of spiritual awakening are called siddhis. So siddhis are, for example, to be able to telepathy or to know what somebody's thinking or to move things, to create telekinesis or whatever, any of these

things spontaneously, very often, are things that happen.

And all the real teachers in India, they do not teach you to develop siddhis. They all point to the fact that siddhis, you should not give them too much importance when they do come because then you lose track of what really matters, which is your state of consciousness. So all the great teachers have said, okay, siddhis are fine.

They tend to come and go. And even if they stay, it's not the main thing. If you get drawn into that, you get lost and you're no longer, the evolution is no longer proceeding.

And in most cases, if you get drawn into some extraordinary ability, ego usually comes in because it's something you identify with as an enhanced sense of self in your mind. And then it has often happened, and I personally know of people who had genuine abilities, and then they couldn't produce them all the time. The ability came when it wanted to come.

Healing, for example, healing through oils, like I knew one or two people personally when they went into the healing state, suddenly there was oil that manifested, fragrant oil in their hands, and they would put their hands on people, and often there would be a healing. And then they started to practice more. And then they began to realize, although they never said that, that they couldn't, the oils didn't come all the time.

Then they tried, there's no oil, and I've got a room full of people wanting to be healed. They're coming at eight o'clock. And some because they had an ego investment, it became their livelihood.

And so what one of them did, I'm not mentioning the name, of course, what one of them did, as was told to me by his personal assistant, he put like a rubber thing filled with oil under his armpits, and then there was a tube going down. He had short sleeves, but the tube just went up to the edge. And then whenever he, when he went like this, the oil would, putting pressure on his armpit, the oil would be squeezed out and would flow into his hands.

And nobody would know it because it ran down. There was a tube ended here, the sleeve ended there, and the oil would run down into his hands. And so he, because he had an ego involvement in it, he became, he was both genuine and a fraud at the same time.

It's not uncommon for people who attach great importance to these powers to become. They have both a genuine power, and when it leaves them, they are a fraud. So, but of course that's their spiritual path.

And at some point there is, well, who could say that this person cannot evolve beyond it? If they, if he realizes what he's doing, at some point awareness may come in, and then he may well give up doing his healing. So all these things, what these various terminologies, expressions, they come on the one hand, they come from people whose

state of consciousness values that particular thing.

And then often they create that expression, say this is the ultimate thing. And of course the ultimate thing is the one that I can do. And there are teachers who can perform so-called miracles, and in by relatively unevolved humans that can be mistaken for great enlightenment.

But sometimes these abilities, like yogic abilities, there are people in India who can stop breathing for an hour or two or three. They can, they bury them in a box, a sealed box, and they emerge days later. And does it mean that they have gone beyond ego?

Not necessarily. In fact, their ego may be very big while they're in the box, and especially when they come out of it and everybody goes. So, but if these things come as a by-product of awakening, it's fine, but not giving them excessive importance.

That's really the main thing.

[Speaker 3] (17:43 - 17:45)

Could you say a word about octaves?

[Speaker 1] (17:46 - 17:48)

No. No. No idea.

[Speaker 3] (17:49 - 17:50)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (17:50 - 17:51)

I look it up on the internet.

[Speaker 3] (17:52 - 17:53)

Me too.

[Speaker 1] (18:19 - 55:03)

So how do you get out of the self-talk in the head? One, you need to know that that's self-talk in the head. If you don't know it's self-talk in the head, you become the self-talk in your head.

You become the voice in your head. You don't know it, you are it. So you have to, the vital step, and I cannot tell you how to do that.

That minimum of awareness needs to be there where you know that there's self-talk happening in my head and it's telling you some kind of story. It could be the briefest of

stories, like I shouldn't have come here, or I don't fit in here, all these people are too spiritual for me, or I'm so spiritual, these people are not spiritual at all. It's all little stories in the head.

Even every fragment of self-talk is a little story in the head that goes around. And then you look at reality through the lens of the little story. It's not just one story, of course.

There comes another one, and another, and some stories are not little, they may be big stories about yourself and your life and what's gone wrong with it, or what's gone right with it. Even that's a story. More pleasant than if it's gone wrong.

So you need to know when the self-talk happens in the head, hmm, the knowing is not part of the self-talk. The knowing is just an awareness that there is self-talk. The moment there is an awareness that there is self-talk, the possibility of freedom from the self-talk opens up.

If that awareness is not there, there's nothing you can do. You have to wait until life knocks you over the head so that finally some awareness comes in, and you go, huh. So you might have to sleep on a banana skin or something because you have self-talk, and suddenly you go, huh.

Oh, life told you to wake up. Awakening, which is a term that's been used for thousands of years in the spiritual context, not in the conventional context, to awaken means to come out of sleep, in conventional language, terminology. But in spiritual terminology, to awaken means to awaken, one could say, basically, to awaken out of the self-talk in the head because the self-talk in the head is a form of hypnosis, self-hypnosis.

You are hypnotized, you have been hypnotized by society, your surroundings, the surrounding culture, even the language that you were taught to use that becomes a large part of the self-talk, although some of the self-talk is also accompanied by images, but a lot of it is language. And all that, you've been conditioned, and you are possessed by that, which is an energy formation, and humans are possessed by that and mistake that conditioned entity, which consists of thoughts, they're so trapped in it, they're so identified with it, they believe in every thought that comes into your head. It's absurd, but normal.

Well, another word, rather than absurd, I could say it's mad, but it's normal. It creates incredible amount of suffering, unnecessary suffering that humans create for themselves and for others. You can't create suffering for yourself without making others suffer who are close to you and whoever comes into contact with you.

An enormous amount of suffering is created by not realizing that large percentage of your problems consist of self-talk in the head. That's amazing. And once you see that, you say, okay.

And then you can have a little bit of awareness and say, who am I? Am I that story, or am I the one who sees that, who recognizes that there's self-talk? And in order to recognize that there's self-talk going on in you, that's not a thought, there's just an aware presence that, hmm.

And then the compulsive nature of self-talk lessens somewhat because some awareness has come in, the light of awareness has come in. Shh. And then you realize you are that light of awareness, you are the awareness.

And there's a shift, the head may not immediately stop, it'll want to carry on, the self-talk wants to carry on, there's a momentum to it. You can observe that momentum if you can't do it in yourself, you can observe it in others. Once they have a story and they're telling you their story, they can't stop, they want to go on and on.

And they don't want an end, if they're talking about their problems, they don't want an end to their problems, they want a continuation of the story, which is the problem. Ha, ha. Ha, ha.

Ha, ha. Ha, ha. Ha, ha.

Ha, ha. They don't know that, that's why we call it unconscious. They don't know that their primary thing is they want the continuation of the story, because that's the continuation of the fictitious person that cannot live without its story, its storyline.

And so those people, do they want an end to their problems? Of course, they will probably tell you, yeah, I'd love. No, they don't.

They don't want an end to their problems because that would be an end to their story, which is their identity. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. They don't want an end to their sense of identity.

I need my story. All the things that I've been telling myself in my mind about myself and other people and my parents and my relatives and my coworkers and my ex-wife and my ex-husband and what people did to me or what I did and shouldn't have done, failed to do. Who am I without, I can't let go of that.

I need to think about this more. So it becomes a habitual place, the habitual place of the mental noise where you feel that's me. And so every therapist knows that you always reach a point with your clients, patients, whatever, depending on the school of therapy, depends whatever you call your clients, your patients, whatever, there comes a point when you hit that resistance, they don't want to be free of their problems.

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. And that the big challenge is, there is this person going to overcome that barrier because that barrier is not just becoming free of my problems, but also becoming free of a very limited and ultimately fictitious sense of identity, the me. This

mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive.

To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. Who you are as a person is of little or no importance. Who I am as a person is of no importance, at least while we're here.

And then hopefully that will have some effect on the rest of your life when you go about your business so that the me, the person, loses its overriding importance in your life. It's still there, but it's no longer what dominates your life, so it's really transcending the person. And being here together can give you an intensified experience of the shift from being primarily a person to being primarily a presence.

I don't speak to you as a person. My mind is used as a tool through which presence speaks. That's why I have a little book called Stillness Speaks.

Seems almost paradoxical. This entire teaching, if you even want to call it that, is not, does not come from a person. It only happens because the person got out of the way, became transparent, subsided, and so something deeper was able to come through into this dimension.

And that's your destiny and purpose also. So to be the presence consciously, to experience yourself as that underlying presence is liberating. It frees you from the density of being only that person, knowing yourself only as that personal self, being a self in the Buddhist sense, which is ultimately a delusion, deluded.

What emerges is, in Buddhist terms, or you might say the no self, which is not something, it's not an object, it has no form. Or in Hindu terms, the transcendent self emerges, the formless self, not the me anymore. And it's timeless, there's no past and future to it.

And so this is recognizing yourself as essentially timeless, timeless awareness, timeless consciousness. So when you look at me, you're not looking at a person, but you're connecting with yourself. So the depths of who you are is reflected back to you, that's all.

When you go back into your daily life, there may be times when the person reasserts itself completely, so you lose yourself again in the person. And then you wake up again, and some presence comes back. There may also be times when you are primarily the presence.

That's wonderful as that happens more and more in your life. With that comes an openness, a non-judgment, the judgmental mind subsides. And a real sense of connectedness or rather oneness with other beings, human beings, other life forms.

And so that means the way in which you experience your so-called life, the way in which

you experience the world, people, situations, events, that changes the reactive person. The reactive me is no longer running the show. And where before there was a reactive, judgmental person, there's now a deep benevolent presence.

When the ego weeps for what it has lost, the spirit rejoices for what it has found. So there's no need to demand that external conditions should be perfect so that you can become still. In fact, it's sometimes the case that it's precisely when external conditions are seemingly unhelpful, that can sometimes be a great opportunity to find that true stillness.

And especially that is the case when external circumstances have the appearance of actually being a hindrance, something disturbing, something happening that upsets the status quo in your life. And those are great opportunities because then your motivation for going deeper as you suffer when things happen in your external life that quote, unquote, should not be happening, then you begin to suffer. And as you suffer, the motivation eventually arises of going deeper, of finding the place where there is no suffering.

And you could still suffer a little bit on the external level of your life. So sooner or later, we find in our life that life does things to us, seemingly putting obstacles in our path, seemingly having bad intentions towards us. We experience diminishment in some form.

Of course, the ego says, or the egoic self says, that's terrible, I don't want any diminishment. Diminishment meaning loss of something that had become part of your sense of self. It could be loss of possessions, could be loss of a relationship, loss of a loved one.

Loss of a healthy body, diminishment of physical health, loss of your persona of what other people think of you. One day they tell you that you're the greatest, and the next day they tell you you're awful. So diminishment of whatever kind is abhorrent to the egoic self.

There's a beautiful saying, I believe it comes originally, I'm not sure, but it doesn't matter where it comes, it comes out of consciousness, so it doesn't really matter. But I believe it comes originally out of Sufism. And that is, when the ego weeps for what it has lost, the spirit rejoices for what it has found.

And those people who, there's no human, by the way, who does not experience this in life several times, sooner or later. The next one comes. Some people experience it even very early in life.

Some children have experienced loss of a parent, of both parents. So diminishment comes sooner or later. How do you meet it?

Recognize it when it comes, not as a monster or the work of some malevolent deity or

demon that wants to sabotage your life, but as an opportunity also. Now, you may not be able to be grateful for it in the moment of it happening. That would be perhaps too much to ask.

But you will find that later, a year may pass, two years, depending on what it is, suddenly realize that it has taken you deeper into the essence of who you are because something was removed from you that you thought you were, but it was a fiction ultimately. You had identified with something that ultimately is not who you are, it's a temporary thing. Possessions, not status, great physically strong body, good looks, relationship.

And then retrospectively, very often you are able to be grateful for the loss, for the diminishment because it drove you deeper. It brought out the essence of who you are beyond any form. Now, it does not do that to all humans.

It's for everybody, diminishment is only a potential deepening. The possibility is there. And many, many humans are not able to use it because nobody has told them.

The knowledge, this kind of spiritual knowledge is still very limited. It is not part of mainstream culture. People are dying every day without having any true assistance.

People who are approaching death, who are getting old, our mainstream culture still knows nothing. It's just, let's prolong life as long as possible, even if it's totally pointless and it creates a lot of suffering. Let's just, because we don't know what to do with death.

That's one of the reasons why the foundation will hopefully be able to reach people to use the opportunity of this greatest diminishment, which is death, the greatest, when as you approach death, an enormous opportunity for spiritual awakening, realization. But many humans, of course, miss the opportunity of that diminishment and with the result that the ego becomes even more hardened through it, or in the words of Brother David, shriveled, shriveled up to an even harder lifeless thing. Then either you carry continuous anger or resentment or despondency for years, which becomes part of your egoic identity.

And the ego loves any kind of identity. If it's a miserable one, doesn't matter, I'll have it. Just give me a strong identity.

I'll take miserable any time over being nobody. So the opportunity of diminishment is missed. Often you see when people, they're wealthy people and suddenly something happens, they lose their money and then they jump out of the window because the entire sense of self was associated with their possessions.

There are people who lose their reputation. You remember, of course, the case of Mr. Madoff. He is a few years ago who had this scheme, fraudulent scheme and people lost millions or billions of people who was investing with him on Wall Street.

They lost, it was a pyramid. It was a Ponzi scheme, I think is the word. So he was just deceiving all these people and they lost all their money and he had accumulated billions and then finally it all collapsed.

Now he's in prison and his sons couldn't take it. One of his sons, apparently the sons didn't know what was going on. I don't know if that's true, but they were also working in his firm, in his company.

I think, believe one died of cancer soon after and the other committed suicide. Would have been a great opportunity if only somebody had told them, you've lost your money, you've lost your reputation. This is a great opportunity.

And find yourself, the opening is there, but it's just lack of information. Nobody told them. I hadn't actually thought of this until this moment because we want to bring the teaching to places where it otherwise would not be, go or would not reach.

And I just thought of Wall Street. And we will donate books and CDs to Wall Street. So we'll have to call Goldman Sachs tomorrow.

See if they agree. Now they won't be very interested perhaps at the moment, but they may become interested in the future. Just wait.

So you have already, I believe everybody here has already experienced some forms of diminishment to use that word through the physical form, the psychological me entity. And for many, the reason why you're here is because you've gone through that and it has deepened you. Even the collapse of a relationship, you don't have to be married, but you have a relationship, doesn't go well.

It ends, it's a little death, it can be painful. It leaves a little hole in you and takes, it seemingly rips something out of you. And for quite a while you feel it.

It's not pleasant, but that too is an opportunity. So when the ego weeps for what it has lost, oh dear, it's all terrible. I'll tell you what happened.

And I'll tell myself what happened. Even if nobody's listening, it'll go off in your head. Oh my God, I can't take any more of this.

I just can't take it, it's just too much. What's the point of it all? Just completely.

It's good to act out the ego sometimes because then you can actually see it. It's like a reflection in the mirror because it's funny because you remember everybody knows, familiar with that in some way. And that's why it becomes funny.

I'm learning from Marianne yesterday because she has other ways of acting out the ego. It's a little bit more feminine, but I can try that too. Woo.

It may look a little weird when I do it though. But there's a lot in it that doesn't really need to be explained in words. Just this simple gesture, implies a self-image to look at yourself through a self-image.

Look at me.

[Speaker 3] (55:31 - 55:59)

In this third and final part of our series on conscious manifestation 2020, Eckhart looks at what's possible once we come into presence, the fullness, the freedom, the natural abundance of life. Here's Eckhart Tolle.

[Speaker 1] (56:02 - 4:34:16)

The collective suffering that humans are experiencing at the present time is also an opportunity that's opening up for millions of humans, not that they're all going to recognize that and be able to use it, but some will, perhaps many an opportunity for the beginning of an awakening, or perhaps even more than just the beginning of an awakening, the opportunity for an awakening of consciousness. Because if you don't, then you stay stuck in suffering. And you cannot create, manifest a better life for yourself or a better world from the place of suffering.

You need to have gone beyond suffering in order to be able to manifest a better world. So the foundational step then is what I just described. And then you, as the transmutational process continues in you, then you are able occasionally to perhaps have certain thoughts that are no longer in conflict with the emotional reality in you because there has been a transmutation of the fear.

And when you can feel that intense presence, this is a good time, if you even want to do it, you can have a visualization or an affirmation of the goodness of life or the abundance of life, that life is abundant and it's no longer a lie. Because when you sense that presence in you, before it was fear, perhaps, and then it's become presence. There is a feeling of intense aliveness.

There is a heightened aliveness in that presence that would not have been there if life had not challenged you and first made you suffer and then caused you to become more conscious in order to transcend the suffering. That's how evolution happens. And so there is an aliveness in that conscious presence that is inseparable from what we may call abundance.

That brings me to one of my favorite sayings of Jesus. He said, he said, I want you to have the abundant life. That's in one translation.

In another translation, it says, he says, I want you to have the fullness of life. So some Bibles translate it as abundant life. Some Bibles translate it as the fullness of life.

I want you to have the fullness, the fullness of life. He's talking, yes, abundant life. What does that mean?

Abundance in conventional terms, when you think of abundance, we think of many things. You can have lots of things when you have abundance, but true abundance is something, it's not lots of things, although maybe lots of things may come to you, but you don't need lots of things in order to experience abundance. You experience abundance through experiencing the presence within you is the abundance.

It is the fullness of life, the fullness of life that is within you now. Oh, and then we come to another saying of Jesus since I'm talking about Jesus, let's use another very important. The most important thing anybody's ever said about manifesting things is in one sentence that Jesus said that you don't need all the books written about manifesting.

Once you understand that one sentence, you don't need to read any of them. And that sentence is when you pray for something, believe that you have received it and it will be yours. Believe that, not, now the key, of course, is not believe that you will receive it.

The key is believe that you have received it and then it will be yours. The will be refers to the thing, whatever it is that you pray for. But what does that mean?

How can you believe that you have received it when obviously you haven't received it? Now, this can only be understood together with his statement about the fullness of life. It is when you realize the fullness of life, that is the power of your own consciousness.

It's not your own, but let's just call it your own. It's universal consciousness. And this awareness, this presence is universal consciousness.

It is, let's temporarily call it your consciousness. It's not yours because if you say your consciousness, you have a separation between you and consciousness, but there is no duality here. There's only the consciousness that you are.

So when you realize that this, the power of your consciousness, the power of consciousness is the fullness of life. And you can then, nothing that you could add to yourself could be any greater than that. So when you realize the fullness of life, which you can only realize in the present moment, when emotions, the emotion of fear or other negative emotion has become transmuted into intense presence, then this intense presence is the fullness of life.

Anything else that you could obtain in life and that you as a person may want or may enjoy or may need on a personal level is the icing on the cake. Now to this important realization that all manifestation, you can only be a really successful manifestation practitioner if you realize that whatever you manifest is the icing on the cake, because you already have the cake. You are the cake.

If you don't realize that, then life is frustrating because even whatever you do manifest, if you think that's the cake, it's not going to satisfy you for long. It might even make you sick if you eat too much cake. It may make you sick.

So the cake is the essence of who you are, is the presence. If you bring an image of what you want to obtain or achieve into that feeling of presence or aliveness, then that can become a very powerful manifestation. You want to have a better place to live perhaps, whatever it is.

But you don't need it to experience the fullness of life. You can only be successful at manifesting if you don't need whatever it is that you want to manifest in order to give you the experience of the fullness of life, which we could use other words to describe it, the experience of being fully yourself, the experience of having made it, the experience of a fuller sense of identity, whatever it may be, because people don't, they don't want the thing that they think they want.

They want the feeling that that thing will give them. You don't want the car just for the sake of the car. You want the feeling that is associated with a car and the mental image that's associated with I am the owner of this car, it's my car.

That's what they want. The car itself would be meaningless. So they want, whatever they want is always a secondary thing.

They want this fullness of life through something else. So I'm really describing how manifestation does not work. And even if it did work in that way, and sometimes it does in a limited way, it's not the answer and it doesn't make you happy.

And it won't ultimately solve anything. So the powerful manifesto, if that's a word, is the one who was already in touch with the fullness of life and manifest from the fullness of life. And again, Jesus said, so many beautiful things there.

Find only the kingdom of heaven that is within you, which is again, the fullness of life, which is the presence, the unconditioned consciousness, and all the things that you need or think you need will be added onto you. That's an amazing thing. So it's even when you do not specifically attempt or practice manifesting specific things in your life, which some people do and some don't, it's an interesting practice.

Even if you did want to manifest specific things, your life will change as a result of being in touch with that dimension within you, the fullness of life, because from there, manifestation happens. It even happens when you're no longer even want to manifest because you're fine, but you represent then a different level of consciousness in this world. And the way in which you experience this world changes.

And the way in which you affect the world changes. So you cannot help but manifest when you undergo this shift in consciousness. And even if you don't undergo it fully, you

still begin to manifest a different world.

First of all, a different world for yourself, because the way in which you experience the world depends on your state of consciousness. One person may react to the same circumstances very differently from another person, depending on their level of consciousness. So one person gets encounter a particular form of adversity, a very unconscious person, and react in their way.

So they experience a very different world from a person who meets the same adversity from a different, from an awakened state of consciousness, experience it a different world. And not only that, the way in which the, let's say, whatever event you're experiencing in the present moment, the way in which you meet this event, the state of consciousness from which you meet this event determines the subsequent development of that event. This is a somewhat esoteric thing, but you, the so-called world and your state of consciousness are a single phenomenon.

There is not really a world if nobody experiences it. So the consciousness that you are and the world are a single thing. When your consciousness changes, the world changes.

First of all, the way in which you experience the world changes, it basically means the world changes for you. And if the world changes for a sufficient number of people, then even the so-called outside world changes. So for the world to change, there needs to be a shift in consciousness.

But you begin to experience this in your own life first, and then you begin to inhabit a different world. So you always, you manifest, of course, always, most people manifest, as I'm sure you know, most people manifest unconsciously because they're conditioning, the way in which your mind is conditioned determines how they experience events in their life. And that becomes their world.

So they manifest every moment. So how do you manifest your experience of this moment? That's another way of looking at manifestation.

How do you manifest this moment? It depends on your level of state of consciousness. And so there is your freedom.

You are not dependent ultimately on external conditions. And that's when you realize that, that you are not at the mercy of what's happening or not happening around you. So you develop, this is a wonderful realization, a wonderful freedom, that your consciousness is not dependent on this or that happening or not happening.

That's an incredible realization, and it's a sense of liberation. Meditation is really all about becoming still without going to sleep. Or let me correct what I just said.

It's not so much becoming still, but being still. Becoming would imply that you have to go

somewhere or do something. Being is already here and now.

And in a sane life, a conscious life, a harmonious life, there needs to be a balance between becoming and being. Becoming is doing things, getting things done, and so on. In this world, dealing with things, creating things, achieving things.

And being is about being aware of the present moment, which, after all, is all you ever have. Whatever you achieve through becoming in the future eventually turns into the present moment. So as I speak to you, the meditation, if we even want to call it that, it's perhaps best to forget about the word.

And as I speak, be aware of the silence or the stillness between the words. Being aware means just notice that it's there. It's very simple.

So you notice that in addition to the words, there's another dimension that is easily overlooked. And that's the dimension of stillness, which we could also call space or spaciousness. So when you notice that there are two, so to speak, two dimensions here, the dimension of words, which you hear and which then become thoughts, in your head, and the dimension of no thing, spaciousness.

So you just notice, that's all that's required, that there is that dimension also present. So you notice it in between words and even behind the words, so to speak. Now when you notice it, what happens inside you?

What does it mean to notice the stillness? Be aware of the stillness. It means you have become still inside.

It means you're conscious, but at that moment, at this moment, you're not thinking, but you're alert. Present, completely here, but not thinking. So that's the realization of the dimension of depths within you, and without that realization, your entire life is a surface phenomenon.

You run around on the surface of being, never satisfied for long, frustrated, almost always feeling there's something important missing in your life, and of course there is. But you can't find it on the surface of your life, the horizontal dimension, looking here and there. You have to not become still, but realize that that dimension of stillness is already in you.

And another word to describe it is to say it's this alert presence that you can sense right now. And you may find the mind wanting to come in from time to time and say something about it, or even deny it, or say, I don't understand it, or say, what's the point? I have other problems to worry about.

I'll become still when I have solved all the other problems. But why people experience, many people, most people experience their life as a succession of problems, and

ultimately a frustrating experience is because they haven't discovered that dimension, the most vital thing or no thing to discover within yourself. That stillness is also power.

It's the source, not only of yourself, it is the source of life. And nothing creative can ever come into your life if you're not connected with that. Whenever you feel joy, for a moment perhaps, in your daily life, or a moment of loving interaction with another human being, or an animal, or when you suddenly see beauty somewhere and you go, oh.

Now, without you necessarily being aware of it, there has arisen a moment of stillness in you, if only three seconds, or perhaps a bit more. And it's only there that the joy of life arises. Or the ability to really connect with another human being.

Without it, without the stillness, you have only your conceptual mind thinking, thinking, thinking, and you relate to the world through the conceptual mind, judging, thinking, judging, interpreting continuously. The inner self-talk, the monologue, which may become a dialogue in your head. You're no good, says one voice.

The other one says, I'm trying, I'm trying. Whatever the voice in your head is doing. And then you try to relate to another human being through that.

And before long, concepts come in, judgments come in. So there's always a sense of insufficiency, of lack, of not enough. There's always conflict arising when the dimension of stillness is not at all operating in your life.

Or very briefly, it's not enough. Yes, it's good if you can occasionally experience joy and a sense of aliveness, and see beauty, and a loving feeling towards another human being. Not the egoic love, but a goodwill flowing out towards another human being.

Yes, it's wonderful, but if it's only brief moments, then yes, at least that keeps you going. But it could be much deeper. It could operate in your life continuously so that you never lose touch with it.

But the first step is realizing it's there always. It's already there. It's already here.

I wrote in the little book called Stillness Speaks, I said, you're never more truly yourself than when you're still. And you might think that's a strange statement. Most people, when they talk about myself, talk about their personal history.

And their personal problems. And their life situation. When they talk about myself, that's what they refer to.

They refer to my relationships, my work situation, my financial situation, my home situation, my health, me and my life. And of course, all that, yes, that is the case. But is that who you really are?

Even if you have failed at everything in your life, most people's life is a mixture of successes and failures. But let's say every decision you ever made was a disaster or resulted in disaster. And everything went wrong and you failed at everything.

But suddenly, you encounter that dimension of consciousness within you. And you would go, wow. It liberates you from the limited person.

And suddenly, there's a deeper identity in you that's not the narrative of the person. A deeper presence in you that frees you, it liberates you from the person. So even if the person has done a lot of unskillful things, to use a Buddhist term, Buddhists like to use the term unskillful, which means really bad.

You've done something unskillful, one unskillful thing after another, resulting in a disastrous life experience. And yet, at this moment, you can awaken to presence. Then, retrospectively, you are grateful for all your wrong decisions.

Because they've brought you to this point. That's just an extreme example. You're more likely to become drawn towards the dimension of consciousness if you experience the unsatisfactoriness of normal existence.

At some point, unless you're extremely deluded, which is also not uncommon, at some point, you experience that there's a strong element of unsatisfactoriness in normal existence, normal life. There's always something going wrong, even if you practice positive thinking, which is a great thing to do, and yet you are still defiant. Why doesn't life leave me alone?

Why do I need to always get silent? If it's not one thing, it's another. You sort out one thing here, your job, professional situation, the relationship problem comes up, or the other way around.

Or there's a living situation. If you move from here to there, it looked great at first, and then it turned out to be not great at all. Experience that you never arrive at a lasting sense of satisfaction, that you can finally say, oh, I have arrived.

Feels good to be here now. That only comes when you discover the deeper dimension of yourself through presence. So it is a dimension of consciousness, and then at first you begin to shift back and forth.

Sometimes you're present, sometimes you lose presence completely, and you're just totally in the ego, conditioned ego entity reacting to things in its conditioned way, at the mercy of fear and desire torn by this and that, this way and that way, at the mercy of your mind completely identified with every thought that arises, very unpleasant state. And then suddenly, presence is back. And it may only require you to remember that there is such a thing as presence.

And where to find it? Stepping out of the stream of thinking for a moment, becoming present this moment, becoming aware of this moment. This is present at this moment.

But what is this moment? Well, there are levels to it. This moment is, of course, first, whatever you're experiencing at this moment, which implies sense perceptions.

Whatever you experience in this moment is this moment. So it's already helpful if you become more alert to your sense perceptions, no matter where you are. Give attention to your sense perceptions in this moment.

That implies there's less thinking and instead awareness is arising. And you're really looking, you're really listening or touching, whatever it may be, or tasting. It's just a complete shift.

A moment ago you were stuck in your mind and then suddenly you wake up. And that's why the term awakening is often used in many spiritual traditions. It's to step out of this stream of thinking that when you're identified with it, it drags you along, never stops.

Identified means you derive your sense of self from it. It's you, but it's not you. You think it's you.

And then you step out of that and it's like awakening from a dream. The dream of you, the person. The script that otherwise you act out, like an act on stage.

So you wake up, just as you awaken from a sleep-like state in the morning, dream state, you awaken into the present moment. And then something may be happening in the present moment. Maybe you have to take some action, maybe you have to say something, or maybe not.

We don't know. But if there's a situation in the present moment that requires some kind of response, you need to do something or say something, and if you become present, then your response comes from a deeper level. Whether they're words that you speak to a difficult person, or whether some action you take in a difficult, challenging situation, the action or the words, then if you're present, there's an alertness there.

And out of that alertness, there's a flow of a greater intelligence than the egoic mind intelligence. A greater, deeper, higher intelligence can use your mind, and then you're not acting out the script of your old habitual reactions. You can respond to a situation in a fresh and new and more intelligent way.

And you break the karmic wheel which goes on and on, repetition, same thing, action, reaction, action, reaction. So you may find as presence comes more into your life, this alertness, you feel the way in which you deal with people and situations changes, becomes more intelligent. But that is a deeper intelligence, which we could call is more closely related to what we could call wisdom.

Because intelligence, the way we interpret it in our civilization is a fairly narrow thing. There are many intelligent people in this world, and there have been always, and they've created havoc. They've got their university degrees, whatever.

Maybe they're actually also very good at doing IQ tests, and yet they produce politicians, many other areas of life. You can see, well, they're supposed to be intelligent, but their actions seem to show that it's not enough to have this limited type of intelligence. There's a complete lack of something deeper, wisdom, and wisdom arises out of presence.

Wisdom is the intelligence that comes through presence. The realization of yourself as essence identity can be continuous, and that is, you could call that a spiritual practice, but it's not really the right term. It's simply continuously directing attention in your daily life, in addition to paying attention to whatever you need to pay attention to, directing attention to what?

Directing attention to attention. Becoming aware, like, for example, now, becoming aware that you are conscious right now. That's a strange thing.

There's no content to that. There's simply a presence. And for that to happen, and I'm finally getting to it, that is, there needs to be the cessation of thought.

And so this is my invitation to you. You do not need to think continuously in your daily life. If your mind tells you that if you do not think and do not worry, then your life is going to collapse, that is not true.

It's a lie. But your mind might either explicitly or implicitly say that you need to, I need to really think about my life. Thinking has its place.

It's a wonderful tool. It can be used for manifesting. It can be used for creating.

It's a tool. But if it takes you over, if you're identified with a tool, then it comes to possess you, and that's a terrible limitation. So the new state of consciousness is a mixture of thought and spaciousness, so that you can go about your daily life, walking from point A to point B, in that state of simple, aware presence.

Let's do it now. I'm calling it do, but it's not doing involved. Simply become aware of yourself, as you sit here, just as I am aware of myself as a conscious presence.

This is a very strange thing. It's not, you can't say, you cannot become an object to yourself in this. Everything else is an object that arises in your consciousness, an object of consciousness.

But knowing yourself, you cannot be an object in your own consciousness. So you cannot know yourself in a subject-object relationship at the deepest level. You can only know

yourself as the eternal subject.

In fact, there is a space of stillness in that moment, of knowing yourself as the essence identity. There is an alive sense of stillness and presence. Let's separate.

Let's just say, my two hands, this is thought, you're thinking, and then you go, and here's a space of no thought, just awareness. You can't define what that is. You can't think about it.

You can only be it. Stillness is one word we could use to point to it. Stillness.

It has nothing to do whether there's noise outside or not. Inner stillness is the cessation of thinking without loss of consciousness. And that is realizing yourself as the unconditioned consciousness, because everything else is conditioned by the past.

But that is the unconditioned in you. That is your essence identity. You cannot, by exercising willpower, that is not the way to go to stop yourself from thinking.

I'm not even saying stop thinking as an active practice, but simply become so alert that thinking stops by itself. One way you can do it is by becoming aware of sense perceptions. Acutely aware of sense perceptions.

I give the example in The Power of Now of a cat watching the mouse hole. And the cat watching the mouse hole is in that state of absolute attention. And the cat goes, no, you don't have to stare like that.

But that is the state of that is this state of awareness, consciousness, that's the only thing in your life that you cannot question. That the only thing that is absolutely and undoubtedly real. Everything else you can question, for example, whether our gathering here is a dream or not, you don't really know.

It could be that you are dreaming, that you're sitting here and there's a man talking on a chair suggesting to you that you might be dreaming. You cannot, as many philosophers have pointed out, you cannot know for sure that this life that you're experiencing is not a kind of dream. And from one certain one perspective, it is a kind of dream.

Look at, I like to sometimes look at old photographs, made, taken in 1900, early days of photography, 1920, whenever, of street scenes or gatherings. And you look, you can go to second-hand shops and they sell sometimes old photographs. You can buy one for a penny or two.

You have no idea who these people are, nor has anybody else an idea who these people are. But they're running around the city street, excited about this or that. And then there's another gathering, people sitting around a table, eating and laughing in this old photo.

And where is that now? It has evaporated like a dream. Nobody even remembers who they are.

And that is the same with anything that you experience here. It quickly evaporates. So there is a dream-like quality to human existence, any existence.

So you could say, OK, maybe it's all a dream, that may well be. But one thing you cannot doubt, that is that you are conscious. Because if you're not conscious, there couldn't be a dream.

A dream can only arise in the light of consciousness. So, the one thing, whether or not this is a dream or not, it becomes irrelevant. The only thing that matters, if it is a dream, is whether you can realize what the essence of the dream is.

Consciousness. And you can only realize that directly, here and now, as this. Oh, Descartes, of course, the French philosopher, said, I think, therefore I am.

If he had waited a little bit longer, before saying anything, he could have come to the point of cessation of thinking, and then he could have made the more profound statement, I am conscious, therefore I am. Thinking is only an expression of consciousness, a surface expression of consciousness. This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive.

To be free, you awaken to who you are, beyond your history and your life situation. I will ring this bell and I'll ask you to follow the sound with your attention. So after ringing the bell, the sound will go on for quite a while.

Just follow the sound until you can't hear anything anymore, and then now ring it again. You may notice, in order to still perceive the sound as it gradually subsides, you need to become more alert. The fainter the sound is, the more alert you need to be to still be aware of it.

So the alertness, as the sound gradually subsides, the alertness increases. So you go, at first it's easy, the sound is there, and then it subsides, and you need to be more attentive, listen more acutely. And now I will ring it again.

Follow the sound with your attention, and when you can no longer hear the sound, see what is left when the object of your conscious attention, which was the sound, disappears, and what is left is the pure attention itself. Let's do this. So as the sound subsides, silence remains.

The silence that was there before the sound started, and you become aware of the silence. But the silence is the absence of sound, so you're really becoming aware of nothing. Silence is the absence of sound, so you're becoming aware of nothing.

It seemed almost impossible, but it is possible, because really, what remains is awareness itself. The awareness that was there that enabled you to listen, you are the awareness that was listening to the sound, and when the object that arose in the awareness disappears, what remains is the awareness itself. So to follow the sound with your attention to its death, because the sound dies in the end, the form that was there, the form, which is a in this case, one could say a sound is a form, too, auditory formation.

The form dies. What remains when the form dies? Just you can't really name it, because it's not an object, only objects can be named.

But we name it anyway. Consciousness remains. Your attention remains, whatever you want to call it.

Pure awareness remains. And you know that pure awareness remains, because you are it. You become aware of awareness.

One more time. One child says to the other child, look, I can do this, you can't do what I can do. I can do this, but you can't.

Or the child says, my dad has a bigger car than yours. You can't say to that child, don't do that. You are emphasizing your form identity.

But you know that's what's happening. It's a natural tendency in humans to emphasize. It could be a possession.

I have more than you. It could be my body looks better than yours, or is stronger than yours, or bigger than yours, or taller than yours. Or it could be I have an ability that you don't have.

Children, start with that. I can play the piano. What can you play?

I play the ping pong machine. So to emphasize form identity is a natural thing. There is a point where this should come to a natural conclusion.

I would say in a more evolved humanity, the emphasis of form identity as a person reaches adulthood, a little bit after, is replaced at the moment, this is not what's happening, but can be replaced by something more genuine and deeper. And that is finding your essence identity that's underneath your form identity. And that is spiritual dimension, finding the spiritual dimension in yourself so that who you think you are is no longer, you still have a form identity.

Yes, that level is still there, undoubtedly. You have certain abilities. You're good at this, you're not good at that.

You're better than the other person in this thing, but not as good as in the other thing.

That remains, but it no longer gives you your sense of who you are. Sitting down mindfully.

Laughter Contrary to popular belief, you don't have to be slow to be mindful, or it probably helps, but you can be in a rush and still be mindful. That's actually a lovely experience of high energy, which means you're still present with every movement and not excessively focused on some future point, and then you just go. It's wonderful.

That's contained in the ancient Zen saying, hurry slowly. Seems to be a contradiction. Of course, what it means is on the outside you hurry, but on the inside you rest in being.

Doing, being. You don't get lost in doing, nor do you get lost in being. Om Om But if I had to be lost somewhere, I'd rather be lost in being, of course.

It varies from person to person to what degree you're more drawn to what's doing, to what degree you're more drawn to what's being. Almost nobody's right in the middle. I'm more drawn to what's being, as you might have noticed.

But I'm able to do. Talking is doing. Traveling, writing, speaking, is doing.

But the strange thing is, in my case, all the doing that I do, well, not all, but all the significant doing that I do is concerned with pointing the way to being. The speaking, the writing, traveling. But you may have a business, or you may have some function in this world, and everybody has to find some balance between doing and being, which doesn't mean...

The important thing is that initially, perhaps, it happens to many people, you have a compartment in your life when you become still and present. Sometimes it's associated with meditation, meditation practice. Or it's when you go out in nature, or when you're sitting alone in your room, and then you are able to become still, and that's already a huge gain in consciousness.

You're able to become still and present, and feel the being dimension of you. And then you go back into the world, and you start doing again, and for a while, you easily lose yourself again in the doing, and you're just as lost as everybody else in the doing, until you come back to your meditation practice, or to your room, or into nature, and then you go back into being. But eventually, and gradually, the two merge.

So when you're doing, you're not totally lost in it, you're not totally dragged along by your mind and by external things that demand, continuously demand your attention. You're able to deal with things, but not... Don't become crazy.

And when you're in being, the danger with being, we know what the danger with doing is. The primordial doing is in your mind, thinking is doing, so that's the place where you really get lost, and then it gets externalized, you get lost in stuff. But, the...

In being, when you go into being, when you're present, you're above, as I put it, you're above thought. Here's thought, this is where the human dimension, and then there's being. Being is not just above, it also, it envelops it all, but let's for a moment, let's look at it like this, it's helpful.

So, you rise above thought, and your dog is here, below thought. Doesn't mean the dog is not conscious, but the dog does not do thinking the way you do. The dog does not have an opinion about you, or about him or herself.

So, the dog exists below thought, and when you become present, you rise above thought. And below the dog, there's the tree, and the plants, they are very deeply still connected with being. The tree is, there's a consciousness in the tree, but it's impossible for us to conceive of it.

You can be sure that it's very slow, and it's a, it's a, nobody knows how it, how it is aware. It has no self-awareness, of course, but the tree is even more peaceful than the dog. So the tree vibration, this is why a tree is, now this has been recognized in ancient, many ancient cultures, and certain trees were considered sacred, so people had a special relationship with trees.

Because before they became so mind-dominated, they had a little bit more sensitivity towards energy fields, and they could sense something in the tree that they called sacred. They could sense the deep stillness within which the tree exists. Whereas modern humans, those who are completely identified with mind, do not have that deep relationship with the tree, except when you become present.

Because you look at the tree through your mental concepts, and that's, even the moment you name it, the veil has already come up between you and it, and that veil is the concept that the label that you give it. And then the illusion arises that you, once you have named something, then the illusion arises that you know what it is. So you've attached a label to something, and you think, now I know what it is, it's a tree.

It's an oak tree, what else do you want to know? Or you can go more deeply and attach other labels, so you can cut it into little pieces, and put a piece under a microscope, add more labels. That's the conceptual knowing that we've been talking about.

It covers up the other dimension, the deeper knowing. When you can be with a tree and join with the tree in that become aware of that space of stillness in which the tree exists. To enter that meditative state of consciousness, because that's what it is all about.

Meditation is about a shift in consciousness away from concern with doing and thinking and becoming aware really directly aware of the present moment. And that's perhaps the easiest and most accessible starting point for most people to enter the state of presence which is the aim of meditation, is to get you into that state of absolute

presence in this moment. And that's being.

Becoming aware of being. Most people are always engaged in doing. That includes thinking continuously.

And a lot of the thinking that people do is not very uplifting. A lot of the thinking that happens compulsively creates negative feelings. And a lot of thinking is actually harmful and dysfunctional.

It doesn't serve any useful purpose, but you just can't stop it. Or you think you can't, but you can. And that's of course what meditation is about.

To realize there is in you a deeper dimension of consciousness. Deeper or higher, you could call it. Depending from where you look at it.

Deeper or higher than thinking. And that is the state of presence in the now. So it's an amazing realization for most people that they can actually easily access that state of presence by bringing their attention into the present moment like now.

So I would kind of or I'm talking my aim is to talk you, so to speak, into that state of meditation. And it helps if while I talk you can become conscious or aware of the small gaps between words as I talk. So you're just aware not only of the words of course you hear the words you take them in but you're also aware that there are little spaces between the words.

You just acknowledge that. These are little meditative gaps, so to speak. And in order to be really aware of the meditative gaps you can't be thinking.

You're just aware aware of that space. There is what does it mean aware? There is a presence in that awareness.

You know in that awareness like now you know that you are here as a conscious presence without any thought telling you that. In other words you become aware of yourself not as a person because to be a person you need to be thinking about you and your life and your problems and so on. But there is a deeper dimension in you, deeper than the person.

And this is what we are here to access So you become aware that really on the surface of your life there is the person with a past and a future and all the thinking and the emotions that keep the person going, of course. And so you're happy one day, unhappy the next. Happy one day unhappy the fluctuations of the person it's quite normal.

And the person is always concerned with doing and thinking and the next thing or the past the future. The past is never really present. When you become present like now you realize that there is a deeper part in you there is a deeper dimension to who you are

where you are more than a person where you are a presence, a conscious presence.

The question is can you sense feel or be aware of yourself at this moment as a conscious presence without which there couldn't even be a person so it's almost like saying the person is the surface of the ocean or the ripples or the waves on the surface of the ocean but you are not just the ripples or waves on the surface of the ocean you are the ocean so there is a deeper presence in you and to access that and to sense that in yourself to sense yourself as the presence a presence that is what liberates you from being completely trapped and limited in an exclusively personal identity in other words there is more to you than meets the eye you are deeper than you ever knew by thinking about yourself and it's not difficult to access that dimension in yourself can one describe it well one can give a few pointers let's see if that makes sense the pointers I'm giving you now let's see if they make sense in your own experience at this moment sensing yourself as a presence there is a peacefulness there that is really the essence of what is sometimes called inner peace the person the surface of the ocean the waves and the ripples of the ocean cannot be at peace for long it fluctuates occasionally if things happen to go well yeah I'm happy it never lasts for very long and then the storm comes and big waves come or little little irritated waves whatever then you are unhappy but there is a deeper if let's say you are a ripple on the surface of the ocean with a name and a date of birth and a past and a future and problems and suddenly the ripple realizes there is more to me and realizes oh I'm actually much deeper and vaster I'm the ocean manifesting as the ripple and so you are the universe or the consciousness that underlies the sense perceived universe manifesting temporarily as a person you are the universe becoming conscious of itself at this moment in your life as a person you are not separate from the totality of the universe you are the universe the universe has or the consciousness that underlies the universe has given form to who you are temporarily in order to experience itself as a person it's an amazing thing and the universe here is in the process of becoming more conscious that's what the entire evolution of the universe is about, it's consciousness so you your life is part of the evolutionary impulse towards greater consciousness and if your life is not primarily about greater consciousness, which actually you can build into whatever you do, it doesn't mean you stop doing and just say all I'm interested in is consciousness no, it needs to flow into what you do if that if your life purpose is not aligned with the conscious evolving consciousness of the universe then what is the point of it all and then sooner or later you get very frustrated and things become pointless so you are here to become more conscious because that's what the universe has put you here for instead of universe you can use other terms you are more comfortable with them the universal intelligence God so, right now in addition to being a person which right now is not important it becomes important again when we finish our meditation I'm sure but right now something else is more important that's realizing yourself as the presence coming into the present moment and feeling just being aware right now that you are conscious if you were not conscious you wouldn't be able to hear hear, see, perceive anything the fact that you can perceive things the fact that you can

think the fact that you can have emotions all implies that you are conscious because the meditative state is becoming aware directly of that consciousness sometimes the word that is used also is stillness right now you become still you become aware of just being of being that presence and that feels energizing you don't go to sleep you are actually alert and still at the same time and now you access an intelligence that is deeper than the thinking mind by entering that state of alert presence and then when you think again you are connected with a with the source of all intelligence with creativity you are you become empowered your thinking and your doing and your actions are then aligned with a deeper purpose of the universe not just little egoic desires so all this is so terribly important aligning your life with that presence so you need to during your normal day I'll give you a few hints how to invite that presence into your life by invite I mean direct your attention to it because it's always there that really is what supports you in life and if you can be aware of that fear anxiety happen less and less in your life because you can feel supported by that vast presence which is not just your own presence, it is the universal presence of consciousness you connect with that you are that so on a day normal day you go to work or whatever you do as much as you can become aware of just brief moments of yourself as the presence in addition to being a person so one of the things I recommend is it sounds almost too simple but from time to time look at the sky for a few seconds you look up it doesn't matter whether it's blue or cloudy today here is the early afternoon, happens to be a sunny day look at the sky for a moment you are looking but not thinking you could do that with anything but sky is easier because there is this vast expanse that has some correlation with the presence of stillness within you so you look and for a moment there is just the sky and you can sense yourself as the presence that is perceiving and you are not thinking so there is a brief moment of not thinking but not going to sleep alertness without thinking that's the key to bring that into your life more often and don't believe when your mind tells you that you need to think and think and think all the time bring in gaps of just alert presence, that's the being the rest is the doing the two need to be a balance in your life between being and doing, otherwise you go mad a civilization that completely loses touch with the being dimension is going to self-destruct at this moment you are aware of where you are you are aware of the room you are aware that you are breathing in addition to that sense perceptions perhaps some feelings a few thoughts floating through your head or maybe no thought maybe just a clear sky inside you with just little puffy clouds here and there little thoughts and then disappear again so perhaps you are the clear sky and the clear sky is the awareness so the essence of our meditation is to be aware right now whether or not your eyes are closed or open, doesn't matter whether you are aware that you are aware whether you are conscious that you are conscious can you sense your own consciousness it's kind of subject and object merging within you because usually when you are aware of something the subject is aware of the object but when you are aware of awareness the subject is no longer aware of an object because it is just awareness you are aware that you are aware object and subject merge into one self-awareness presence that's the sky, the clear sky occasional thoughts may come not a problem and

you can be aware with every cell of the body an alertness that pervades the entire body it's not the body anymore it's just the space you are that presence there's nothing to know about it beyond that you can't know it you can only be it and as you no longer identify with the mind, the thoughts the presence can shine through the mind can even use your mind and inspire your mind another word we can use is stillness that's the stillness within you vibrantly alive stillness and of course you don't necessarily need to sit still to be in stillness you can move as you know and be in stillness that's the beauty of it you can do things and be in stillness can interact with another human being can even speak to them and be in stillness as I'm speaking to you now but I'm in stillness the words are just floating around the stillness and you can bring stillness to nature and nature will love you for it and you can share stillness with a tree see if you can be as still as the tree that's something or if the sky is clear at night you look at the sky there are stars but there's the vastness of space which is also stillness there's not a single sound in space only in science fiction movies but there is no sound in outer space the deepest stillness but even a flower is surrounded by stillness the flower exists in that still field so if you need a little bit of help to find the inner stillness go to a tree look at the sky the night sky or the sky at sunset as it gradually darkens very still and spacious or you can touch the earth it's also very still so many things can teach you stillness and help you and the quickest way to stillness in any situation no matter where you are whether on top of a mountain or Times Square or Piccadilly Circus in the midst of traffic is to welcome the present moment just that little thing no matter what form it takes whatever arises in the present moment you welcome it or at least you allow it to be non-resistance immediately you can sense in the background of your being that field of stillness or peace so that simple thing allowing this moment to be as it is connects you with the transcendent in you couldn't be any easier than that all you have to do is remember that this is possible and then do it meditation is about accessing stillness within you which is a dimension of consciousness above thinking awareness aware stillness there is also a stillness below thinking people become still when they get tired the most important thing in a person's life is to find that dimension perhaps first it comes in glimpses sometimes arises naturally perhaps when you are out in nature or relating to an animal or it can be there as the part of your meditation practice while you meditate or right here and now by paying attention to the silent spaces between words paying attention meaning noticing the silent spaces between the words that's the meditation not noticing just for one second and then go off into thinking but noticing the silent spaces while they are there for example between now and now and of course you can't notice the silent spaces and think at the same time to notice the silent space you become still inside because only the stillness in you can become aware of it so noticing those spaces between words for here is an important part of or the most important part of our life meditation and as you notice you become still inside and there is the dimension that transcends the person so first you access it here and as I said perhaps it arises naturally and if you access it here or as part of your meditation practice it's more likely to arise also naturally in other situations in daily life and when it does arise you notice it again a moment of alert

attention when you look at the sky and you go without having any interpretation or words arising in your mind about the sky you just go there is an alertness in which an alert space in which the sense perception happens of the sky and what is the sky? nothing really it's not an object you can never touch it there is even no such thing as the sky it's only a perception from a particular location there is the background of space and there is the sunlight that creates the temporary illusion we could say that there is a sky but because it has no actual form it's a helpful thing to look at the sky it's a vast spaciousness today the sky here is totally clear and that's you can look at that spaciousness with inner spaciousness and if there are clouds you see that there are clouds and the clear sky also there and sometimes there is just clouds but still there is still a spaciousness there and the light is filtering through the clouds and that could be used as an analogy for your inner state of consciousness which can be totally overcast which means in this analogy clouds are thoughts for many people their state of consciousness is continuously overcast which means one thought leads into another into another and all their consciousness is absorbed by thinking so that's how most people still live on the planet and then comes a time when you realize oh there is an opening a bit of spaciousness there is some blue sky coming through in between the clouds so that means noticing the gap between two thoughts in yourself and then occasionally you may find there is mostly clear sky and just a few puffy clouds floating past which are little thoughts you don't have to give them too much attention and gradually gradually you begin to be able to have that stillness that spaciousness not just occasionally or when you are practicing meditation but have it always if not in the foreground of your life that's not always possible there are many things that happen in the foreground that you need to give attention to but in the background so when you are looking at something you don't immediately label it interpret it you don't immediately form some fixed opinion or viewpoint but there is a moment of non-conceptualization and there is a stillness in the background against which the sense perception happens and then whatever you look at, you look at there is a dimension of depth to whatever you are looking at which cannot be there if you immediately label everything and sometimes that you don't even need an interpretation you can just be there with a stillness against which the sense perception happens or if you need to have an interpretation then after a moment of stillness a thought arises concerning that particular situation event or thing or person that is being perceived allowing the flux of experience to be there to unfold one thing after another and instead of demanding that there should not be impermanence just enjoy the flow the comings and goings gain and loss hot and cold so these are all forms that arise in your experience and you experience yourself as a form you experience yourself as a physical form and as a person the larger part of who you are is of course not visible only the physical body is visible and as you know there is more to you than meets the eye all your inner space thoughts, feelings emotions and even the way in which you experience your body is an inner phenomenon but even that inner self is still form on that level consisting of mental activity thoughts emotions feelings and perceptions and that also is subject to of course impermanence the physical body changes with some people it's very

noticeable some people you might have noticed it if you look at a photo of yourself when they were 20 years old and then you look at a photo when they were 40 or you look at a photo when they were 30 and then a photo when they were 50 or 60 sometimes they are hardly recognizable the entire shape of their face has changed not to mention the rest of the body so all is subject to fleetingness of things form whether they are inner forms or outer forms thought forms sense perceptions physical objects which can only be experienced as sense perceptions so all external phenomena are really inner phenomena so yourself your person the person who you are for a little while subject to change and eventually, sooner or later it disappears one day you're here the next day you're gone is there anything beyond that?

that's the question that has been asked by spiritual seekers for thousands of years and of course there is but just believing that there is a transcendent realm that is not subject to time and decay well believing in that as an article of faith might serve as a little crutch on your life it can give you a comforting thought similar to the thought of there is a God it's a comforting thought but it does not really help you experience the reality of it it's still just a belief of course as a belief you might be wrong in the power of now probably I wrote I used the term form identity and essence identity referring to the human being so you know a lot about your form identity which changes and is not going to last, even if it lasts if an aspect of your form identity lasts beyond your physical existence that will also be subject to change as form because no forms are permanent so if you if there is life after death you are not going to be Mr. so and so or Mrs. so and so for the rest of eternity your personal identity of course all forms are subject to metamorphosis and change and transformation so who you experience to be on your form level of your form identity is temporary even if it continues for a while beyond the physical form that is also temporary and then it shifts and changes dissolves, but as physicists tell us, energy itself remains it changes form there is an essence to life that is formless and that can be known not as an object in your experience but as the very subject of all experience and that is who you are in your essence and who you are in your essence is identical with what the universe is in its essence and that is the realization of your essence identity that frees you from unhealthy let's put it like that attachment constant compulsive obsessive attachment to your form identity and all the things that make up the forms in your life the objects around you and so on and so there is a clinging, if you don't know who you are on the essence level then there is a clinging to the world of form that is unhealthy and by that I mean it creates suffering because if you cling to something that by its very nature is fleeting and deep down you know that there is suffering even while you still have it not only when it finally dissolves or decays or leaves you even while you still have whatever you are clinging to, there is already that anxiety and that nervousness in the background form identity essence identity essence identity is not something that arises in your experience because it is the foundation of all experience and it is I sometimes call it inner space it is known, not in a subject-object relationship but it knows let's put it like that, you know it as yourself when the mind subsides for a

moment, thought activity ceases like now and all that's left is a sense of presence it has no content from the point of view of form or form identity it is nothing and yet undoubtedly undoubtedly there is a presence there a knowingness let's put it like that, a knowing a knowingness an awareness not of something just awareness without the of to use an analogy light let's say you are a ray of light and usually you know what the light shines on things and it shines on something and you know it because the light shines on something if the light doesn't shine on something you can't see it in order to see light there needs to be a reflection so let's say you are the light and suddenly you realize your essential nature as light and not what you thought before you took yourself to be whatever the light reflects so it's a shift in the direction of your attention one could say, instead of going continuously either outward to sensory experience or to thought experience involved in one thought after another and your attention is drawn into that and it has a hypnotic quality, most people are completely hypnotized by their thoughts in the grip of their thoughts and they follow wherever they go, they follow them, their attention and then you suddenly there's a reversal of attention like now, this is why we're here and you become aware of yourself but not as a form as the very consciousness without which there would be no experience of any form and it has no features that's why the Buddha called it emptiness, sometimes he called it emptiness in other Buddhist traditions, I don't know whether the Buddha also used that term or it came later Buddha nature is another term you have not only the and that of course is essence identity that is your Buddha nature or if you want, Christ consciousness, whatever you want to call it so the greatest realization, the greatest thing to happen to you in this lifetime is the realization that there is the transcendent dimension in the background of your life and to have it there at first as glimpses then sometimes it stays for a while that realization which I sometimes describe as a stillness in the background while your life unfolds in the foreground and you become aware of more spaces arising in between thoughts more stillness arising, more presence more peace and then you realize that essentially who you are is not what happens in your mind or what happens externally that does not define who you are in your essence losing your job or getting the great job or the house or whatever it is, you get it or you lose it this is the constantly shifting forms if you look to that for your real sense of identity then you're going to find a lot of trouble in your life, you will be troubled continuously continuously but if you realize yourself as that alive stillness spaciousness then you can enjoy the world of form and if you can't enjoy it sometimes perhaps you can't you can at least tolerate it with a sense of peacefulness in the background, knowing that it's not going to last you can accept whatever is right now or if you can't enjoy it at least you can accept that this is what is right now it may change the next moment or in a year's time or 10 years time but in the meantime this is what is or you can take action to change it but even then in the meantime it is you take action, I'm going to do that, that, that and then you do it also in the present moment at some point the situation changes either the change may be brought about by your action or it just comes it's in the nature of things but in the meantime you lived in alignment with the is-ness of the present moment which in itself

that acceptance of what is as I have often said that acceptance of what is if you realize you make that into your spiritual practice become one with the is-ness of this moment then the transcendent dimension your essence identity reveals itself as a piece in the background so the acceptance of form that whatever form arises in the present moment, forms change so there is a succession of forms arising and it's all in the now and you let go of dysfunctional mind patterns like this shouldn't be happening welcome to our live meditation for those of you who are joining us for the first time all that's happening here is we become comfortable with nothing happening so that we can shift our consciousness from doing to being doing is not just physical doing which obviously we are not engaged in right now well the mouth is moving but that's all or you may be twitching a bit but basically we are sitting or lying, that's physical doing so we stop doing on the external and more importantly the mind so we are here to experience get a taste of or perhaps even more than that go deeply into the state of being which in itself has no content it's a bit like having lived in a room full of furniture stuff for many years, always being worried about polishing it or getting more stuff or getting rid of this stuff and talking about the stuff in your room and for the first time you become aware also of the space of the room, which is the essence without which there wouldn't be a room and you realize the furniture in the room is secondary to the space in the room but space you cannot grasp, you can't say ah, there it is you can't even point to it where? you become, you sense it, you become aware of it you sense, one could almost say the presence of the space wherever you are now you can do it you can sense the presence of the space and to do that you might notice you can't be thinking thinking is to do with the furniture in the room but thinking is never to do with the space in the room a different faculty is required that inner faculty is required to sense or to become aware of the space wherever you are that is not thinking and most humans still don't know that they potentially have that ability or that faculty in other words it's not awakened in most humans yet and of course we are here for some of you to awaken that and for many others who are already awake to it to deepen it so let's go back to the room when you become aware of the space in the room you might notice it's a very peaceful thing to be aware of the space it suddenly becomes this and suddenly an added dimension to where you are because before you were concerned with the furniture and whatever filled the room stuff and that every bit of stuff has a history you talk about its history by the way may I point out that right now what we are doing I'm using the room as an analogy for of course your mind but I'm also talking about the room so we are on two levels here so you can take it literally and you can take it as an analogy for your mind or both so you may notice that suddenly the room which is the old room that you've lived in for many years suddenly becomes peaceful in the moment that you can sense the space of the room rather than always focusing on the different bits and pieces in the room the stuff suddenly you take in the totality which transcends what's in it the spaciousness of it and it becomes oh it's there's a sense of peace and some almost a peaceful presence which of course essentially is you could say yes it's in the room but of course it's in you in our analogy the furniture in the room the bits and pieces the stuff corresponds of course to

the content of your mind the thoughts most of which are old and repetitive the furniture whatever is occupying your mind is the stuff, the furniture every item wants your attention you keep the old stuff alive by continuously giving it your attention and if you become aware of the space in the room you withdraw attention from what is in the room and you become aware of that which could be described as the essence of the room without which there would be no room without any room there's no room there's space, space and within you the same if you don't find the space within you the spaciousness which is the presence the presence that you can sense as if it were an external presence in filling the room is also in you now this is very deeply peaceful and in many traditions that's called the presence of God that all the mystics whether Christian or Buddhist or Hindu or Sufis they all point to that that's not the ideological God not the person but that which underlies all manifestation the eternal so the eternal is both within and without the moment you notice that presence outside of you you can be out in nature or you can be in a room you're no longer focusing on individual things you're focusing on the space between things one could say and you sense that as a silent presence, you can't say much about it if you're a poet perhaps you could, some poets have written about it quite beautifully sometimes words worth the English poet went out into nature and wrote beautiful things all pointing to that but the moment you notice it outside of you it's also within you so I call that usually presence you can call it the presence of God you can call it divine presence or you can forget about those terms the terms don't really matter so your entry point then can be you start with the external become aware of the essence of whatever wherever you are of that particular place whether it's in a building or outside the essence of that place which goes beyond whatever is filling that place, whatever is there as a form you become aware that there is also the formless dimension to that place spirit, another word and the more you are able to sense that in your life the more spiritual you are so how spiritual you are doesn't really have anything to do with your thought processes so thinking about God for 12 hours a day or more or talking about God doesn't make you spiritual, it's a concept and the test of course is always whether you are able to retain that awareness of the presence really awareness and presence are the same thing, the moment you use language you separate things into subject, objects and bits and pieces the question is are you able to retain that aware presence continuing to sense that presence that is of course inseparable from the essence of who you are whether you can retain, sustain that when all this stuff in your life whatever is happening shouts at you so to speak and every bit of stuff in your life says I matter absolutely I demand your complete attention if you don't give me attention your life will collapse I need you to worry about me says the stuff if you don't you are irresponsible of course that's not true your most fundamental responsibility is to find that which is beyond the stuff to access that dimension in you that's why you are here that's what the universe wants through you to awaken to that dimension to be it consciously first it seems that it's something outside of you it's the space in the room or here in nature and then you realize oh it's within me too and it's more essentially me than anything else it's where the whole feeling of who you are actually originates in that deep sense of being of

presence and then it gets mixed up with things, with stuff and then you sense the beingness through the stuff still a little bit and then a possession can give you a little bit of aliveness you can sense your car if you just got it after a while it wears off if you just got it that's a little bit of sense of deeper sense of identity so it but where it really any identity sense of essential self comes from is from the formless dimension of presence and for most people it can only a little bit filter through all the things in their lives and it's never very satisfying because it's to a large extent obscured and it's mistaken for the thing it's like having a lampshade and you're mistaking the light that comes through the lampshade you're mistaking the lampshade for the light and then you attach yourself to the lampshade and not realizing what you love about the lampshade is the light that shines through it and then you worry about the lampshade if you think that we are doing something here, doing a meditation that can become a big obstacle to actually entering the state of meditation the notion that you're doing something one minute you're doing you're answering the emails and then you're putting the dishes away and then you're doing a meditation and every doing has a certain aim you're doing in order to get it done get it over with achieve the goal so in doing involves time can't do anything without time and the ordinary state of consciousness is always involved in time inseparable from time there's a deeper dimension within you that could be called timeless but as long as you're doing something to get there that becomes a paradox you can't use time to get to the timeless because you don't need to get to the timeless it's already there in you you just need to notice that it's there so that removes all sense of doing or you need to do so to speak it's not a doing it's a notice right now that there's a deeper dimension in you deeper than the physical that which you perceive through your senses deeper than thinking deeper than emotions emotional layers where is it? I still can't feel it somebody thinks become aware that you are become aware of the beingness of yourself aware of your own presence thinking doesn't help you here it actually prevents you from dropping down into the core of your being so you can allow yourself to let go of thinking or trying to figure something out become aware that right now you are conscious right now you are aware and in the gap between two thoughts there's a space or a spaciousness and in that spaciousness in that space you are aware you are conscious without any particular content you are conscious of consciousness that which is prior to all content but not separate from deeper than all content but not separate from all the content of your mind whatever you are aware of sense perceptions thinking emotions all these things you are aware of in many cases not just aware of identified with you derive your sense of self from those things situations which you are aware of through your sense perceptions plus mental interpretations plus emotional reflections that makes up the content of your consciousness that makes up what you call your life that's my life and you try to figure out your life by thinking about your life there is a place for that too, yes if that's all there is to your life however then you are to use one of my favorite analogies you are like a wave or ripple on the surface of the ocean who does not realize that it is not only a wave or ripple on the surface of the ocean being surrounded by other waves or ripples but this wave or ripple does not realize that it is also and more fundamentally the entire ocean

and that this wave or ripple is only temporarily a manifestation of the entire ocean somebody once said I believe it was Alan Watts said something like you are something that the universe is doing in the same way that the wave is something that the ocean is doing so you are something that the universe is doing or being and if you can realize that rather than just thinking oh that's an interesting idea let me think about that I am something that the universe is doing in the same way that the wave is something that the ocean is doing you can start thinking about it that's one way, you might come up with a few more related ideas or the mind might say well this may be true or may not be true or the mind might say that doesn't make sense to me or I have no idea what he is talking about now like with all statements that point to spiritual dimensions they are just pointers and they are to be used as pointers signposts so if you can get even just a little taste or a glimpse experientially of what this means and perhaps you can do it by visualizing just yourself as a wave or ripple on the surface of the universe the surface of the ocean to keep the analogy and allow yourself to drop into the core of your being in the space between two thoughts and realize your essential beings I am no particular content as such but you feel connected to something limitless timeless vast, deep you are not only connected with it you are an extension of it an expression of it inseparable from it you have to have the courage in order to experience that to realize that the courage to enter the realm of not knowing anything and of not being anybody in particular that's the most beautiful experience if you want to call it that it's deeper than experience the most beautiful realization the most liberating realization that you are not just this little person which is just like a brief momentary spark that appears and disappears oh that was you that was me so every human being a brief momentary spark of light is born and dies so to speak oh that was it yes and all over the planet new sparks are born consciousness beings right now at this very moment new sparks are rising right now and right now other sparks are extinguished and each little spark has a name attached to it that gives the impression that there's something permanent there well that spark originates in the central fire, the central consciousness each spark is a manifestation of that and returns there so the most liberating thing is for you to become aware that there's more to you than the person, that you are connected with that depths within yourself and that is the universe not just the sense perceived universe and galaxies and so on but more essentially something deeper that underlies the sense perceived universe but as I said you need to have the courage to step into the unknown become comfortable with not knowing anything don't worry, all the things that you know when you need them you can still use but to know who you are essentially you need to become comfortable with not knowing anything become comfortable with not knowing who you are conceptually become comfortable with being ignorant so to speak and then something that cannot be known emerges you can't know it because it's the source of all knowledge where all knowing and all knowledge originates as you cannot know it but it knows itself through you so the you know how a humming sound that something is like a refrigerator or some noise in the room is going on and on you no longer know it's there in the background but when it stops then you suddenly know oh oh it feels so good there

was this constant humming sound in the background I didn't even know it anymore I didn't know it and so for some people the first awakening is to become aware of the humming so to speak their mind, the constant chatter, the constant dialogues and monologues that make life so hard and so you become aware suddenly oh for many humans that's a moment of awakening what is my mind doing and then you begin to be able to differentiate between what is in this moment out there what is and your mental interpretation of what is if you're very unconscious the way in which you interpret the phenomena that surround you and that constantly change people, events, situations, places when you're very unconscious the way in which you mentally interpret and mentally react and mentally emotionally react to other people places, situations and so on are perceived as a single phenomenon you cannot differentiate between what is out there and how you see what is how you interpret it, what you call it the narrative that you spin around what is they are a single thing you experience as a single thing and so the way then in which a very unconscious person interprets the phenomena that happen around you continuously is determined by the conditioning of their mind the mental emotional conditioning so they don't experience almost anything as it is they experience it through the veil of their mental conditioning and a lot of that mental conditioning is verbal it is in many cases an important part of it is a narrative in your mind and so if you become aware of the narrative in your mind that's a great step forward, it's a great awakening and when you see that what you are, the way in which you are talking to yourself about something that's happening here and now and the mind says this shouldn't be happening, they should know better why can't they do better why do I always encounter situations like, why are people always so obnoxious, I just can't stand people anymore why is this person look how he pretends, he's pretending to be spiritual and just you can see he's completely unconscious what's this why did I even come here I'm stuck here in this room and is it even clean I could be in a much more comfortable, if I hadn't left home I could be in a much more comfortable place at home why did I do that, why do you always do things, it's completely pointless coming here, I mean what is this man even talking about and so it goes on and on and you don't, you cannot differentiate between what is and how your mind interprets what is it's crazy so the moment you can separate, you see here's the is-ness of things this is what is here I am and there's that person talking about whatever politics and you may find in yourself an urge to say something but it could happen here even here because it's unlikely that you left your mind outside the boundary of omega it came with you but that's a good thing because then you can become aware of it and so life suddenly becomes much more simple and you begin to practice here where you differentiate between the is-ness of things and your interpretation of it, this includes people too, every person behaves as they do according to their level of consciousness at this particular moment in many people their consciousness varies, sometimes they are really unconscious and at other times they are fairly present you might have noticed that could happen to you sometimes still, sometimes you're very present and then something is triggered, I got triggered, he triggered me, he always triggers me so you got triggered and then so what

happens when you get triggered, something takes you over it's like you become somebody else for a while and you might even say things that you later regret when you're a bit more conscious again, you say oh I said something terrible it's too late, you said it of course then forgiveness has to come in oh there's another problem you have to forgive yourself, no you don't have to forgive yourself, that's too complicated you just have to see that you neither you nor anybody else can manifest behavior or speech that is beyond their level of consciousness at that particular moment that's obvious so if you get annoyed with people or of course some things on a practical level can you can have changes on a practical level, you can say don't do this I don't, this behavior is not acceptable and that's a clear statement, it doesn't have to be reactive being comfortable with just being but remaining alert become aware that there are moments when you're not thinking and then thought happens again and then there's another moment of just spacious presence which could arise spontaneously or you could invite it into your life consciously bring more spacious presence into your life in daily life with a simple thing like for example occasionally looking up in the sky well I don't see the sky yet because there are trees out there but mostly usually there's some sky somewhere look up at the sky and for a moment be aware of whatever is there whether it's clouds or clear sky or completely overcast just be aware of the totality of the sky which is a vast spaciousness without calling it anything in your mind just looking at the sky during the day it's amazing that people go throughout many people go throughout the day without ever really being aware of the sky because they're so concerned with what's happening down here below so they're never aware of that spaciousness that surrounds them so just looking at the sky brings about a moment of spaciousness and an interruption in the flow or the stream of thinking identification with which constitutes the person the personal selfhood sense of self so sometimes that arises spontaneously in your daily life a moment of space a gap between thoughts and when you don't know you're not really aware of it, then you only sense it as a moment that feels good a moment where you feel some joy or a heightened sense of aliveness or some inner peace or even just a contentment with what is and usually that means a gap has arisen in the stream of thinking you may not know that and may only interpret it as, as I said peace, joy aliveness happiness a generic term that covers all of those and when you become conscious of it when it arises spontaneously then it can deepen and you can be in it for longer you can be in the timeless dimension for longer slight paradox I'm talking about it from the dimension of form where there's time looking at the times and then the paradoxical statement arises you can be in the timeless for longer I've told the story before some of you may know it when I lived in London and travelled on the underground or the tube or the subway every day there were a couple of stations where there was a more than usual more than usually wide gap between the train and the platform so when the train arrived at the platform the doors opened and the recorded announcement would say, mind the gap and repeat again and again mind the gap mind the gap well and of course some tourists who didn't know English well enough gap?

what's gap? where's the gap? they would fall into the gap but that could be a spiritual pointer be aware of the gap, the inner gap be aware of what is a gap?

a gap is a space between two things I don't think that's a dictionary definition of it but I would define it as the space between two things there's one thing there and there's one thing there in the middle there's nothing there's the gap no thing nothing so finding the gap inside you between two thoughts either being aware of it as it arises spontaneously in your life when you're looking at beauty or something new and unusual before you interpret it there's a moment of just spacious perception and there's the gap look at the sky so let's say you're working on your computer and then the phone rings you answer text messages come in and then you become aware okay the moment of spaciousness and then you look at the sky completely different state of consciousness immediately arises and give yourself half a minute or one minute to look at the sky half a minute is fine but it's not that long it brings about a gap when the stream of thinking subsides and this the most important thing you can do if you even want to call it doing because it frees you from being here only as the person and you become aware that there is another dimension to who you are which is the traditionally called the spiritual dimension spiritual dimension is not elsewhere it's a dimension within you where who you are as a person is transcended and if you don't find that transcendence in your daily life then there is no spiritual dimension in your daily life even if you talk about and quote spiritual books there is still no spiritual dimension in your daily life unless there is the gap and it becomes as familiar to be the space as it is to be the person in fact more familiar more satisfying you really feel it there you are yourself in that space of course there are other ways in which you can invite that gap that space into your life apart from looking at the sky anything natural you look at can be helpful and bring about the gap the tree but you have to look innocently with innocent perception not judging it not comparing it or referring to your knowledge or memory about it or associations mental associations none of that just looking like a child who hasn't learnt the names yet so you can either look at one thing and sense the spaciousness behind the perception the peace or you can look at the totality of whatever surrounds you whether it's in a room or you look out of a window or if you are outside just take in the totality of your surroundings no matter where you are you could be in a mansion or in a prison cell it works in the same way and then you become aware of yes there's all these perceptions but there's also a sense of spaciousness behind them peace and when you access that dimension whether you live in a mansion or a prison cell still it of course makes a difference in your life but it's no longer of absolute importance that's how I put it it is of relative importance before you have access to that dimension whatever happens in your life is of absolute importance it absorbs you completely it determines your happiness or unhappiness would I rather be in a mansion than in a prison cell yes of course I would it doesn't have to be a mansion it could be a lovely cabin in the woods but if I had to be in a prison cell I could still be in the space for it and look around and surrender to whatever is there so just looking around you is another way of if you don't name it of being the space rather than being the

person then after a while the person comes back and you start thinking again about your past and your future and your problems and what you have to deal with and people around you but imagine living all your life with nothing but that thinking about things you have to deal with the people around you, the situation and liking it and disliking it and reacting to it and your inner state depending on whatever happens to be happening around you whether that person close to you is nice or not nice terrible so at the mercy of whatever happens a little thing falls and you go you are upset and never really happy anywhere there is always something missing and then figuring out in your mind how you can become happy never getting there because you haven't found who you are beyond the person having moments of insight while you meditate informal meditation where suddenly perhaps you have a glimpse of just being the presence being the space that's wonderful but it needs to translate into everyday life otherwise you can only be free when you sit cross-legged on the floor and have your eyes closed and your hands in a particular position and then you open your eyes again and it's time to get up and immediately you are flooded with mental stuff stringing with me so you just meditated what you have to do now it has to so therefore I say it is more important if you have formal meditation it can be a wonderful help even more important it is to have spacious moments throughout the day so that you become liberated from your attachment to the person your complete identification with the person and then the depth within you is there and suddenly feel, sense that you are deeper than you thought and ever could think because in that spacious presence where you are the unconditioned consciousness that is not confined to this body that is where you are connected with the one universal consciousness and it merges with the one universal consciousness so when you look at a statue of the Buddha this is not a this is not the statue of a person that once lived nobody knows what the Buddha looked like a statue of the Buddha represents a state of consciousness and it is a state of consciousness of being the presence transcending the person and that's why the good statues of the Buddha have a hint of a smile so because that is where true peace is found alive peace and so the Buddha goes like freedom from the person

[Speaker 2] (4:34:48 - 4:37:10)

welcome to our live meditation which today apparently is not live due to technical difficulties one minute before we were due to start everything crashed nobody knows why but I do know that sometimes it's happened quite a few times before the energy of presence does affect electrical systems so it's still the present moment so I'm inviting you to become aware of the present moment which you may know has two levels to it the external level or dimension of the present moment so it's quite easy your attention moves into sense perceptions visual, auditory so this is what you're doing here looking at the screen being peripherally aware of your surroundings

[Speaker 1] (4:37:10 - 4:37:30)

and the deeper dimension of awareness of the present moment is to be aware of yourself as the presence

[Speaker 2] (4:37:31 - 4:37:42)

that's really the present moment consciousness to sense your own presence

[Speaker 1] (4:37:42 - 4:37:59)

when I talk about it there's a duality because language creates the duality I say sense your presence as if that which is sensing the presence and the presence were two things but it's not

[Speaker 2] (4:38:01 - 4:40:59)

it's a single thing or rather no thing it's the arising of self awareness maybe a better way of putting it and as that happens you feel rooted in something very deep and vast and then whatever happens externally by saying external I include even your thought processes and emotions they're still on the periphery and of course whatever happens outside of them is perceived as peripheral when you're really rooted in being there is a calmness and a depth there is at the center words are not quite right but from there whatever happens around you and even whatever happens in your mind or your emotional field is the surface phenomenon and you can enjoy it and participate in it yet at the same time be rooted in something that isn't touched by the whatever is happening on the surface one could say on the surface of being because you are in touch with or to put more accurately you know yourself as the being itself or being itself and that is what all ancient and true spiritual teaching is only about that, there is nothing else that's what every teaching

[Speaker 1] (4:40:59 - 4:41:12)

points to, that's the pearl of great prize that Jesus talks about, that's the end of suffering that Buddha talks about because unless you know yourself as the presence

[Speaker 2] (4:41:16 - 4:41:24)

you are at the mercy of all surface phenomena whatever happens

[Speaker 1] (4:41:26 - 4:42:30)

has enormous power over you your thoughts, you are controlled by your thoughts you are at the mercy of your emotions you are at the mercy of events something good happens, you go wow and a few hours later, a day later and you are continuously in fear because you know you are at the mercy of very unstable fluctuations continuously and that's why ancient spiritual teaching talk about that you need Christian teaching, you need to be saved saved from what? You need to be liberated some teachings call it

liberated you need to come to the end of delusion so what are you saved from, liberated from? Liberated from all surface phenomena

[Speaker 2] (4:42:37 - 4:43:44)

including your thoughts and emotions so that's what becoming aware of the now really is yes, you become aware of what's going on on the surface of being but primarily you are aware of being itself as the underlying presence the I I am you become aware of your I am-ness the essence of your sense of identity which gets mixed up

[Speaker 1] (4:43:44 - 4:43:55)

with mental, emotional stuff and you think you are your memories no, you are that which enables the memory to be

[Speaker 2] (4:44:00 - 4:44:18)

consciousness awareness there's the story of

[Speaker 1] (4:44:23 - 4:45:46)

it's a Zen story so all Zen stories are a little strange they are meant to be strange because they always point to something that you need to can only understand by experiencing it so the story goes there are two young monks in a Zen monastery and they're walking outside and there's a little hill just near the monastery and they see on the hill the master of the monastery is standing there and one monk says to the other I wonder what he's doing on that hill and the other monk says I think he's looking for a place to plant another tree because he likes planting trees I think that's what he's doing and his friend says no, I think he's looking to see he's probably expecting somebody and he's wanting to see if they are approaching in the distance and then they say let's go and ask him and see what he's doing there so they walk up the hill come up to the master and say Master, what are you doing here? and the master says

[Speaker 2] (4:45:48 - 4:46:06)

I'm standing here on the hill end of story meaning

[Speaker 1] (4:46:11 - 4:46:33)

in the usual state of consciousness or unconsciousness the present moment is always in the service of something else it's used as a stepping stone towards the next moment you want to get to always reaching out to the next moment because all you know is surface phenomena

[Speaker 2] (4:46:37 - 4:46:39)

oh by the way, I'm just told

[Speaker 1] (4:46:39 - 4:47:33)

that we are now live so that's fine let's carry on the all you know is surface phenomena in the usual state of consciousness or unconsciousness and so you always look to the next thing to arise, the next thought the next emotion, the next event and the now is continuously in the service of some imagined next moment so when the monks go up to the master on the hill and say what are you doing here? they expect the master to say I'm here in order to do this, that or that but he's not, when the master says I'm standing here on the hill what that points to is that the master

[Speaker 2] (4:47:33 - 4:47:39)

is rooted in being primarily

[Speaker 1] (4:47:39 - 4:47:54)

that is his state of consciousness the present moment is not reduced to a means to an end, he is in the depth of being, which is the now the present moment his consciousness is rooted in that, his consciousness

[Speaker 2] (4:47:54 - 4:47:56)

is that

[Speaker 1] (4:47:58 - 4:48:59)

and so when the master says I'm standing on this hill period, so the monks are amazed, they don't probably still didn't get it because the implied question is, aren't you always here for something else?

well, it does not exclude the possibility that the master may also be on that hill in order to look for a place to plant a tree or in order to look for, see if someone is arriving as the monks have suggested but the master is primarily rooted in being whatever else he may be doing is secondary and peripheral and that's why the master didn't say I'm here to look for a place to plant a tree or to see who's going to arrive no primarily, I'm here now, standing on this hill, or in your case

[Speaker 2] (4:48:59 - 4:50:00)

or in my case I am here now sitting where I am and I am aware of myself as the presence therefore I'm rooted in being therefore I'm not reducing this moment to a means to an end I'm fully in this moment then I can still take action without losing myself in whatever I'm doing and then I go

[Speaker 1] (4:50:05 - 4:50:37)

you can see how you go completely out of yourself and then you go, what's the next thing that's going to upset me or what's the next thing that's going to satisfy me and of course what's the next thought that's going to come into my head and going to take possession of me to such an extent that I become the thought, to such an extent that creates an emotion

[Speaker 2] (4:50:41 - 4:52:35)

reflecting thought so you emanate a completely different energy when you're rooted in being there's a calmness, a peace also a power that comes and emanates through you and all your doings will be will become more intelligent because you're in touch with the source of all intelligence all intelligence itself without being rooted in yourself being rooted in being most of your doing creates more problems more karma, more suffering and none of it is satisfying not for long

[Speaker 1] (4:53:04 - 4:53:27)

we could also say that when you're rooted in being then there's a stillness in you even while you're thinking thinking happens or there may be periods when you're not thinking which is wonderful, the space opens up and you're just present but there are times when you need to think

[Speaker 2] (4:53:29 - 4:53:45)

and even when you're thinking there's a a sense of presence behind your thinking in the same way that now that you are listening

[Speaker 1] (4:53:45 - 4:54:00)

but there's a sense of presence behind the listening without which there could be no listening and I am speaking which means the mind is active

[Speaker 2] (4:54:00 - 4:56:45)

but there is a stillness continuously behind it, so to speak and that stillness or that presence moves into the mind and then the mind is at the service of that which is beyond the mind rather than the mind serving itself self serving mind which is what the ego is, the false sense of self that distorts everything where you interpret the world other people distorted by a misperception a fundamental error underlying all your mind activity and that fundamental error also creating dysfunctional action action that creates more suffering for yourself and others even if the intention is good and may sound reasonable and then the old saying implies the road to hell is paved with good intentions

[Speaker 1] (4:57:14 - 5:16:02)

Now in a very strange and mysterious way how a situation develops is connected to the state of consciousness with which you meet the situation this is very mysterious hard to understand but you can experience it when you begin to practice or maybe already doing it you're faced with a situation are you facing it in presence not the reactive person which means you are you can sense this deeper presence that is within you as you look at this situation and you are there not just as a person but you are there more importantly as the light of consciousness and the light of consciousness is the awareness that looks at the situation and then if action is necessary you will know right action will happen which will rise out of this aware presence it might use your mind sometimes actually involves saying something but the saying will not be egoic egoically reactive it arises from the deeper level and you will say the right thing that is helpful in that situation you will not say something that it will inflame the situation create more suffering for yourself and others and therefore produce in eastern terms would say produce more karma you produce more and more karma and so how a situation evolves in your how your reality evolves and even what happens in a difficult situation is connected to the state of consciousness with which you meet that situation a very unconscious state will amplify the tribulation the trouble the problem create more chaos create more suffering for yourself and others and will be completely devoid of wisdom really active because why because you are possessed by energy formations sometimes they are collective thought forms that have taken possession of you and in this easy especially these days when people are online a lot on the internet it's very easy to become very quickly contaminated with not the physical virus but a mental virus that you can you take in and suddenly a certain collective thought form has taken possession of your mind and there it is and you don't know it you identify with it comes part of your ego and you think that's you and then you start fighting and you think it's a good cause but you're beginning to fight and you get very angry and very upset and get it gets it's awful and you don't know that the enemy lives between your two ears ultimately not out there and you don't know that there's not enough awareness not enough light of consciousness to be aware of that and that's that is ultimately that is the greatest challenge for us humans now the greatest challenge is not external the external is actually helpful because it's there as an awakener it awakens you it's here every challenge is meant to we come back to what we talked about earlier you're not here to be comfortable when you are it's fine but it's the ultimate aim of your life is not to have a wonderful comfortable existence to be comfortable to live in your comfort zone yes there is a comfort zone but it's not not external deep within when you are aware when you are present you have access the transcendent dimension of consciousness which is the transcendent dimension not only not of your consciousness but the transcendent dimension even of the universe you have access that within yourself and there you have in that transcendent dimension one could say you are in a comfort zone but that is one that is beyond the polarities of good and bad and you can in other words you can be at peace even when the external situation is turbulent and very challenging and when you realize that that is just incredible awakening when you realize you can be internally at

peace even in the face of challenges and not only even in the face of challenges the challenges forced you to go deeper because somehow you know that if you don't go deeper it's going to be very you're going to be really unhappy if you don't go deeper you're going to suffer more and more and nothing external will ever free you from that and so challenges are here in order to bring more consciousness because it's only the light that needs to grow that comes into this world the light of consciousness and that's the evolutionary process of the planet and the universe as a whole is that the light of consciousness comes more fully into this dimension it's the emanation from source and it emanates into this so the universe is engaged in a process of awakening or becoming more conscious and every life form is gradually becoming more conscious you can see how life evolved on the planet here at first they were just the simplest life forms and then gradually over hundreds of thousands and millions of years the growth of complexity to more complex life forms complex means a bit more consciousness more consciousness manifesting as more complex life forms and then there were several devastating disasters if they're called extinctions extinction events on the planet five I believe four, five devastating geologists have found that to examine that for devastating in some cases 80% of all life got exterminated in mass extinction for various reasons they assume planet was hit by a huge comet and other things happened to cause mass extinctions and then after millions of years new life forms even more complex developed after the mass extinction and then another one came millions and millions of years later there is something that is operative in the unseen what we see is only the surface reality there is a vast intelligence operating underneath the world of phenomena this vast intelligence is consciousness about the universal consciousness and that's the ultimate reality and this universal consciousness is the universe is in the process of manifesting more and more consciousness so it's being still being created it's not finished God is still creating this world and you are an essential part of this creative process you are not separate from the awakening you are an expression of the awakening universe so God is bringing more consciousness emanating this consciousness into this dimension in our case it's through you other life forms too but it's the human here is very important there's been conscious evolution for millions and millions of years sorry there's been evolution of consciousness for millions and millions of years but now for the first time here on our planet well maybe for the first time we don't know that much about human history only a few thousand years on this planet there's not just the evolution of consciousness there is also conscious evolution of consciousness and that happens through the human and our talking here being here together is an expression of that conscious evolution of the universe suddenly the evolution is not just the evolution of consciousness that's been going on for millions of years we've reached a stage where suddenly the evolution of consciousness becomes conscious evolution of consciousness so we are the universe through you through me the universe is realizing its own journey its own purpose its own essence ultimately the universe is becoming more this this is a transitional stage that we are at right now this is why it's so difficult because any transitional stage is difficult from one mode of being to another mode of being and the

other this new mode of being is conscious participation in the creative process of the universe through the human form conscious participation in creation and that happens when you face a situation an external situation and bring conscious presence to it rather than reactivity you bring conscious presence you are no longer at the mercy of externals the external has the purpose of driving you to that deeper place of presence that presence because if you don't go there you suffer a lot and things get worse and then you meet a situation consciously and then it's no longer the same situation the way what happens after that the external world and your consciousness are a single phenomenon so what happens in the external world depends on your state of what happens let's say the next thing that's going to happen to a large extent depends on your state of consciousness at this moment and how a situation evolves that might be perceived as a difficult situation how it evolves from now on depends on the state of consciousness with which you meet or face that situation and deal with that situation and then you will find suddenly it changes and this is a very mysterious thing but the important thing is to realize you are not at the mercy of externals and it is of vital importance so that you become a participant in this conscious participant in the creative process of the universe is you begin to change external reality sometimes yes by taking action but primarily by being present so that your action arises out of presence which then becomes wise action and empowered action I never tell people specifically what to do because that's not my job how do I what do I do to change all the bad things that I see in the world well I'm not a my job is to address the causal realm my job is to address what I perceive as the realm of cause the world is the realm of effect when you address the realm of course then you can deal with the realm of effect the realm of effect will change as the causal which is consciousness is consciousness changes the world changes so what we need is more people awakening to who they are the light of the world and then we will find that reality changes as a reflection of the collective consciousness and I won't make any predictions except right now it seems fairly certain that we are moving into a time period of turbulence on the collective level and that's a good thing it's meant to happen it's here to awaken us although it could also make us more unconscious and it's quite possible that it will awake a certain segment of the population it will make another segment of the population unconscious that is not an impossible scenario and this other segment of the population just needs more time that's fine they just need more time this is quite possible I don't want to go too far into this or speculate any further but it will be much easier for those who awaken whatever the external circumstances may be it will be much easier to be to deal with that to some extent even be protected up to a point although ultimately what happens to the body doesn't really matter that much death will come sooner or later anyway we don't need to speculate as to the totality of humanity and so on yes I can see right now certainly we are moving into turbulence certainly some people are becoming more conscious and some are becoming more unconscious this is what I have observed in the world and my job and your job is to help humans become more conscious so that they can take right action and you if action is necessary or possible and you it's your primary responsibility is to yourself first and then you will

affect others around you directly and indirectly even on others you may never be in contact with and I don't mean necessarily through technology by sending out messages but all humans are connected underneath the surface of things there is one human consciousness so any change in your consciousness is a change in human consciousness and so that's our purpose so we do not need to fear what's happening but just to realize that it actually is as it should be if seen from a larger higher perspective of human evolution the present moment is as it is and it could not be otherwise and this situation is what humans need for their further evolution they don't need their comfort zone right now unless it's the inner, the deeper transcendent dimension that I pointed out earlier so this is the message one could go on talking about this but the essence of it is this realization that

[Speaker 2] (5:16:05 - 5:16:14)

welcome whatever life brings to you

[Speaker 1] (5:16:15 - 5:17:08)

in the moment even if it is difficult don't complain because the moment you complain about what is you are in an antagonistic relationship with life and if you are in an antagonistic relationship with life you will experience life as antagonistic life reflects back to you ultimately your state of consciousness that is not an easy lesson to learn for some people and some people are even angry when they hear that but that's fine eventually everybody will realize that so that's our message I wish you well in your journey

[Speaker 2] (5:17:10 - 5:17:11)

towards

[Speaker 1] (5:17:13 - 5:17:37)

further awakening of consciousness and the realizing it's a journey without distance and it's ultimately a journey into yourself and the realization that who you are in your essence is consciousness

[Speaker 2] (5:17:37 - 5:17:39)

is the light of the

[Speaker 1] (5:17:39 - 5:29:16)

world just checking if everybody is present yes especially important as you begin to move around again leaving here many of you one little thing if you remember to live this little thing that would already significantly change your state of consciousness and that little thing to remember not as a memory as a concept that you remember but to

remember to apply every moment is or concerns the value that you attribute to the present moment whatever may be happening in the present moment and the usual mistake or dysfunctional way of living unconscious way is as I've mentioned before is devaluing the present moment and overvaluing the next moment that's so unconscious that most people have no idea that that's how they live because everybody lives like that and everybody has been conditioned to live like that but that is a significant factor in unskillful living unconscious living and it strengthens the ego enormously ego lives always with reference to past and future for example I come here I emerge from behind the curtain and then I walk to the chair walking to the chair has as much value as arriving at the chair so by giving your complete attention to every step you actually honor this moment fully instead of unconsciously devaluing it because you believe you need to arrive somewhere else which is promises some measure of fulfillment no matter how small or sometimes some big fulfillment but no matter how small so if I walked in here in that dysfunctional and unconscious way the steps that I'm taking towards this chair would be devalued in my mind as being less significant than arriving at this chair or starting to speak and the arriving is always very short you arrive and then it's over so if you begin to travel again from here to home or from here to somewhere else if you can remember that the present moment is all you ever have and carrying your suitcase from here, well people don't carry they've got wheels these days so wheeling your suitcase from here to there or wherever it is to the bus, to the car to the airport to the train station is not those all those moments are not inferior to any next moment because then what and then you arrive at the train and then you look for something else now I need to get mentally I'm always somewhere else instead of giving fullest attention to this because this is the most valuable moment why? because it's the only one, the present moment so to live as if the next moment were more significant more important is a very unconscious way to live and the strange thing is you never really ultimately arrive anywhere because the arriving is never enough the arriving is immediately replaced by some new mental projection some next moment even on a big scale often people experience that, some huge success that they've been striving for for years and finally it comes and then they sit there in their big house often it goes with success but or whatever, their private jet and it feels good for a while especially if you invite other people who don't have private jets then it feels even better because it enhances your fictitious sense of self but after a while even that wears off so you have arrived you've made it, that's the English expression, I made it made what? well in case you don't know that English expression it means I have succeeded in my endeavors I made it idiomatic expression strange one so the world is full of people who want to make it and when they make it there's a brief moment of satisfaction, that's the arriving then they go okay, now what?

the same dissatisfaction arises again and then you have to the making it is not enough, you have to make more so small scale and large scale just this little thing give your fullest attention to this moment because it's not true that the next moment is more

significant because it never comes so it's a way of living absorbed in thought, if you always live for the future you're absorbed in thought because future is a thought it's never experienced as an actuality so essential part of being lost in your mind is to be lost in the future because to be lost in the future always looking to the next thing is to be lost in your mind because that's where the future is, not here and now this does not mean you will no longer make any plans it doesn't mean that on a practical level you can plan and say okay at such and such a time I need to be there whatever you use for your planning, probably a device and then if you're old generation like me you go like I need to be there and you tap in where you need to be in your diary or if you are with younger generation your fingers move in a different way they go like that or the old ones they go and still get it wrong every third one is wrong so there is a way of being totally present in the planning for the future so this is actually you're very focused in planning the next your next destination what time do I arrive there what do I need to do, when do I need to be ready and you can write it down and you're fully present in that and once you've done that your attention is again here and now, it was even here and now when you were planning it because you were not mentally devaluing this moment of planning and the strange thing is you begin to enjoy now all the small things in life that before you had overlooked or neglected because the mind projects the bigger thing and even on a small scale it's the bigger thing like I need to pack my suitcase and I need to get the bus that is on a very small scale, the next big thing that I need to get to in the meantime you devalue the moment between now and getting the bus or the train so that's and then once you're on the bus you think okay now I need to be then you get off the bus and then you know where do I need to go, do I need to go now and then you arrive there but of course that's only a very temporary relief because now you need to go

[Speaker 4] (5:29:16 - 5:29:17)

somewhere else

[Speaker 1] (5:29:21 - 5:29:30)

and when you're sitting on the plane or wherever or in the car you mentally project yourself to tomorrow morning

[Speaker 5] (5:29:37 - 5:29:38)

and

[Speaker 1] (5:29:38 - 5:37:40)

there's always a more important moment and it's in the future now what you neglect then and what you continuously overlook is all the small things that actually make up the vast percentage of your life is all the little things that before are relegated to the periphery of your life what are those little things well whatever, for example things that

you handle in your life things that you pick up and put there and objects around you the world around you, walking breathing, looking at the sky looking at a tree seeing, breathing in the air, looking at another human being sensing their deeper aliveness all the little things that constitute life even if you are a so called VIP in the eyes of the world which is pretty meaningless, it's just a narrative and you go from one significant thing to another but all the steps that you take even if you get picked up in a limo as I sometimes do when I go for a talk, the organiser sends a limo well a big car with plenty of room in the back, that's a limo and you can stretch your legs so then it's just very little things you walk to the car and you breathe and then you get in and you sit okay well it's just you're sitting somewhere and breathing and looking you're looking out of the window and then you arrive at a venue and you take a few steps into a car and you sit again and then you walk onto the stage it's all little things and even if you're the Pope or the president of a huge corporation or the president of a country it's still the same life consists of small things all the things that look at just your relationship with objects, this is usually overlooked because every object is treated as a means to an end but if you live in a way that is more present then the objects may still be a means to an end but they are also giving just short attention just picking up a glass there is pleasure in enjoyment in even just looking at a glass and the water and drinking and to realize that, most people realize that for the first time, if ever when they take certain types of drug like acid because it amplifies your sense perception and it shuts off your thinking mind and then for the first time you pick up a glass of water and you go oh wow so amazing so amazing I can't believe it and it is and then you drink and the taste is so incredible it is water, it is amazing it is liquid, alive it is alive, it is liquid no I haven't taken acid before coming here and it is just giving it your fullest attention without interference of thinking just awareness and all this the background then to that state of inner peace or contentment is all the aliveness of everything around you when you you pick up something put it in your suitcase pick up something else unfold it it is a nice thing to do taking a fruit maybe peeling it or biting into it the present moment in its richness that is usually overlooked because you are looking for something more significant but even the most significant thing, let's say you got the Nobel Prize can come to Oslo I think there is one Nobel Prize that people come to Norway for that is peace and then you stand on the balcony of that hotel that overlooks the square where the parliament is I think apparently that is where they go and there you are I have made it you are just standing on a balcony looking and breathing laughing unless you live through and for a narrative in your mind that you completely believe in and that becomes a conceptual sense of identity I am such and such a person who has achieved this and that and this is all the story and that is me a big narrative that gives you your sense of identity thought movement and then you feel bigger while you stand on this balcony and then you feel deflated when you step off the balcony or let's say you are a pop star what is the word that you a rock star that millions of people say wow wouldn't it be great especially youngsters wouldn't it be great to be a rock star you can do anything for a million people and of course they experience this in a magnified way they are on stage and energy

moves through them and then they walk off stage and they are regarded as gods by the audience let me only touch you I hope nobody does that to me

[Speaker 5] (5:37:40 - 5:37:41)

laughing

[Speaker 1] (5:37:46 - 5:38:46)

may I just touch you they say to the rock star the rock star then having in most cases not that much awareness they feel they are more and more like a god because they believe in the narrative that all these unconscious people have mentally manufactured for them and then they begin to believe in it and then there comes a huge conflict or discrepancy when they go off the stage and they sit in the green room or somewhere where am I now and then they have to take drugs because what happens there is a sense of a lack returns much more strongly than ever before a sense of lack and insufficiency so I need another fix a drug or I mean to smash up my hotel suite

[Speaker 5] (5:38:47 - 5:38:47)

laughing

[Speaker 1] (5:38:48 - 5:47:44)

that's what they do rock stars apparently laughing and that enhances their sense of self a little bit more so people live for many people live for something that's going to happen in the future and of course you may succeed in your endeavors this is a nice thing but it's not going to give you long lasting and ultimate fulfillment or tell you who you actually are it's not it's fine to achieve things especially if they are beneficial but for humanity and the totality of the planet it's lovely to have that but even that doesn't break up your identity when the Buddha was teaching 2500 years ago he told people to seek out a quiet place in the forest and meditate there that was an essential part of his teaching so nature was an essential part of his teaching I just like to share with you how I experience nature and the state of consciousness that's behind it and we start right now with something that I don't know whether the microphones can pick it up we listen to the stillness that is here now whether a microphone can pick up stillness I don't know we will see for me the stillness is not 100% because at the moment I have a little bit of a ringing in my right ear but the stillness is still picked up with my left ear and it's very deep and in order to listen to the stillness in nature a certain alertness is required so your senses have to go in acute listening and you can combine that with looking around so you are listening and you are watching what's around you the secret of being fully in nature and experiencing the sacredness of nature is to refrain as much as possible from thinking while you are in nature and just be the awareness behind all the sense perceptions the alert presence because that's the western mind especially tells you you can do

something to remedy the situation you must be able to do something there comes a point when further doing is not possible and sometimes it inflicts more pain because it wants to do something because it doesn't know anything else another question I used to be very angry and resentful towards my parents, awareness of their unconsciousness removed these feelings yet in their presence I turn to a bitter person am I in denial this question beautifully illustrates the two dimensions one could say to acceptance or perhaps the two steps to acceptance the first step is an understanding you understand that your parents do what they do did what they did because of their unconsciousness so you can understand how unconsciousness controls people's thinking and behavior so you've understood that and that's good and because you understood that you no longer feel angry and resentful towards your parents it removed those feelings except when you visit them and that brings us to step two it's very good to understand and then become to some extent free but that's not complete freedom yet there also needs to be the presence in you and it's only that that provides the deeper dimension of acceptance so and when you're not with them it's enough to understand them but the moment you stay with them all the past comes back people with whom you share a lot of past very easy to be drawn back into past reactions and it's only by being absolutely alert and present that you can then become free even while you're with them so understanding often operates when you're not immediately challenged by this whatever situation it was that caused you the upset first you understand that it's unconsciousness in them but when you're actually confronted with them or any other situation then it's vital you realize understanding is helpful but not quite enough yet there also needs to be the presence the alert presence while you're with them and especially there you need to be that's the challenge and that's your spiritual practice to become especially alert in that situation

[Speaker 4] (5:47:45 - 5:47:56)

my second question is from my husband who's not here tonight and he was recently diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and his question to you is how can he heal this

[Speaker 1] (5:48:03 - 5:51:49)

well let's start with the second one there's something more important whether or not it can be healed I don't know there is something more important than the healing of that physical condition or any physical condition and that which is more important than the healing which I'm going to just briefly talk about now is also that which in some cases brings about the healing but that's not the main thing that which is more important than the healing is to use the condition in this case it's a deterioration of the physical form which comes slowly over years as far as I understand to use that to push you into intense presence practice that's all you can do so allow it to push you into that which changes the entire vibrational frequency of the physical body when you truly live in presence which affects every cell of the body the entire frequency of the physical form

changes if you do intense body awareness you can feel that for yourself it's an enormously enlivening energy field and that also that practice also burns up the ego so the opportunity there is you have an enormous motivation to embrace the state of consciousness that we call presence that's the most vital thing and that may bring about healing or if it does not bring about healing it may delay considerably the onset or the process of deterioration that comes with that disease I mentioned in the New Earth that when I was a graduate student every day in the cafeteria I would observe the physicist Stephen Hawkins who was eating lunch there every day while being fed lunch he had a similar condition it wasn't called Parkinson's in England they call it a motor neuron disease or do they call it that here but anyway that's his condition at that time he wasn't world famous he was just well known in the university and everybody said and it was common knowledge that he had been given I think it was 3 or 4 years maximum 5 years to live and that was when 30 years ago or more so he had this deterioration, all the doctors said just a few more years that's all you have 30 years later he's still alive yes he's incapacitated but his mind is not and he has come as I mentioned in the New Earth he may not be I don't believe he is spiritually awake but he has entered a state of considerable surrender to his condition there's nothing in him that has created negativity as a reaction to his physical condition that's very rare

[Speaker 4] (5:51:49 - 5:51:50)

my sister

[Speaker 1] (5:51:50 - 5:51:52)

your sister?

[Speaker 4] (5:51:53 - 5:52:13)

yes she had cancer breast cancer a really bad kind and she got complications and infections and with the chemo and she was wonderful and happy and not showing and I saw her suffering so much

[Speaker 1] (5:52:14 - 5:52:15)

yes

[Speaker 4] (5:52:15 - 5:53:00)

and sometimes she couldn't talk it was so painful what she was going through and what they were doing to her trying to save her life a couple of times yes I wanted to run away I wouldn't because I hadn't been there for her but I was reading your books and trying to be present I know that I couldn't change the situation I could be there for her that's the only way I could help her but I couldn't take the pain away and the fright, she was frightened I couldn't take her fear away and I wanted to I wanted to run or think about

the future so I did not want to stay present it was hard to stay present yes

[Speaker 1] (5:53:19 - 5:59:33)

sometimes acceptance means acceptance of the unacceptable and this is an example where what is happening seems to be impossible to accept but it is happening and of course there are millions in the world who go through similar pain doesn't make it any easier but it is a fact and many others go through other kinds of extreme suffering people who go through it and people who are around them who want to help like yourself, you want to take away their suffering you don't want them to suffer and you can't help so the important the only way is really to find a place within you where you touch something that is deeper than anything that has formed the very life within you if you can close your eyes and find that not necessarily now but in a painful situation to sense to go deep enough so that you sense the life that you are because the life that you are beyond form the very consciousness that you are that pervades the entire body and goes far beyond is also the life that she is so if you sit the same applies to a dying person it's another thing that sometimes can be very painful especially if death seems to come too soon even if it's an old person who is dying it can be painful but if it's a younger person who one would say is not meant to die but you sit with a dying person this can take for the dying person of course it's a different experience the dying person if there's been any even the slightest understanding of acceptance, surrender, stillness when they were in their lifetime the slightest and they will then be able to access that and go very deep sometimes it's more difficult for the person around them than for the person who is dying or who is very ill you need to take your attention deeper let's say you sit with your sister or with any dying person or very sick person and you sit there the mind says I should say something, I should help but of course there's nothing you can do but you can be you can go deeper into being and so really it's a becoming still let's say you just sit next to her bed or hold her hand let go of the idea of doing when my mother was falling ill and her body was failing as she was getting older she kept asking me what do I do and right now there's nothing to do that was the old conditioning in her mind because that's the western mind especially tells you you can do something to change the situation you can do something to remedy the situation they must be able to do something and of course all the the whole in hospitals it's all to do with doing but there comes a point when further doing is not possible but the western mind doesn't understand that, it continues wants to do and sometimes it inflicts more pain because it wants to do something why does it want to do something when whatever you do can only be causing more pain because it doesn't know anything else the western mind is not confined to the west but I call it the western mind even the east is now adopting the western mind be is not recognized in the west as anything that even exists or is valuable but you have to go into being and if you have done it before before the situation became so difficult that will be a help if you've never heard of it even then it might be possible so but anybody who's here and of course we will all face either being with someone close to us who is dying

and we will all face of course sooner or later the moment our approaching death and if by then by the time you sit with someone close to you it dies or death comes approaching if by then you haven't gone into being haven't even touched it it may be hard to go that deeply within then but if you've even touched it during your life as you all have and many of you more than touched it then that will be any kind of extreme suffering of that kind either happening close to you or to you will bring about an enormous deepening it forces you to go deeper you have to become deep in a situation like that if you are not deep you suffer enormously but even if you are deep you still suffer you suffer on the surface you cry you feel sadness and pain but underneath the suffering you can suddenly sense a stillness a vastness in yourself so to speak

[Speaker 3] (5:59:34 - 5:59:38)

as the now becomes more and more my experience

[Speaker 1] (5:59:38 - 6:27:24)

I started to question why be in a relationship with another and I guess I want to know a little bit more about how things shift in what we're seeking in a relationship and again through observing yourself in relationships you can actually find the answers to your question or the answer to your question nevertheless I will continue to speak it's to ask to find try to find some mental conclusion about the function of relationships when you are present or awakened actually isn't that helpful although many people actually wanted to know the answer to your question that's why you're here but you can observe yourself how relationships operate in your life or how new relationships if they come into your life how they differ from the old relationships when you were not present you may notice that when you're not present you seek something from the other person it may be a very subtle thing or it may be not so subtle but when you're not yet connected to the source within yourself which is the transcendent dimension which is the stillness which is consciousness when you don't know yourself as the light of consciousness as a living realization which is not difficult it's right here but when that gets obscured you seek because that's the only source of true satisfaction and peace and aliveness and then but if that is blocked you're unaware of it then you seek it through something else and often it's through another human being so you seek something that the other human being cannot really give you nor any other situation can give you because you may seek it through some imagined situation I have to work out the right structure for my life good income so that I don't have to worry anymore nice place to live lovely relationship on top of it and be able to travel wouldn't that be great and even that would not be would not provide permanent satisfaction, it would provide short-lived satisfaction always followed by dissatisfaction so you would be seeking something in the other human some kind of completion make me complete make me at home in the now help me find myself through you we'll have a deal I make you feel complete and you make me feel complete it sounds good when you say it like that but when you actually begin to live it it doesn't

work not for long so you see in the old way of seeking relationships there's the seeking something through the relationship it could be just physical pleasure that is often the case and then of course comes the psychological pleasure through the relationship some kind of psychological completion through the other and as long as there's the seeking for completion through the other the relationship is doomed ultimately and as presence arises the mind may still ask well would I still need a relationship or want a relationship you don't need to find some kind of answer, abstract answer or arrive at some kind of conclusion about relationships and then live the rest of your life on the basis of that mentally arrived at conclusion about relationships the mind loves that it says I need to sort out in my mind what relationship is all about and whether it's still needed when I'm present and once I have the answer to that I can use that for the rest of my life and build my life on that of course you would be back in mind activity and that kind of conclusion is just a limitation you would impose on yourself and then even more challenging meeting humans with whom you share a lot of past the more past you share with them the more the old behavior patterns will want to come back in you know that with meeting your parents your wife your husband after many years of marriage patterns get very established of who you think he is, who he thinks you are and the way in which you interact or more difficult meeting your ex-husband or your ex-wife and be present then and there and be in the body so you're meeting human beings without past not that you cannot remember certain things they did but not to bring the past as an active operating principle into the interaction meeting everyone without past just in this moment through the power of this moment which is the power of presence which is who you are and not meeting the other person as a walking personal history and that is an enormously liberating thing to do when you can meet even your mother and father with whom quite a few people some people have a wonderful relationship with their mother and father which is beautiful some grew up in a relatively conscious family and many in this world did not grow up in a conscious, their father and mother were manifesting varying degrees of unconsciousness and resentment built up over the years between adult children and parents often this grievances, resentments complaints he doesn't understand me I get criticized all the time he doesn't even want to understand me my father, my mother and the same reactions happen every time you visit them and then you have a fight and then you leave and next time it happens again and then one day you meet them you arrive at the doorstep and you look at them and feel the inner body at the same time and then you come in and you sit down and you still, you look at them still feeling the inner body because now it's vital that you're anchored now it's vital that you're anchored in the now and then you get the old thing your father says, are you still involved in that spiritual airy fairy nonsense still haven't got a job have you I told you years ago you should be doing this and that then you have to be very present and just sit there and simply say well yes I'm still doing that yes but then he if it's your father or she if it's your mother after a while will feel a slight disorientation because you are not feeding the old patterns anymore you're not reacting and his or her ego will feel there's something missing here and so it will be hard for them to keep up that playing out that

script if the other one isn't playing anymore isn't reacting anymore simply stating this is how it is and you don't even expect anything anymore because expectations that he or she should behave in a particular way to make me happy is to do with being identified with certain thoughts that's how things should be he should understand me so that I can be happy the whole thing is an illusionary edifice you won't be happy even when he understands he won't make any real difference to you now he understands me so now what what has changed nothing he doesn't understand me so the same nothing so you become free of that which you thought you needed when you were identified with thought in presence you don't really need anything psychologically speaking you don't need psychological this or that and there you are and then you can see the patterns in your mother or father crumbling and for the first time perhaps he or she will ask you a genuine question what are you really into what is that this has happened people have told me these miracles happen and if they don't that's fine too it doesn't really matter so there comes with presence comes an acceptance a compassionate acceptance of what is which very often means what is is the human being in front of you a compassionate giving them space to be because presence is you have found your inner space or spaciousness formless consciousness peace so in English we don't have a word that applies to both men and women I don't know if in Swedish in German you have the word mensch which means could mean it's man and woman but the English language doesn't have that so you have to say human being human being and that's great, I like that because I realize that that points to the two dimensions that constitute your reality you are a human undoubtedly which means you have a past you have mental emotional conditioning that makes up the person the ego, the personality you have a life situation you are a human and you have your desires as a human you have your goals and so on all the things that you experience as a human right, okay but what about being the being dimension is overlooked by most humans they are lost in their human nature they are completely unaware of that transcendent dimension of consciousness that actually is the essential reality to who or what they are I sometimes call it your essence identity, the essence your essence identity is the being of you and the being is timeless the being is consciousness itself and then there's the human and the two are together and if you can awaken to the beingness of you then of course you continue to be a human until you are no longer until the body dissolves in the meantime your task your mission your purpose is to as a human to also embody the being then you have both dimensions in your life the limited dimension of here that is temporal inseparable from time and you have the transcendent dimension to who you are in the timeless realm of consciousness itself and that is a continuous realization at first it may only come to you as glimpses in brief moments and you feel suddenly a sense of lightness very peaceful but very intensely alive and you go ah and you may realize you're not thinking in those moments thinking has subsided but you haven't fallen asleep you're awake and then you may remember those moments this was so wonderful sometimes it happens when you go into nature if you can really be there nature can help you in your awakening if you can really be there with all the senses and be aware of the awareness itself when you're out there in nature

and sometimes it can happen to some humans almost accidentally they're out climbing a mountain or they're swimming somewhere in nature and suddenly the person subsides and just an awareness arises and they go wow and they think it's been caused by the beauty that they see but it's not really that it's been caused by the cessation of thinking and you can have that in the middle of a city and that's a this is your continuous practice is are you able to as much as possible let go of habitual especially habitual, useless self-serving thinking thinking that only feeds the fictitious self, the ego the entity that loves, actually loves its problems says no I don't love my problems yes you do because you talk and think about them continuously in fact you create them through unconscious thinking you create them, no no I don't yes you do and that this entity then becomes as first you have glimpses, sometimes accidental they may only be a few seconds and then perhaps a little bit longer and then the two are gradually the being and the human kind of merge the being seeps into the human and so the human the conditioned entity, the human becomes less and less obnoxious and less and less dysfunctional and less and less creating completely unnecessary and absurd suffering for yourself and others completely unnecessary and absurd suffering created unconsciously by the ego this entity in its attempt to strengthen itself, it loves its problems and its enemies oh I feel much bigger anger is great and you can talk about it all the time this is completely asleep completely asleep and so as the awakening happens presence begins to sometimes completely replace the person and at other times it kind of shines through the person in the same way that a light shines through the lampshade the light shines through the lampshade and the person still, yes the person still has its conditioning to some extent and can never be totally free of the conditioning there's always certain ways in which you behave that's part to do with how you were brought up your environment, all the conditioning the country, even the language that you speak is a form of mental conditioning, all those things they are still there but the most dysfunctional and unhappiness creating patterns they subside more and more certain patterns remain as long as you are a person, a human certain patterns remain but not the heavy deeply unhappy and obnoxious patterns they gradually dissolve and all is left with certain idiosyncrasies in your personality and so on that's okay so that the person remains but it undergoes a substantial transformation it no longer creates suffering even in the face of challenges because they continue to happen even as you awaken the universe will continue to present you with challenges, new ones no matter what situation you go into at first you oh this is great, I'm in a new situation and before you know it oh it comes up from behind another challenge it won't, the universe won't leave you alone but the wonderful thing is if you're not undergoing the awakening process every challenge that arises will make you more unconscious it will strengthen the self the self that is reacting is reactive and complaining all the time and reacting so the challenge will make you more unconscious if you're not awakening yet you can verify that perhaps in your own experience when things go wrong there is a reactive entity there that works itself up either you become angry or despondent or whatever the reactivity is people like in professions such as lawyers often encounter people in their most unconscious states because they tend to

go to lawyers when things go wrong, they're being sued or the divorce is happening divorce lawyers to be a divorce lawyer potentially could be a very enlightening job because you encounter deep human unconsciousness which most people in a conflict situation like that become more unconscious than they are normally deeply unconscious and so that's when you're being challenged by life the challenge will create a reaction and you become completely identified with the reaction and you become even more unconscious than your normal state which is unconscious enough but now it's more unconscious can't stop thinking about it now as you're awakening challenge comes again and then you suddenly see the possibility of actually being more intensely present when a challenge comes and you go it's like you know what a dimmer switch is on an electrical switch you can turn up the light dimmer switch so when a challenge comes something goes wrong so to speak a difficult person arises a difficult situation arises some kind of loss arises whatever kind of loss it may be and instead of reacting and becoming more unconscious you suddenly sense you're becoming more present in the face of a challenge and that is when the challenges of the world are becoming helpful to you rather than make you unconscious they can intensify the awakening process when the Buddha was teaching 2500 years ago he told people to seek out a quiet place in the forest

[Speaker 2] (6:27:26 - 6:28:17)

and meditate there that was an essential part of his teaching so nature was an essential part of his teaching the story goes that the Buddha sat under a tree when, as the story goes he awakened spiritually or became enlightened so his enlightenment is associated with that tree

[Speaker 5] (6:30:11 - 6:30:12)

...

[Speaker 1] (6:30:37 - 6:30:49)

so here I am in the forest in northern California there are some amazing trees here, the redwood

[Speaker 2] (6:30:49 - 6:30:54)

trees I'm taking a little break

[Speaker 1] (6:30:54 - 6:31:27)

I have a little bit of a cold so that slowed me down quite a bit usually when I take a walk in nature the first part of my walk is fairly fast I don't have the energy for that today, and then when I return I walk more slowly and in a very contemplative way so I'm getting a little bit hot so I'll take the scarf off if I can get it off

[Speaker 2] (6:31:32 - 6:32:03)

oh, it's very long okay so I just like to share with you how I experience nature and the state of consciousness that's behind it and we start

[Speaker 1] (6:32:03 - 6:32:35)

right now with something that I don't know whether the microphones can pick it up we listen to the stillness that is here now whether a microphone can pick up stillness, I don't know we will see for me the stillness is not 100% because at the moment I have a little bit of a ringing in my right ear but the stillness is still picked up with my left ear

[Speaker 2] (6:32:36 - 6:34:24)

and it's very deep and in order to listen to the stillness in nature a certain alertness is required so your senses have to go in acute listening and you can combine that with looking around so you are listening and you are watching what's around you the secret of being fully in nature and experiencing the sacredness of nature is to refrain as much as possible from thinking while you are in nature and just be the awareness behind all the sense perceptions the alert presence and then you will notice that there is a depth to nature that transcends anything you could say about it or conceptualize it there are also arising within the stillness

[Speaker 1] (6:34:24 - 6:34:54)

occasionally very subtle sounds so it's actually quite helpful and can help you stay alert if you listen to the sounds so you are aware of both the stillness and the sounds of the leaves here occasionally we may get some distant car passing by, that's fine too so just be alert

[Speaker 2] (6:34:54 - 6:37:19)

and listen to both the stillness and the sounds very subtle sounds nothing spectacular and then it seems almost as if the forest were whispering and you can sense that it is a live energy field pervaded by the one consciousness out of which it has come so this contemplation of nature frees you from temporarily from yourself and preoccupations about yourself nature can help you transcend that trap of only paying attention to that limited self and so as you walk or sit in nature the person the personality that you are recedes if you are alert enough it recedes, you don't remember your past you don't need to right now or what's going on in your life all that is replaced with alert awareness and so the most wonderful thing

[Speaker 1] (6:37:19 - 6:37:33)

most wonderful most conducive place for meditation is to be in nature and have your

senses attuned to the sense perceptions of nature and that includes also

[Speaker 2] (6:37:33 - 6:38:09)

breathing the air everything slows you down meditation helps you to become still and so you begin to resonate internally with the stillness that's all around you occasionally of course

[Speaker 1] (6:38:10 - 6:38:46)

thoughts may come into your head you might look at something and occasionally the mind may say something, for example here the tallest and oldest trees here, and I believe the oldest trees here are close to a thousand years old those trees many of them are scarred so they have survived many forest fires, these gigantic trees survive

[Speaker 2] (6:38:46 - 6:38:54)

forest fires in fact I'm told that they actually

[Speaker 1] (6:38:54 - 6:39:12)

need the forest fires and some of those trees will not drop their seeds until the forest fire has cleared the space around them, it's burnt down all the smaller trees and then the seeds will fall and then a new tree will come into being

[Speaker 2] (6:39:14 - 6:41:34)

so this may arise as you walk you have that thought and you see it's amazing how these trees have lasted for so long and then let that thought go so don't follow it so that you return your attention to stillness and thinking again is replaced with awareness if I use poetic language I would say that being in nature nourishes the soul so there is something here that is very healing but you need to be there if you are engaged in continuous thinking then you are not really where you are if you sit somewhere in nature, you may occasionally want to close your eyes for a few minutes and then just listen to the stillness and be aware of any sounds that may be there and of course be aware of yourself, the presence the underlying presence that you are and somehow the presence that you are aligns itself with that still presence the energy field that surrounds you

[Speaker 1] (6:41:34 - 6:41:48)

you kind of merge with the energy field of the forest the boundary between inner and outer which is created by excessive conceptualization

[Speaker 2] (6:41:49 - 6:42:24)

subsides and so then you participate and not only participate in the stillness you are one with it and you are when you then look at the trees you feel no longer a sense of separation and it's almost

[Speaker 1] (6:42:25 - 6:42:33)

there comes goes a little plane which is fine too you allow it to be there

[Speaker 2] (6:42:38 - 6:42:41)

it's almost as if

[Speaker 1] (6:42:43 - 6:42:59)

when you perceive nature in that way as if in this case it's a forest it became conscious of itself through you

[Speaker 2] (6:43:00 - 6:45:01)

because there is no longer a separation between you and it there is a continuity a continuum and I would suggest and I strongly sense that nature loves to be to become aware of itself through you so we have a continuum of consciousness and when you look at a tree or touch the tree or become aware of how still these trees are just deeply rooted in the earth and deeply rooted in being when you become aware of that we could say that the tree becomes aware of itself through you so what you provide you bring to nature is the aware dimension and a kind of completion so we could say that nature needs you and wants you to be aware of it and loves you for it oh

[Speaker 1] (6:45:16 - 6:45:34)

when the Buddha was teaching 2500 years ago he told people to seek out a quiet place in the forest and meditate there that was an essential part of his teaching

[Speaker 2] (6:45:35 - 6:45:48)

so nature was an essential part of his teaching and of course as you know probably the story goes that the Buddha sat

[Speaker 1] (6:45:48 - 6:45:59)

under a tree when as the story goes he awakened spiritually or became enlightened so his enlightenment

[Speaker 2] (6:45:59 - 6:47:21)

is associated associated with the tree a tree don't believe what science tells you there is more to the tree than that and you can know that and sense that if you become still

enough and give it your attention looking almost sensing its stillness so but it is a reciprocal movement it goes both ways yes nature becomes conscious of itself through you but nature also helps you to realign yourself with stillness

[Speaker 1] (6:47:52 - 6:58:22)

if possible make sure that you are not disturbed while we are here and just give this time to yourself because really meditation in a wider sense just means being with yourself and everybody should take time out every day even if it is only 10 minutes to be with themselves now you may ask am I not always with myself throughout the day and you might even say I'd rather get away from myself in my usual preoccupations worries, anxieties fears so what does it mean when I say being with yourself I don't refer to your usual sense of self which I call the surface self that's to do with all the thinking that goes through your mind throughout the day the emotions you experience all the things that happen in your life your memories of who you are in every human being there is a deeper dimension to who they are and getting in touch with that deeper dimension within themselves that's really what meditation is and if you've never accessed that deeper dimension in yourself you'll always feel that something really vital is missing in your life even though you may have achieved many things on what I call the surface reality the surface level of your life maybe you can you have recognition maybe you have wealth you can buy whatever you like and yet you'll notice there's something that seems is still missing a certain underlying dissatisfaction or discontent it may not be there all the time but it always resurfaces and many people I've met quite a few people who have achieved fame and fortune and they all told me that after a while after the initial elation of being suddenly wealthy or famous recognized as important by the world and soon the old discontent came back a sense of insufficiency also to do with fear so no matter what you achieve on the surface level of life if you haven't found that deeper dimension to who you are your life is not really fulfilled and there's so much frustration the frustration that people continuously experience in life is not really to do with the imperfection on the outer level of their life because on the outer level things can never be perfect or never perfect for very long things come and go you lose here you gain something there you lose something here so the dissatisfaction is not realizing that there is something deeper within you that is more truly who you are than whatever happens on the surface of your life that really is the spiritual dimension and the deeper self also connects you with the underlying deeper dimension of the universe because just like you what we see in this world the universe, the world whatever you call it it's all the surface of reality under that the great teachers and philosophers since ancient times have said that realized it there is an unseen dimension underneath that there is a universal intelligence underneath all the phenomena that we experience through the senses and you are one with that universal intelligence and the way to connect with that universal intelligence that underlies all the manifestations of life that continuously unfold around you is miraculous underlying all that there is an intelligence we can call it, there are

other names we can use to talk about it but it's only in you that you can find it, you can't find it out there but once you find it in yourself you recognize it out there you can sense that intelligence or that consciousness is in everything so how how do you connect with the deeper level within yourself it's deeper than thinking so you can't get there through thinking about it it's deeper than the emotions and yet it's always there it's always there and it's not that it's totally hidden from you it's that the thinking, the thoughts the emotions and the sense perceptions draw all your attention to themselves so people are kind of hypnotized by those things, especially thoughts so they no longer can sense the dimension of depth because every thought really demands your attention and you go, you follow it with your attention and then it leads to another thought and another thought and every thought is a voice in the head and it thinks, thinks and you go and you think that's your life, all the thoughts that come and talk to you about who you are and what other people who they are and continuously your attention is being drawn into that mind activity and emotions go with it and that's the usual surface sense of self and it's frustrating if there's nothing else everybody has it has that surface sense of self of course but if there's nothing else in your life except that then your life is shallow and the spiritual dimension is missing so here we are because we want

[Speaker 2] (6:58:22 - 6:58:23)

to

[Speaker 1] (6:58:25 - 6:59:03)

find the dimension of depth within ourselves and it's already here we just need to become aware of it how? well that's what traditionally what meditation methods are for but here I'd like to suggest you to just investigate without actually using any technique as such just investigate with your attention

[Speaker 2] (6:59:04 - 6:59:14)

what it means to be yourself on the most essential level

[Speaker 1] (6:59:21 - 7:01:19)

what does it feel like to be yourself what is that sense of self can you get a taste or a glimpse of that sense of self without thinking about yourself how is it possible that you can even think about yourself and about your life and all the things that make up your life what makes that thinking possible what is the prerequisite for being able to think you need to be conscious if you're not conscious you can't think but usually this consciousness is completely absorbed by thinking and that is what keeps you on the surface level of reality and yourself so you only know yourself as defined by your mind you then have an image of who you are and really that is what ego means in the way we use it you then have a mental image you have a self talk and you think that's who you

are me but there is a more fundamental sense of self underneath all that and that is your simple sense of presence so I'm inviting you now

[Speaker 2] (7:01:21 - 7:01:22)

to sense

[Speaker 1] (7:01:25 - 7:01:34)

that there is more to you than all your thinking what does it feel like without

[Speaker 2] (7:01:35 - 7:01:42)

the thinking to be yourself what is left

[Speaker 1] (7:01:45 - 7:02:13)

when you're not thinking but you're not falling asleep let's see if we can create a little gap in the stream of thinking to some extent me talking to you already does that so if there is a little gap in the stream of thinking like now you go and there is

[Speaker 2] (7:02:17 - 7:02:19)

a moment of no thought

[Speaker 1] (7:02:23 - 7:02:53)

but something is there a sense of presence or aliveness whatever you call it so can you sense now at this moment that inherent deeper sense of alive presence that has nothing to do

[Speaker 2] (7:02:55 - 7:03:03)

with your personal history it has nothing to do with the past

[Speaker 1] (7:03:04 - 7:03:19)

it has nothing to do with the future it has nothing to do with your situation in life or your name or your background

[Speaker 2] (7:03:22 - 7:03:24)

it's beyond all that

[Speaker 1] (7:03:32 - 7:04:44)

so another way of putting it can you sense that presence you can't define it it has no content it's just space spacious presence and then you know in that you know that you

are alive without having to tell yourself that you are alive because the fact that you are alive is self evident because you are conscious and to say you are conscious is even that is not absolutely correct because in essence it's not that you are conscious but that you are consciousness that strange thing or no thing that's the essence

[Speaker 2] (7:04:45 - 7:04:47)

of who you are

[Speaker 1] (7:04:49 - 7:05:47)

and sensing yourself as that consciousness consciousness also frees you liberates you from being completely trapped in your personal sense of self of course that's still there on the surface but now you can sense that you are actually deeper than that now you may notice that as I speak

[Speaker 2] (7:05:47 - 7:05:52)

to you there are little gaps

[Speaker 1] (7:05:54 - 7:07:01)

between words or sentences now these gaps are not there to hypnotize you because we are here to de-hypnotize you from being totally trapped in your thoughts and deriving your sense of who you are from your thinking it's to bring you to that presence pure presence that's so refreshing so revitalizing to sense yourself as that pure presence and so these little gaps in between words or sentences as I speak are very important

[Speaker 2] (7:07:04 - 7:07:33)

because you may notice that in those gaps you are not thinking in those gaps for example now you are just present and that's wonderfully

[Speaker 1] (7:07:34 - 8:02:36)

liberating to sense yourself as that presence now you may find occasionally your mind may come in and say something it might even feel threatened by this and there may even be one or two or three of you who couldn't stand it any longer and they are no longer with us here but if you're still here and you can sense that what I'm saying points to something very important and you can sense the reality of what I'm talking about you may have noticed the spiritual dimension does not require belief because it's to do with experiencing knowing directly not believing in something I would like to welcome you to our live meditation and a special welcome to the participants of the Wisdom 2.0 conference in San Francisco 300 miles up the road so to speak from where I am right now so welcome to the Wisdom 2.0 conference people who are with us now this is not a conventional meditation I may be speaking most of the time but there are also gaps in

between the words which of course are always more important than the words and if you're aware of the gaps as much as you're aware of the words then you're already entering the state of meditation without having to go through any preliminary technique not that there's anything wrong with techniques so it's actually quite lovely to be aware not only of the words but also the stillness that's there the space one could say between the words even underneath the words and the miraculous thing is when you're aware of that for a brief moment whenever you're aware of the space you're not thinking so the more you're aware of the space or the spaces the less absorbed you are in the stream of thinking and not being absorbed in the stream of thinking not identifying with the stream of thinking is meditation and of course the aim of meditation is that eventually it becomes your normal state of consciousness in which case you may still want to practice so called formal meditation because you like it or you may not now usually in your daily life things constantly arise in your field of awareness demanding attention situations people things that need to be done and sometimes things are pulling at you from various directions demanding your attention at the same time and when you no longer know where to put your attention you're beginning to experience so called stress because stress means one thing is pulling this way another thing is pulling that way and so you get stress and as long as you're unaware unconscious spiritually speaking the world around you determines where your attention goes people situation, events your electronic devices that go ping the next text message comes in or whatever sound it is or go pong when the next email arrives and immediately your attention goes there and then somebody else somebody else so I call that losing oneself in the world and then of course there's your thinking every thought that arises seems to say give me more of your attention follow me to where I want you to go and so when you're unaware then whatever thought comes into your head has this enormous pulling power and so you identify with the thought and you're completely in it and it takes you this way and that way and leads to a whole succession of thoughts and so on the most primordial level it's thinking really that absorbs your attention your mind because even external things have to be transformed into mind stuff before you can experience it so that you can experience it all external objects before you can be aware of them have to be taken in through sensory perception then transformed into love of impulses and then reassembled somewhere to make up this picture of external reality but it's ultimately all you ever experience is your mind so that's really what we need to look at so most people are continuously aware of something and they are at the mercy of whatever arises in their mind that has this power to pull in their attention one thing you learn in meditation is you can you have a choice, you can direct your attention to one thing and then you can see if you can keep your attention on one particular mind object which could be becoming aware of your breathing or it could be a mantra that you repeat in your mind one mind object or an external object the candle flame so you begin to realize that you can actually direct attention, you don't have to be at the mercy of whatever comes into your mind so as we sit here for example you can direct your attention your attention is of course in auditory perception and visual perception but in addition you can also have

some of your attention on your breathing for example you're aware even as you listen and as you watch if your eyes are open you can be aware also that at the same time you're breathing you're choosing to have some attention there too that's a very calming thing and you become aware that your body is alive on the inside you can become aware that there's a sense of aliveness inside your hands another ancient meditation method to do it more methodically you become aware that your feet are alive on the inside, your legs your entire body there's a field of aliveness, you become aware of that you can then choose to put your attention on that rather than on something else where it would habitually go so gradually you become aware of your own power you're not at the mercy of events and things your thoughts ultimately there's a deeper dimension in you deeper than thinking and getting in touch with that accessing that realizing that that is the essence of who you are that's why we're here the purpose of this is to get in touch with that deeper dimension within yourself deeper than thinking and what is that we could describe it as the feeling or the sense of being you at the most fundamental level what does it feel like to be you now usually when you speak in terms of I let's use the first person what does it feel like, what's it like to be me, what is that sense of identity, the sense of self usually you refer then to certain things in your mind your history your conditioned mind the history of me, the story of me me and my problems me and my situation me and this and this and this so there's always on that level your feeling of being yourself is really to be identified with certain things that arise in your mind but here we are attempting to go deeper to a more foundational a more real sense of what is it that underlies all that what is it that makes the story of you that most people tend to be who they are what is it that makes the story of you possible what is the space, the light in which it appears there's something deeper without which there could be no story and yet it's not separate from it and that's always the same, there's a deep sense of beingness or presence in you that is prior and deeper than anything that happens in your life or in your mind so I'd like you to get in touch with that sense of being you at the deepest level what does that feel like and it's a very strange question, so I'm usually then your attention is directed to certain things objects in your mind what we're attempting to do here is to ultimately becoming aware of that attention itself which is awareness so when I ask you what's it like to be you I'm really asking you to become aware of your own awareness and that is not an object you can't say ah, there it is, I've got it now you cannot have it because you are it it's the essence of who you are, you cannot describe it because it has no form you cannot talk about it in terms of past or future because there's no time to it it is a timeless dimension and this bare sense of beingness that if that becomes the foundation for your life so to speak if you could not lose touch with that, in other words, not lose touch with the most essential dimension within you then the way in which you experience this world would change because you would be continuously aware of that which is deeper than whatever arises in this world or in your mind and to feel that within yourself brings about a sense of trust in life it is as if something were carrying you something vaster than the little me and you are connected with a vastness there that goes far beyond you as the person with the history

and to sense that within yourself you can feel there is a power there that is the power of life itself when you don't know that all that is available to you is a trickle of that power but as you become aware of it, which really means become aware of awareness become conscious of consciousness which again when we speak, when we use words it's never quite right because the moment we construct a sentence we create duality subject and object and you say I am aware of consciousness that you have a subject and an object which isn't quite right because there is no I apart from consciousness so you would have to qualify it and say I am aware of consciousness as myself then you undo the original error that is semantic that brings about a sense of rootedness in being and brings about a trust in life in other words what is trust which in other spiritual traditions have other words for it faith it's the absence of fear that's really what trust is so when you are in touch with that within yourself the world is no longer perceived as a fearful place I just want to remind you that we are not here to do anything we are here to one could say experience something rather than do something and what we are here to experience and even that's not quite right I'll come to that in a minute what we're here to experience is very subtle but very powerful whatever name we give that reduces it it's not that it's very vast for the time being let's just call it stillness now when I said we're here to experience something that's not absolutely right but whenever we use language we are bound to falsify that which goes far beyond concepts it's not so much that we're here to experience something as to find that which lies which underlies all experience a dimension that is deeper than any experience becoming aware of that within yourself so some of you may have written down or have in your mind goals you want to achieve in life and that's good it's unlikely that achieving stillness will figure prominently as one of your goals or even number one and yet it's the most important thing in your life but it's a good thing that it's not on your list of goals to be achieved because if you make it into a goal to be achieved it implies that you need the future to achieve stillness which is of course true for all other goals but not for that which we call stillness temporarily we just call it for the time being stillness if you make it into a goal to be achieved you place it into the future and you'll never find it because it's inseparable from the present moment the now that usually people are not aware of as an actual presence and here we have another pointer we could use instead of stillness and that is presence and as the word implies presence is inseparable from the present the now now for most people yet the now is not a living realization they are only aware of what happens in the now and even that's not quite right they're not really aware of it they are reactive towards it and they are identified with it they are identified with their thoughts that arise they are reactive to what happens outside so I'm here just talking a little bit giving you pointers with every sentence every word is really a pointer towards that and I trust that as we sit here together giving up the idea that we are here to do something as we sit here together a realization arises within you that is the living presence within the thinking mind stops for a moment and there's just spacious awareness stillness you haven't gone to sleep you've become still without falling into dreamless sleep without falling into dreams just something has arisen that usually you would have overlooked and our meditation here, if

we want to call it that is to become aware of the space within, another pointer the stillness, this space becoming totally at ease with the present moment a very rare state for most humans usually they're only at ease when some desire has just been fulfilled and then they're at ease for a little while, a few minutes perhaps or they're at ease because they're so tired they're moving towards sleep so I'm here to lead you into that realization of inner stillness of that dimension within lead you through words which are only pointers and through the demonstration of presence which you can sense if you pay attention to the underlying stillness that is here as I speak behind the words between the words tune into that nothing personal in that nothing to do with this person and as you tune into that the same dimension arises within you which again has nothing to do with that person that you think you are so there is a dimension that transcends the person it's in this person and it's in that person the dimension that transcends the personal and the person and everything to do with the person the personal history the personal problems the life situation the ups and downs of the life situation there will always be there the ups and downs of the life situation but the miracle is finding the transcendent dimension within you without which life cannot be a pleasant experience not for long it cannot be satisfying not for long, never for long so without the realization of the transcendent dimension the formless spacious stillness nothing will satisfy you it's frustrating, life is very frustrating without that dimension if you haven't found it, but of course the dimension is there in everyone it's not something that you need to achieve you can't achieve it let alone achieve it in the future you can discover it here and now within, it's lurking there underneath all the doing underneath all the thinking it's always there but completely ignored by most people if you're comfortable with theistic terms you could say God is always present but completely ignored by most people because if God has any meaning it is the transcendent dimension of life it transcends means it is beyond whatever arises in life beyond thought, beyond physical forms, beyond form it transcends form it is beyond past and future, it transcends time it has nothing to do with time it is presence, eternal presence and presence, eternal presence or eternity is not some weird abstract philosophical concept it can be and it points to a living realization so the most precious thing to find in life is that there is stillness inside you always you just have to pay attention to it but then the strange thing is that when you become aware of stillness you realize that the awareness and the stillness are not two but one so it's only when we use language we say I'm now I'm aware of stillness you put it into language so when you're aware of stillness there is a knowing where concepts are not needed words are not needed and there is no duality really it's only when you translate it into words there's a duality and you say I'm aware of stillness but what really happens is that awareness and stillness are a single realization there is no subject and object in this realization when we talk about it, it sometimes seems that there is a subject I am aware of stillness I can feel the stillness inside me when you put it into words that's how there's subject and object but when you look more deeply beyond words you see that there's not me as an entity who is aware of stillness as something in me it's only when we use language and that duality appears when I'm aware of stillness when I'm aware of

stillness the awareness and the stillness are one the whole evolutionary impulse of the universe is towards that somehow and I cannot explain it in words it's beyond we don't even attempt to fully to really understand what is behind that, it's far beyond understanding but just to say that the evolutionary impulse of the universe is behind that consciousness wants to flower through the form the human it will flower through any form it doesn't say you are more worthy than this, I will choose this form because you are more worthy it flowers where there is a transparency where the form the rigid mind structures give way they die first identification with that me mind made self goes that and this is why we're here because as you sit here you are finding death before death finds you and these the mind structures that you are identified with as me the thought forms die so the flowering is happening here before death finds you you embrace death already but it doesn't matter when it happens and consciousness will move through, it could be a criminal killed several people inflicted suffering on others and of course on himself and in that midst of hell in itself waiting for execution suddenly inside the entire structure of the self mental emotional structures dissolves because the suffering is unbearable and suddenly something shines through and now he doesn't care anymore whether he the execution happens or not and there have been cases like that when this happens sometimes when people speak about it and tell others about what happened to them they may use certain words that correspond to their language or culture but when you look beyond the words you will see that they all point to the same and there are some of those to whom it happens who can't even speak about it they just look at you and you look at them they may be uneducated they may not have much to say and yet you look and you see there's something that shines through that is deeper than a person and any person could be the personal dimension and the person has given way to that and so it is always sacred when that happens but so far it's been relatively few human beings to whom this has happened no longer the case now it is the destiny of all humans to go through that transformation it is certainly your destiny otherwise you wouldn't be here the purpose of your life is to enable that to come through you and it's happening already so we embrace the death that is here when you surrender to what is that's the greatest death the resisting me entity gives way you can surrender through suffering or you can surrender through voluntarily through the yes to what is which as we saw yesterday takes you beyond the form you are no longer reactive to a form so the yes that simple thing takes you beyond form and I pointed out yesterday often that which you say yes to is some form of limitation because it's form and that in other cases that which you say yes to may be some form of death some form of loss and that is particularly powerful any kind of loss or death leaves an emptiness behind when a form is no longer there and you don't run away from that empty space and it's an opening into the formless one could say every form obscures God and the death of the form enables God which is the formless one life to shine through therefore death has been long been recognized as sacred in ancient cultures who had not denied death whereas the modern culture modern western civilization denies death it's not they don't know it's sacred they don't even want to talk about it they don't want to see a dead body you can't it's not

allowed it's illegal to see a dead body they would send you to a psychiatrist if you asked to see a dead body there must be something wrong with you so death is hidden because the western culture is totally identified with form, with mind so the worst possible thing for it is death and even in hospitals they don't know anything about death where death happens continuously, old people's homes every old people's home potentially would be a spiritual center, the greatest ashrams would be old people's homes because that is the potential of old age but it's not recognized yet so they would be the most sacred places so these ancient cultures have recognized the sacredness of death not knowing perhaps why intuitively they knew it to be sacred but now you can see why it is sacred because the formless shines through where there was the form and that can happen when there is physical death but it can also happen when you die psychologically to the me and that is the spiritual transformation and that can happen through intense suffering or through the power of a spiritual teaching or in many cases a combination of both and I suspect that in many of you it's a combination of both you've had the suffering, otherwise you wouldn't have come and now there is the power of spiritual teaching which tells you you don't need to suffer anymore and you don't need anymore time before you can enter the surrendered state why would you need time to enter the surrendered state? Do you need more knowledge before you can enter the surrendered? Yes, but before I enter the surrendered state I need to understand the universe completely laughter you've had many pointers already everybody here has read scriptures beautiful pointers no, I have not yet fully understood the nature of the universe I need a few more years says the mind and the amazing thing is a deep understanding happens not in the way that the mind imagines it a deep understanding of the universe happens as you enter the surrendered state this mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation

[Speaker 2] (8:03:03 - 8:03:04)

when was the last time

[Speaker 1] (8:03:04 - 8:50:44)

you saw somebody just sit there and look around? because you have to get out your phone it clutters your mind even more so when I ask who are you?

if I ask that question don't go, let's do this for a moment don't go into the past can you feel or sense who you are without reference to the past in you you don't even need to remember your name right now what for? you don't remember your email address or your phone number or what happened to you 10 years ago don't need to remember that can you still get a sense without reference to your personal history can you get a sense of beingness or presence there's no past in that at all but what is that? you can't really describe it all you know is that you are I am you can sense the underlying beingness or

presence of you but to really sense it what needs to happen is that for a moment the stream of thinking needs to subside and it may be happening for many of you at this very moment the stream of thinking that is normal for most people that never stops except when they fall asleep the stream of thinking for a moment subsides and when I asked you whether you can be sense yourself without reference to your personal history, what I was really talking about what I was really asking was can you get a sense of your presence without thought ah and there's enormous revelation here this question who am I does not have a real truthful answer on a conceptual level it's not in thoughts or words the true answer to who am I has no thought in it, it is a sense of presence of beingness and you can only sense that if it's only a moment, so the stream of thinking subsides and what happens is you are completely present without your mind saying anything you can perceive everything you can see, you can hear you're fully there and your mind is still still does not mean that you've gone to sleep it's the opposite, you're actually more alert in that stillness than you would be if you were identified with this continuous stream of thinking that's the stillness, the inherent stillness that actually every human has that you don't need to work hard to attain stillness or think that if I follow the right course of action, it might take me 10 years and then I'll be able to have a still mind no it's already there and if you're not totally miserable and unhappy every moment of your life that means without perhaps you knowing it anybody who is not extremely miserable all the time has a little bit of access without even knowing it to that stillness within they don't know it, all they know is from time to time they feel a little bit good they feel ah they don't know for 3 seconds they stop thinking ah they might have some other explanation of why in that moment they felt good maybe they were looking at a dog in that moment because the dog wasn't thinking anything about them because the dog doesn't think the dog is conscious but not conceptual thinking, the dog does not have an opinion about you and so when you were petting the dog perhaps you suddenly felt good about petting the dog, why?

because for a moment the dog freed you of the judgmental conceptual mind that otherwise would be very active if you were petting a human it would say something of course you can't do that because people would think you are insane you can't go up to a human may I pet you that would be nice if they did that to each other but but the humans have judgments about you so whenever you go to a human you know that he has certain thoughts about you so the other human cannot free you from your thoughts but the dog or the cat can for a short moment free you from your thoughts and in that moment it feels good that's why people love their pets so deeply there is a reason a deeper reason why they love because the pet frees them a little bit from their minds and there are moments when you interact with your animal you can experience brief moments of thoughtless awareness two seconds three seconds but it's enough to keep you going it's enough so that your life doesn't become totally miserable and then you might have other moments you might have moments when you engage in some physical activity, you swim or you climb a mountain and then there are moments that your total

presence is required by the activity so that there's not enough left for thinking and again you feel intensely alive oh that was so good why was it so good? I love it, it's just so good, I don't know why it's good well it's good because it freed you for a moment from the incessant stream of thinking and there was some degree of awareness of presence arising but you didn't even know that so it's always that dimension of consciousness is in every human now I must admit there are still millions of humans where it's so deeply hidden in them that they have no access to it but there are others who can actually who are beginning to awaken to this dimension within themselves so now you don't have to wait for certain things to happen to briefly free you from your mind you don't have to wait for the next encounter with a lovely dog in the street or you don't have to wait for some beautiful moment in nature when you just go you take in the totality of a forest or the vastness of the sky and you go ah or at night you look up into this clear sky, the vastness of space the countless stars, which are suns most of them, and the vast distances and the stillness of it all and you go it can still your mind too that was my first meditation when I was a teenager, I didn't even know what meditation I didn't at that time nobody talked about meditation in the west I looked up at the sky at night when I was a teenager we were living in Spain so the sky was often, in the summer especially totally clear and I would sit on the roof of the house and go wow what I realized many years later that while I was doing that there was no thought in my mind the space the outer space created in me that inner space or inner spaciousness so that's another word for it, another pointer the inner spaciousness if you don't find that and I say find or discover I'm not saying achieve or attain it's not an achievement or attainment because it's already there as the essence of who you are but you have to discover it, that it is already there, if you don't find it you are condemned condemned for the rest of your life to live a very frustrated existence because life will be just one damn thing after another one damn thing and it never leaves me alone but what really doesn't leave you alone is your mind which reacts to every little thing that happens and amplifies every little thing that happens it's not so much what people call karma it's not so much what what happens to them it's how they respond or react to what happens and when you are unconscious you amplify every little challenge in your life becomes a big thing in your mind oh my god oh and you it was only a little thing but it gets it gets amplified personal conflicts arise all the time inner finding your life, your so called life you might have an opinion the narrative in your mind that you call your life might tell you that your life was a failure it might tell you your life was a great success but in this case you probably didn't come here because if you were totally satisfied for your life why would you ever look for anything beyond the material things and the mental things but nobody can be satisfied for very long so you have all tasted failure, so called and some of you might think the whole thing didn't work out I had such great plans when I was 18 I had great plans for my life and then it didn't work out nothing worked out my marriage didn't work out and then the second one didn't work out either and then I got a job but then I lost it and then I made some money but then it made me unhappy because I bore it so much and became so stressed out that I had to seek psychiatric help and that didn't help oh

dear in other words your mind is cluttered by stuff your mind is cluttered and you can't get out of the clutter it's like a room full of clutter and these days it's even more cluttered because all the devices that people use clutter your mind even more every text message is more cluttered because 99 out of 100 text messages are not important they just clutter Facebook again, there might be occasionally important things but it can continuously bombard it but you need to take it all in and very rarely these days for people who are not awakening it's actually getting worse for people who are not awakening you can see there's not a moment when they are in the past occasionally when you were somewhere waiting for something there was nothing to do and you just had to sit there and maybe look around but nobody does that anymore when was the last time you saw somebody just sit there and look around no, because you have to get out your phone and of course what does that phone do? it clutters your mind even more if you didn't have your phone there would be a chance of having some spaciousness, you could perhaps look at the sky and go ah and appreciate the beauty of it and the depth of it and the spaciousness of it but no there's a text message coming in and what does it say?

it says, what's up? and then of course you have to reply of course so and that when that goes the naturally occurring spaciousness I'm not even talking about consciously embracing spaciousness, just the naturally occurring spaciousness in a normal person's life that rarely happens these days and that's a great dysfunction and I don't know what effect that will have on the civilization within two or three generations now there is, fortunately there is a segment of the population that is awakening spiritually perhaps to compensate for the dysfunction that many humans are forced to enact re-enact every day so clutter declutter your mind is not a process that takes a long time, to declutter your mind you don't have to go ok, now I'm taking out this thought now what's the next thought that I'm going to take out like if you declutter your room you have to say, what is it that I don't need but you don't, to declutter your mind is an instant thing, it's an instant thing of withdrawing from thinking and becoming present and you can do it as I just mentioned one example, looking at the sky because there you have spaciousness the sky is spacious and that is why Jesus used the analogy of the kingdom of heaven heaven means sky in most languages heaven and sky are the same word in French, in Spanish, in German heaven and sky are the same word so he's talking about the kingdom of the sky and he said that's the most important thing, just find the kingdom of heaven and everything else will work out in your life, that's what basically his teaching was I offer a new translation instead of kingdom of heaven I've already said sky, but there's an even better translation that I found and that is spaciousness, because the essence of the sky is vast spaciousness kingdom, my translation for kingdom is dimension so the kingdom of heaven is the dimension of spaciousness it is a dimension of consciousness in you so the kingdom of heaven again, when they asked him where is the kingdom of heaven because they hadn't understood what he was talking about where is it, when is it going to come?

and he said, and this is I believe one of the things that is more or less literally true of what he said, many other things are not literally true that were passed on and written down, but he said the kingdom of heaven does not come with signs to be perceived you cannot say, ah it's over here, or look it's over there but truly I tell you the kingdom of heaven is within you, in modern translation it says in the midst of you both are true the kingdom of heaven is within you, it is the dimension of spaciousness in you, and if you find that that solves not every single problem of your life, no but it gives you access to a dimension in you from where all the problems of your life and the challenges of your life can be seen in their true perspective and are no longer no longer have the ability to draw you in completely and make your life miserable, your ability to deal with the challenges of life, which are inevitable, life is not easy for anybody it's not even meant to be easy, it's not easy for any life form every life form is presented with life challenges from insects to plants to every little, every life form life is challenging and human life is particularly challenging the more evolved, the more problematic things get the more you can start thinking the more problematic life gets, so it does not mean when you find the kingdom of heaven within as the dimension of spaciousness that you are no longer challenged by life, no but the way in which you respond to the challenges changes you no longer amplify challenges, they are just there and you either take action or you accept what is for the time being in other words the challenges of life the problems of life no longer make you unhappy and that's a huge evolutionary leap forward so sometimes spiritual people who are spiritual seekers have a misconception that when they awaken spiritually become enlightened, whatever word you want to use that then they will no longer experience challenges or problems that's not true life continues every situation that you go into has a new set of challenges you could become famous and live in Hollywood or whatever and you would quickly find that before you thought when I attain this I'll really be okay I'll be wonderfully happy for the rest of my life please God just make me famous and I'll be happy for the rest of my life I just need just need 10 million, 20 million dollars to make it 20 I just need that and then I need to be recognized that I'm great by other people I really need that also but then I'll be really happy it's not going to happen even if you get what you wanted unhappiness will quickly resurface this was confirmed to me I've met a few people who got what they wanted and they told me how unhappy they became after a while after the elation of first having it I'm the greatest and then something happened to deeply challenge them so the challenges of life remain and that is a good thing because by being challenged when you are awakening spiritually the problems, the challenges of life no longer pull you into unhappiness and unconsciousness and reactivity and complaining and seeing yourself as a victim but they force you to be more intensely present, they bring out more spaciousness when you get challenged by life you go oh, there it is another challenge and you look at it wow welcome to our saturday meditation the focus of our meditation is stillness inner stillness what happens outside doesn't really matter so much stillness is just a word a pointer to most people it means silence absence absence of noise and in that sense stillness could be called a negative pointer it points to the absence of something but it doesn't really

refer to the absence of noise even the absence of inner noise although it is true that when the inner noise stops there is stillness but every pointer we use is not really it it's not quite right ever, it reduces that to which it points to something we think we can understand so it's much more than the absence of something although as a pointer that works another word for stillness is presence and that's a positive pointer by implication presence points to the presence of something the presence of what all you can say here is the presence of presence so there are two levels one could say to who you are on the one hand on one level you are the presence of certain things the existence of certain things you are the existence of the body the existence of sense perceptions the existence of emotions the existence of thoughts so we can call that the presence of something that's you as a person and here we are not concerned with that we are concerned with who you are beyond the person, that deeper level and we are here together a few thousand people perhaps in different parts of the planet going beyond the individual persons personalities to a deeper level of being and that's our meditation and I am speaking the words point to it, the words of course are not it the silence the stillness the presence which cannot be perceived with the senses is what matters here so there is nothing for you to do except be who you are beyond the personality and realize there is a stillness in you that has nothing to do with the personality and its problems because a large part of your personality consists of your problems as you access the deeper level of stillness or where you just sense as I sometimes put it your own presence it's not your own but let's just put it this way where you sense your own presence or rather where you sense the presence that you are you are that presence before you become this or that person there is a presence an aliveness there is the light of consciousness in which the person arises but the light of consciousness itself is not the person it transcends the person it is not separate from it the light assumes a certain form and becomes a person in the same way that when you watch a movie there is the light the projector light and the ways in which the light is obstructed by the film and those obstructions of the light, not never total obstructions because then you wouldn't see anything partial obstructions of the light and that becomes the movie the characters, the events and so on that's a little analogy and normal life isn't really that much different so if you only know the obstructions to the light of consciousness the light of God then you are trapped on the level of problems and drama and difficulties anxieties, regrets past, future me, me but here we become aware of the presence not the presence of something in us that would make it into some formal thing again but more simply the presence of presence so the presence underlies the words that I speak it underlies the words that you hear and so I am inviting you to be aware of that in you that underlies the sense perceptions and the thoughts that's we could call that the essence of who you are that transcends the person that's the most important realization in your life but it seems to be still a secret because nobody, very few seem to know about it so and many are not interested yet until existence as the person only becomes increasingly frustrating both for the individual and for the collective on the planet society, civilizations where the transcendent dimension is missing completely nothing no individual or civilization can remain sane for long without

it there is an increasing madness if that is all you know and the presence the realization of presence frees you from bondage to the person the personality with all its little concerns that keep it busy all day long and on a larger scale the collective realize that the concerns of the collective that you hear through the media and so on may be relatively important but ultimately they are not just as your problems which sometimes are related to the problems of the collective for example now in times of a recession and so on your problems too are ultimately not that important they certainly won't be important in 50, 60 years time to anybody and not to you because you as the person probably won't be there anymore that's quite soon I suggest you visit a graveyard from time to time and look at the gravestones with the names on them all these people thought that their problems were incredibly important this person asks after many years of meditation and all the twists and turns of life I'm now in the grip of intense fear and anxiety it seems it was always there only more intense now sitting with it, letting it be there seems to make it grow well fear, anxiety which is a form of fear very common some people have it, many have it in the background continuously and I would say there's some degree of fear even if you're not conscious of it if you're totally identified with the egoic mind you will have fear if only in the background and it may come out in other forms it can come, express itself as anger if you look at anger closely you usually find hidden underneath the anger is a state of fear so if there's fear one important thing is to of course you need to direct your attention to it you acknowledge that there's fear the important question that arises is are there any thought processes connected with the fear, in other words what are the thoughts that your mind is producing while you're feeling the fear is it possible that certain thoughts that you think frequently or habitually produce the fear, is it possible you project yourself into the next moment, into the future moment excessively trying to control something that you have no control over, what's going to happen to me or creating an imaginary scenario of loss that you might suffer it's not happening now but it might happen and many things that the thought activity excessive thought activity often creates scenarios of things going wrong that are not happening now, may never happen, often probably will never happen and even if they did happen the actual situation would actually be easier to face than the imaginary situation in your mind because there's nothing you can do there's no action you can take to remedy an imaginary situation except to stop thinking it but if an actual situation arises you face it and you give it your attention and then you take the action that you need to take but an imaginary situation you're totally at the mercy of it so it only exists in your mind so you need to see whether your mind is creating the fear by thinking fearful thoughts by projecting itself into the future and if that is the case then you can see oh so I'm creating those because my body cannot tell the difference between an actual event that's happening outside and what my mind is producing so when I'm thinking thought my life situation is critical if this is basically what your thoughts are telling you then your body believes that this is the actual truth that you are being threatened at this very moment.

The body doesn't know the difference that the tiger isn't in the room the threatening presence is your thoughts the body reacts in the same way whether there's a threat an actual threat in the room or your thoughts can create the same even palpitations shortness of breath because you're thinking fearful thoughts at night I had that for years an awful state it's insane it's a disease nothing is happening absolutely nothing there's a quiet room, nothing it's all happening in the mind so if that's the case then you need to tackle the thoughts because they will cause the fear and how do you tackle thoughts is by realizing the futility and the destructive nature of these thoughts and choosing to step out and what do you do to step out first you don't believe your mind that tells you no you can't step out you have to continue thinking no you step out and take a conscious breath or put your attention into the inner energy field of the body a conscious choice to remove attention from thinking and you may have to be really alert to do it if you're immersed in a mind stream it could even be that it's so powerful that you just cannot get out it has such gravitational pull it pulls you but at least you know that this is what's happening there's a state where you cannot help yourself yet but at least there is the beginning of a dis-identification from it when you know that this is what is happening so at least there's a part of you that knows this is not totally real the fear is being produced by my mind or in those early stages you may not yet be able to step out of it, it may be so strong that you're still totally in the grip of it but at least you know that you're in the grip of it the worst thing is to be in the grip of it and not even knowing it because you're so identified with it it is absolutely real to you so even to know that this is happening is already a step forward and then perhaps after a while the energy exhausts itself a little bit of this and then you can begin to say you will step out of those fearful thoughts because they are creating suffering and you take a conscious breath and another and another and then begin to feel the energy field of the body ah wow it's like this huge burden is suddenly dropped away and then you look around and this is a form of awakening out of complete identification with thinking it really is an awakening and you can observe it in yourself and you go ah so nice it's like a nightmare maybe everybody has experienced awakening from a nightmare and feeling such relief that you're in bed and it's safe you go ah and the same thing when you step out of fearful thought and become present ah and then see thought will then try to pull your attention back in it can go come this way laughter and then you might one little thought comes, do you follow it or don't you follow it, if you follow it laughter oh laughter laughter

[Speaker 5] (8:50:44 - 8:50:46)

laughter laughter

[Speaker 1] (8:50:50 - 9:49:58)

now it's also possible some people that the fear arises and you cannot detect any thought that created it it just comes wherever you are at some moment suddenly intense fear comes, that is possible too and that of course is what I call pain body which

is accumulation of old emotions that lives in you and there are many people who for whom the pain body manifests predominantly as anxiety or fear and it can come up suddenly but usually then it flows into your mind also and produces fearful thoughts so fear can be in some cases if you still suffer from that affliction some of you may be able to see how your thoughts are generating the fear habitually or you may find that in you the fear arises spontaneously and then usually produces further fearful thought and that is the pain body wanting to feed on further experience of the same what makes up its life is the energetic frequency of fear which is a particular, you can feel what fear feels like, it has a we call that a frequency it feels sometimes the body actually expresses it through shaking I'm doing this because I want to give you I don't want I don't want frequency to be just a concept in your mind I want to give you a taste of what frequency means that's frequency and then you have a different frequency of presence nothing has changed outside, it's the same room you're a totally different reality in the same place a totally different world in the same place as you shift from one frequency to a different frequency Salvation is undoing Salvation can be seen as nothing more than the escape from concepts so you can see that why in some other spiritual traditions you had liberation because the escape from concepts is also the liberation from the prison of conceptual thinking when you're identified with it when conceptual thinking supplies you with your sense of self then you are trapped in a conceptual prison and that is ego, that is unconsciousness and people don't even know it that they are trapped in it so the spiritual realization is through letting go of the prison of concepts so that you no longer inhabit the conceptual reality which is what most people do where everything is every perception that you have is filtered through your conceptualization when you look on something you immediately have an interpretation for it you have a label for it you have a self-reference towards it I like it I don't like it so there's already you cannot see without concepts so inhabiting a conceptual reality you have a prison that you have for other human beings because you conceptualize them and for yourself because your self image is an edifice made of concepts and salvation is the escape from concepts and this little part ends with these three lines those who would let illusions be lifted from their minds are this world's saviors again it links in to the word salvation when you let go of the prison of concepts when you awaken in the terminology of the course in miracles you become a savior of the world because by embodying that state of consciousness you help others become free also even just by being not necessarily by formal teaching although you might do some teaching too and when you embody that state of consciousness in the terminology of the course in miracles you become a as it calls you become a teacher of god that's the term frequently used in the course even though you might not necessarily teach as such but by embodying this the awakened state of consciousness you cannot not teach it might not even be through words it could be through your non-reactivity through the way in which you relate to other human beings and so on then everything you do is a teaching the way in which you behave even your very emanation because every human being every life form emanates also a certain energy frequency so even by the emanation your emanation you would become a

teacher and then some of you also of course will use words to teach so you will perhaps even in a formal sense you might teach groups give talks write books who knows but anybody who awakens even if you're not fully awakened even if you're awakening to who you are beyond concepts, you're already a teacher of god according to the course these are the interesting lines here about defensiveness when you feel the need arise to be defensive about anything know that you have identified yourself with an illusion it is not danger that comes when defenses are laid down it is safety it is peace it is joy and it is god so when you feel the need arise to be defensive about anything know that you have identified yourself with an illusion when you become defensive about something then it will be something that is conceptual you as a concept or some concept you hold that you need to defend because you have identified with it so you are defending your sense of self your fictitious sense of self that means you are defending an illusion when you don't defend because the truth of who you are does not mean to be defended so to let go of defenses can be a way of accessing the deeper dimension of who you are and of course takes you beyond ego because the defensiveness is ego ego is conceptual identity and then there is one short line here in my defenselessness my safety lies you are safe already so you don't need to defend anything that brings me to at the very beginning of the course in miracles before even page one there are a few lines that are supposed to summarize the entire course and they go like this nothing real can be threatened nothing unreal exists herein lies the peace of God that's the summary of the entire course and the course is about as long as the whole Bible, it's huge but it can summarize in these few words if you understand what that means you don't need to do the course you might still enjoy reading it but you don't need it nothing real can be threatened nothing unreal exists herein lies the peace of God herein meaning knowing this lies the peace of God I'll just let it be at that, I'm not going to interpret those lines, I believe it's their most powerful if you just let them sink in judgment judgment again the choice to judge rather than to know is the cause of the loss of peace the choice to judge rather than to know so judgment is applying concepts and then you have another dimension that Course in Miracles calls to know and it would Course in Miracles would say that the judgment is not real knowing it's the illusion of knowing and you want to go back to this dangerous activity again and again because this dangerous activity frees you while you're engaged in it from yourself but then of course the moment you come back to your ordinary activities the self re-emerges undoubtedly you are here as a person with a history, a historical person, and hopefully with a future how much future depends to some extent on your age, but who knows you never know, even a young person can suddenly disappear like a soap bubble so you undoubtedly your history that has made you into who you are but if for a moment you forget your history and pretend that there is no past you can do it now I say pretend the reality is there is no past but I don't want to say something that you find too hard to accept so I say pretend let's pretend that there is no past, why do I say there is no past? because you've never experienced the past, it was always the present moment whatever you remember from the past was the present moment when it happened otherwise it could not have

happened and you can only remember it now, in this moment in the light of consciousness you remember something that you call the past let's pretend a moment you don't have it you don't have a past and the most dreadful thing let's pretend that also you don't have a future you don't have a past?

ok, I'm ok with that but don't take away my future because that's a dreadful thing if you went into a doctor's office and he says I'm afraid you have little future left so but let's pretend there is no past and no future, there is only this moment and you don't need to remember conceptually who you are why? no need to remember the self concept the image of who you are no past no future who are you? how do you perceive yourself?

how do you what does it feel like to be you in this moment without past and future, is there anything left of you in this moment without past and future which means without concepts which means without thoughts but not without consciousness is there anything left of you in this moment if you have no past and you have no future, who are you without past and future and you cannot answer that question because any answer would be a concept concept is from the past who are you? so the answer to who are you without past and future cannot be conceptual words, no the answer of who or what you are without past and future can only be a realization a moment of ah so who am I without past and future what does it feel like to be me without memory, without memorizing who I am and that's now you're getting there there is something that is we have to use words of course which distort it but there is a strange sense of presence of beingness, you know that you are but without adding you know who I am but you don't know what or who because that's conceptual the bare sense of beingness or presence is left when there is no past or future that's just a pure sense of beingness or presence at first it seems to be nothing and you cannot analyze it and it's very hard to talk about but you know there is there's something or you could even say there's just a spaciousness a space, perhaps that's what the Buddha meant when he talked about emptiness there is a spaciousness and that's and then if you if you're aware of that it tends to deepen sometimes for brief moments you can get it accidentally in certain situations in life brief moments of liberation from the self and you go perhaps you see something very beautiful and for a moment you're transported out of yourself there's just a pure perception against the background of awareness ah for a moment you are liberated from yourself or a dangerous activity that requires your absolute presence you can't be thinking about your problems or your life situation, you have to be absolutely totally there and you feel so much more alive and you want to go back to this dangerous activity again and again because this dangerous activity frees you while you're engaged in it from yourself but then of course the moment you you come back to your ordinary activities the self re-emerges oh I have to climb another mountain now and that's good and then going beyond the self and as you know I've often spoken about there's a huge desire in every human to become free of themselves they don't know, they cannot verbalize it, they wouldn't say it in this way but there's a huge desire, there's even a lot,

there's an obscure fascination that humans have it's most fear but also a pull about the end of the world everybody is fascinated by stories of the end of the world is coming oh there's fear but there's also a kind of longing because the end of the world is also freedom from myself and there are no taxes anymore to pay and no exams and no worries about careers the end of the world especially if the world is making you unhappy the end of the world would be a great thing of course the world is largely in your mind so you don't need the end of the world to be free of yourself it'll happen soon enough but of course you can lower your level of consciousness so that you fall below thinking by drugs, taking drugs or alcohol in large amounts and they have the effect of pulling you below thinking which but they liberate you temporarily from yourself also not always but often they liberate you from yourself and you feel, that's why people feel happy when they drink not everybody some people get even more aggressive when they drink, that's another story we might go into another day many feel happy because they don't remember their problems and this is a this is also there are some humans who exist below the level of thinking which is the level of egoic the egoic mind and in the past they used to be called fools or idiots these words you must not use anymore nowadays people who live below thinking and these people don't have a problematic sense of self because they haven't arrived at that yet, it's like the dog the dog doesn't have a problematic sense of self what problems does the dog have?

self esteem self esteem do you have a problem with self esteem? do you have a weight problem? are you anxious about the future?

yes, my next meal I'm looking for but that's all once the meal is there, it's fine the fool is a mythical figure too in mythology and literature the fool can do things that highly developed humans cannot do more recent manifestations of that in fiction, for example the hobbit he's not highly intelligent most other people the hobbit interacts with are more intelligent than the hobbit, it's a simple creature and yet only he can do certain tasks because he's still more deeply connected with being with the source, has not developed a conceptual sense of self and does not inhabit a conceptual reality Forrest Gump the movie another character like that who does great things and is supported by life but doesn't claim credit because he has no ego yet hasn't arrived at it yet so you're not here to go that way we are not attempting to regress from the thinking mind and fall below thinking this is why this may be a good moment to mention it I discourage certainly excessive consumption of intoxicating beverages while you're here even any consumption of intoxicating or if English is not your native language I'm talking about alcohol if you cannot enjoy a meal without a glass of wine that's fine but two or three or four can greatly interfere with the arising of awareness or presence unless you're deeply rooted in it then it doesn't matter anymore but then you wouldn't want to drink a lot so that's something to be aware of here because it will pull you below thought and then you might think you're present and you might even convince somebody sitting next to you at dinner that you're enlightened so that's one thing that can pull you below thought and

we don't want to be pulled below thought naturally you will go below thought every night when you become tired and you go to sleep you will feel yourself moving below thought and for that brief moment you're free of yourself also it's delicious to be tired at night and you're in bed the pull is very strong and there's a moment when there's a delicious feeling but you can't have it for very long and then you disappear and then another reality emerges, the dream world and then you're back in some other form and the problems continue another way of becoming addicted to a substance is and again this is important here cell phones and other similar devices it's a huge challenge humans have not realized yet how huge this challenge is of addiction to those devices so my recommendation is here if you want to take real advantage of this situation engage as little as possible with these devices perhaps briefly for 5-10 minutes a day if you have to and for the rest of the time don't even leave it in your room or your safe and if you carry it around the temptation may be too great you might not be able to resist and you know it's in your pocket and some of your attention will move there, wonder what's going on there and it might even still be beeping a message a Facebook post I wonder what they're saying, how many people liked my last post so you may find a certain withdrawal symptoms if you don't engage but that's okay just observe it and you can say oh isn't that interesting I can feel this wanting to get there but saying okay I can feel it but I'm not going there and then it'll dissipate how can we break the addiction to negative thinking and is there a way we can present this to our youth well negative thinking is a many egos love negative thinking because it strengthens the ego the pain body also is often involved in it because the pain body can either feed on other people's reactions towards you which the ego the pain body tries to provoke when it needs to replenish itself then it feeds on the drama or it can feed if there's nobody around on your thoughts negative every negative thought it gets in my life is so fucked up it's so god it's so dreadful can it get any worse or what these people they're so dreadful I just hate these people why is it always this stuff always happens to me doesn't it it's just bound to happen to me why can I never get things right why can they never get things right what he did to me I just can't forget that let me tell you about it what I did was so horrible so horrible I did that 20 years ago I did that I did that terrible thing god what's going to happen tomorrow what am I going to say if he says that what am I going to say then what if I lose that job I think I might get the sack soon I have a feeling that I'll be out in the street I can walk back to my mortgage what can I do what time is it 3am oh god oh and then there's that other thing god I don't think I can take anymore of this ok on one level there is an addiction to that there is something in you that does not want to let go of that type of thinking so in order to do anything about it if I say now mention what you can do about it it presupposes a at least a small degree of awareness while these thoughts happen there must be a small degree of awareness from which you are able to witness whatever is happening and notice that you are engaged in a stream of negative thinking and actually liking it not wanting to get out you can especially with anger which is another form of negative mental emotional state you can see how people if you are trying to say to an angry person would you like me to help you let go of this anger see

what response you get in other words the person does not want to let go of the anger it loves that anger while the person is in its grasp it loves it's the ego the ego loves that anger because in an angry state the ego gets inflated and even an insignificant person in the eyes of the world who has no power in the world can suddenly start shouting and suddenly the ego grows and everybody goes like you see I'm all powerful sometimes you see people in the street they are going around shouting at everybody that's their ego trip because they have nothing else but for the ego even that works don't approach that person and say would you like to be in a peaceful state I can give you some advice so if I say that what you do about it, it presupposes that you know what's happening to you at that moment during that time so there needs to be some awareness and it's likely that it is there if you ask that question you are here so that means there is enough awareness in you while it happens to first of all notice that a part of you at least likes it not the awareness but if you are aware you realize there is something in me that does not want to get out of it if it's been going on for years even your sense of identity or an important part of your sense of identity is in that negative mental emotional state some people have it in the background almost all the time but they are unaware of it, it becomes part of their identity and these are people if you are very sensitive and sometimes you don't even need to be that sensitive when you meet a person like that you can sense in the background there is something waiting for the next thing to be angry about or as somebody once said a grievance looking for a cause now the internet is full of people like that they love going on there so the internet has given the ego a new way of expansion and anybody can go in there and express find a cause and then express their grievance so identity can be associated with that if there is awareness then you can notice while it happens that there is an enjoyment of that negative state then you can also be aware that the mind activity that is happening in you is futile and fulfills no useful purpose whatsoever and then you go hmm these thoughts, isn't that interesting, what is the purpose of these thoughts, does it change the world, do they change the world change anything or do they just drag me drag me into this hole more deeply there is a unconscious belief in the mind also if I complain enough about something even if it's only mentally but especially out loud if I complain enough it's going to change eventually that somehow it works if I just show how unhappy I am then God or the universe or somebody is going to do something about it so many adults believe what little children sometimes find when they become really unhappy and start screaming then they get attention by their parents what's wrong, before they didn't get any attention but when they go I want this and the mother father comes what's wrong, I want this no you can't have it I want this no ok here it is and now they've learned a very important lesson, their mind and that lesson is unhappiness works and if that is repeated many times in childhood, the adult still has that unconscious belief in their mind and so they enter periodically enter states of unhappiness in the unconscious belief that things are going to change if I'm really unhappy now it might work while you're a little child because your parents can't stand the screaming anymore so they give you what you want the adult some adults never figure out that unhappy states do not work when they're adults and they continue to

practice what they learned as little children for the rest of their lives never realizing that it doesn't work laughter so the recognition that negative thinking and unhappy states actually do nothing to change anything, if anything they make it worse laughter so if there's enough awareness and you can suddenly look at that and then you can ask yourself from the point of, from the deeper perspective of awareness do I want to continue to think these thoughts is that helpful or good, do I really want that is it what is it doing what would it be how would I experience this situation without it so you can, as awareness comes in, choice comes in and then there are moments when you may be able to step out and just be present and the negative stream negative mental emotional stream subsides but it's not gone yet because you don't get rid of it that easily a few moments later another thought comes into your head and immediately a new train of negative thinking starts and you can feel the pull of it there it can be very very strong especially if it's been in your life for a long time you feel the pull of negative thinking come this way, this is so familiar this is where you belong this is who you are and then you need awareness so you can't fight the negative states because that's another negative state but you can be aware and see its futility and ultimately see also how that you are addicted to it but when you see it you're not completely addicted anymore you're only completely addicted when you don't see it when you see it you are the awareness when there's no awareness you are it and you are the ego and you are the addicted the ego that's addicted to unhappiness so it's important by the way as I just mentioned little children if you have a small child to give attention to the child not wait for the child to go into a screaming state or some other negative tantrum and then give the child attention but give the child attention at normal times and don't give excessive attention when there's the screaming and especially don't give the child something after you've said no you can't have that and if he or she just cries enough then finally you give it that's not a good lesson to teach, either you give it immediately or you don't give it and if you think it's bad for the child then of course it's better not to give but of course the parent gives it because he or she wants the crying to stop so you're ok oh dear you're teaching a very wrong lesson by recognizing that there is let's say irritation, anger or anxiety in you you are no longer completely identified with it whenever you are impatient trying to get somewhere waiting for something impatiently what's the next thing I have to do and I have to do that and you're pulled in all kinds of directions what's now, oh now I have to do that and there's always the pull towards the next thing that is I call that sometimes you lose yourself in doing doing is necessary obviously you need to do but to lose yourself in continuous doing is a serious dysfunction but it's so normal that nobody realizes it so if you lose yourself in the doing there's always another and this is how stress arises stress is the gap in the gap between now and later, the projected then, now and then in that gap arises the stress arises, so the mental projection towards future creates the stresses between I'm here but I want to be there and for many humans that is their predominant state, they are always they are here but they really want to be there either there in space or time it's amazing and even you awakening beings may still sometimes or often find yourself in that state where you suddenly

realize that the whole day you've been stressed about this, that and that this is what makes so many demands upon you, you need to deal with this and this and this, amplified by the gadgets that we now use, which is an amplification of the dysfunction through this and you lose yourself in the doing you become completely uncentered and basically lost there are many it happens even to children already at an early age these days and many children are suffering from attention deficit disorder and so on, which means their mind is being pulled away from the present moment so lost in doing lost in doing really comes back to lost in thinking thinking underlies doing so you are lost in your thoughts about the world and then you engage in all kinds of activities propelled by thoughts that now I need to do this, now I need to do that so the basic condition still for most humans on the planet so fundamentally yes, they are lost in doing they lose themselves in doing but basically it means they are lost in their mind, in the movement of thought now, you identify then, they identify with every thought that arises many thoughts are about future or the past not that many thoughts are about the present moment and if they are about the present moment then it is an interpretation of the present moment that is completely determined and colored by your past conditioning so, very interesting to observe in oneself this tendency to deny devalue disregard reduce the present moment to a means to an end it's always a means to an end but it's never recognized for what it is in itself and often it is not it is more than a means to an end for many humans this is a very dysfunctional way of being for many humans the present moment is actually regarded unconsciously as an obstacle that they need to get beyond there is a continuous underlying unease and what's the next thing that's going to go wrong I know it's going to happen lost in the mind lost in thought there was an Indian teacher who described the essential human condition as lost in thought and of course that's how it is this is then this movement of thought gives you your sense of identity the unease the uneasy narrative the problematic narrative of me and my life I have to think about this when I wake up in the middle of the night and I carry this heavy burden of my problematic life for many humans their identity is unconsciously regarded as a problem to be solved I am a problem that I'm looking for a solution to this problem that I am and of course then you go to a therapist now if the therapist is good he might be able to take you beyond that depends if he or she is not good then you get more deeply entrenched and 15 years later you are still undergoing psychoanalysis and find ever deeper layers of complexity in your past and there's no end to it so the present moment is devalued not recognized regarded either as a means to an end or an obstacle that is for many humans that is their predominant state of mental emotional state and as I said their identity is derived from that so it's the error lies in identification with thought now the question arises who or what is it that identifies with thought if I am not the story that I tell myself about who I am if I am not ultimately that then who or what am I and what is it in me that identifies with the story what is it that creates this sense of identity that is mostly exists mostly in a state of unease or very often discontent because it cannot acknowledge the present moment that is the ego by the way that's what we call it the egoic sense of self there is a very simple spiritual practice to get you to the realization of

who or what it is that identifies I suggest at this moment that observe yourself internally right now to see if there is any lingering emotion in you perhaps from earlier today or an hour ago or yesterday or the past two years or the past ten years can you feel for example is there an irritation somewhere is there some kind of anxiety is there kind of heaviness a certain heavy mood a despondent mood perhaps is it lingering there is there anger big thing some residue of anger from what happened earlier is that in you and then normally humans would say I am angry or they would say I am anxious, I am fearful I am in a bad mood now there is already a delusion when the moment you say I am angry or I am anxious that indicates already that you have identified with the emotion of anger or the emotion of sadness or the emotion of fear you have identified, you equate I with what arises in your field of consciousness so you say I am angry it would be more correct to say I am angry there is anger in me right now now it may sound a trivial difference between saying I am angry and there is anger in me but there is a significant difference which goes beyond mere syntax how you put words together because when you say I am you equate I with whatever condition is there in you this applies to emotion and it also applies to thought when because anger is often not just the anger as emotion, the anger also exists as angry thoughts and then they reinforce each other as a vicious circle when you are trapped in irritation or anger the emotion feeds the thought and the thought feeds more energy to the emotion it's a vicious circle and you don't want to get out of it you might notice when you observe an angry person or a despondent person or an anxious person they don't really want to be free of the anger they don't want their if you suggested to an angry person you can be free you will not get a pleasant answer and you've seen angry people they are in the grip of anger or irritation they cannot help it then they shout at you and then they leave the room and a minute later the door opens they come back because they thought of something else to insult you with they are in the grip of it there is complete identification with thought and emotion

[Speaker 2] (9:49:58 - 9:50:00)

they are lost

Eckhart Tolle Talk YouTube 02

[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 5:44)

In thought, they are lost in emotion, but who or what is it that is lost? If I am not the thoughts and the emotion, who or what am I? Okay, I just asked you to just have a look inside yourself and see what it is, if there's anything there that's jarring and doesn't feel good, but it's there.

And I'm not saying try to get rid of it, no. Acknowledge the present moment. The present moment is what is, externally or internally.

That's what is. But there's a huge difference now. You've already, by recognizing that there is, let's say, irritation, anger, or anxiety in you, an additional element or dimension has come in.

And that dimension, we could call awareness, or we could call it presence. And the moment awareness comes in, you are no longer completely identified with it. One could say, I sometimes describe it as, let's say, there's the anger, and as your awareness of the anger comes in, there's a little bit of space around it.

That's the awareness. The awareness knows that there's anger. The anger may still be there.

It may not immediately disappear, but the awareness knows it's there. Or whatever else it may be. The arising of awareness is spiritual awakening.

The disidentification that happens when awareness arises, that is the spiritual awakening, or the arising of the transcendent dimension of consciousness. Transcendent because it transcends who or what you are as a person. Yes, you are still a person.

You have your personality. You have your memories that hasn't changed. You still have a narrative in your mind, but you call it your life.

But it's no longer, there begins to be a shift. A shift from identifying with that which arises either on the level of thinking or on the level of the emotion, to identifying with or being the observing conscious presence. That is the awakening out of identification with form.

Thought forms, emotional forms. So this is where when you realize thought, thoughts that go through your mind in the unconscious state, the thought has you in its grip. The thought, you don't think in the unconscious state.

Thinking happens to you and you can't help it. The thinking mind does what it wants to do and you don't even know that there's anything other than the movement of thought

in you because you're so in the grip of it that there's nothing beyond that. So every thought that arises becomes the truth for you.

It has you in its grasp. One way of putting it is you believe in every thought that comes into your head, no matter how crazy. That's something, that's how it is.

And then you, if you look on the internet where people communicate with each other on social media and so on, you can easily see how a person's opinion becomes their identity. Now, an opinion is no more than a form of thought, a movement of thought, a certain mental position. Opinion turns into identity and then, because opinion has turned into identity, anybody who has a different opinion becomes threatening to you because it's your identity, your sense of self.

It's a fiction, but this person becomes your enemy. Ha, ha. Ha, ha.

Ha, ha. Ha, ha. Ha, ha.

So when thought becomes identity, then anybody who questions the thought that you had identified with is the enemy. And that's a deeply unconscious thing for human beings to be trapped in, a very unconscious state, and it wreaks havoc on the planet because it also happens collectively. Identities, there's a collective identity too in groups of people, nations, tribes, religions, or movements within religions and so on.

So to free yourself from that, that is spiritual awakening.

[Speaker 13] (5:46 - 6:13)

And then you can contemplate with detachment what time is doing to your body, okay?

[Speaker 1] (6:15 - 19:23)

Because your sense of identity is no longer derived from body, who you are, obviously. That's sometimes a difficult step to take, to go deeper beyond. There are some people who have a particularly, body that is more beautiful or more well-developed than normal bodies.

Normal bodies are kind of, well, I'm not sure. And then there are other bodies that are definitely not great. You can't, but people to still identify, it makes them unhappy.

For many years, I had body identification too, but not in a proud way. It made me unhappy because it was less, much less good looking than other, most other bodies, actually. And so if you have body identification, it can either, it can create pride and enhance your ego.

Well, any identification enhances your ego, even a negative one. So I had body, negative body identification made me unhappy for quite a few years. And that's also ego.

The ego, the negative profile of ego. The egos are not always happy egos. Many egos are miserable egos, just as strong as the happy ones that say, I am the greatest.

And then the other ego, I'm the most miserable, just as strong as the other. So ego is not just, hey, look at me. What's the egos?

Oh no. Why is all these horrible things always happening to me? I feel so miserable.

I'm not, it's all still egos and narratives. So anyway, I had ego identification, but I could see perhaps a little bit easier for if you have a negative identification with the body, it's perhaps easier to let go because you're more motivated to let go of that. But if you have a positive body identification, very good looking, whether man or woman or strengths.

If you look like Arnold in his younger years, how can you not identify with your body if your body looks just like, just coming, just like some ancient Greek god or something. Like, and so, or you're very beautiful. And every time you look in the mirror, you see how beautiful you are.

And you continuously, these days you continuously post images of yourself into the world. Look at me, look at me, look at me. And you have thousands of people who love you.

They send love signs. Me, me. And so many people have this, their strongest identification is with body and the rest, the psychological entities come secondary.

That's also ego, of course, but psychological entity, whatever they are on the level of their personality, it becomes secondary or whatever, what they have achieved becomes even secondary. But the body figures so prominently in their sense of identity. That goes on for years.

When I was in my 20s, and if somebody had asked me, if some god had come down and asked and said to me, I offer you a deal. I take away, I'll give you a great body like Arnold, or well, not, it doesn't have to be that extreme, but just a good looking body. Well, some would say Arnold is a bit, going over the top a bit, that's a bit, but just a beautiful.

I would have that, but we have to give up 20 years of your life. You are 20 years younger, but I'll give you a great body that you can enjoy for a few decades. For three decades, you can enjoy this.

I would have said, it's a deal. And I would be dead now. I wouldn't be here.

I would have enjoyed perhaps ego satisfaction during those years and sensory satisfaction through countless physical encounters with women. And would have exhausted myself. And would have died young as predicted by the god who came.

We were walking, or I was walking on a waterfront, I believe in Sydney, Australia. It was a lovely day. I believe it was perhaps a Sunday morning and not excessively hot, just a very pleasant temperature.

Everybody was enjoying themselves. And then I saw one man walking without a shirt on, just bare. And he had a fantastic body and everybody's kind of looking at him.

And I thought it's strange that he was the only person who felt too hot, he had to take off his shirt. Strange. And then comes a time, the time that eventually becomes your enemy, when you'd say you have, for years you identified with your good looks and then after a while you realize the same thing is happening to you.

It just takes decades. That's happening if you put a fresh apple on your windowsill and wait a few weeks and see what happens to the apple that you leave there. It kind of shrinks and becomes, it develops.

It goes. Before it looked. After a few weeks, the apple shrinks and it's old, an old apple.

It happens to all life forms and that can become a source of great suffering. There is still time for you when this suffering sets in, you realize you're no longer beautiful because old age is eroding your beauty. And then when you compare yourself to younger humans, you begin to feel inferior and to get resentful.

Look how he's young. And you feel diminished and that's painful. So many humans who are identified with bodies, as they get older, they move into a period of unhappiness, increasing unhappiness, unless they can break through that and go to a deeper level.

Some can, some cannot. It's, I would advise to go to that deeper level before the time starts to erode you as soon as possible. But there's always a chance to go there.

So at the latest, shortly before you die, I would hope. But for many people when they reach old age, the patterns are so deep seated that are associated with the ego identity. They're so, they have become so rigid and so deep seated that they get trapped in them.

There's nothing you can do. We've all met old people like that. Instead, old age is meant to be a flowering of consciousness.

When the body begins to dissolve, something else emerges and it can be a beautiful thing. In many other cases, this does not happen. And we've all met old people who are cranky and angry.

Your grandfather, perhaps. You're still in all that spiritual nonsense. Are you still doing that?

It's all rubbish, obviously. I know it all. I've seen it all.

And I have an opinion about everything. I know everything. And it's all dreadful.

They're all idiots, all of them. And then it dies. My God.

So no matter where you are at in the movement of time, this moment is the best moment to step out of the movement of time and take your attention into the timeless so that you learn to be connected with that consciously for the rest of your life in this form. What is this thing that you cannot doubt? You say, I cannot doubt that I'm conscious because if I were not conscious, I wouldn't experience anything, whether it's a dream or not, it's secondary.

Even to dream something, there needs to be a consciousness that is experiencing the dream. So there's a consciousness that's experiencing this world, I am that.

[Speaker 3] (19:24 - 19:30)

Now, this is a very subtle and simple thing.

[Speaker 1] (19:31 - 19:32)

Very subtle, very simple.

[Speaker 3] (19:34 - 19:54)

Can you be conscious right now of the fact that you are conscious? And you cannot do that by thinking about it.

[Speaker 1] (19:56 - 20:47)

That is an obstacle to that realization. You can only become conscious, that you're conscious by letting go of thought. You don't, just for a moment, let go of thought.

And what is it that remains of you when you let go of thought, but you haven't fallen asleep at all, but you've let go of thought? What is it that remains of you when you're not thinking? You're not thinking about the world and you're not thinking about yourself.

You're not thinking. Just a gap between two thoughts. The gap opens up.

[Speaker 3] (20:53 - 20:59)

And in that gap, you know that you are.

[Speaker 1] (21:01 - 26:14)

You don't know how you know it, but you know that there is a presence and you are that conscious presence. You know that. I'm already putting it into words, but the knowing is beyond words.

You know that you are this presence. Now, you know that you are this presence, so you know, but you don't know anything else about this presence. There's nothing to know about this presence.

And you don't know it in the same way that you know a table or a dog or another human. That's not how you know this presence. You know the presence in you knows itself.

You can sense your own consciousness. The consciousness knows itself. It's not an object, it's a subject.

So another way of putting it is you realize that you are. And the realize that you are, I wouldn't say that you exist. That's a different term.

Some philosopher and some spiritual teachers might use that term, but I would prefer not to say exist because to exist is to stand out, to be some particular thing. You exist as a person, you exist. Ex means out.

Ex is from Latin to stand, to stand out. Something that exists is manifested. That's why it exists.

It stands out. But this is prior to existence. The person that you are temporarily exists.

But prior to this person, there is a timeless dimension of pure being or consciousness where all you can say about yourself is, I am, if you want to say anything. And you wouldn't add anything to the I am. It's the realization of being between two thoughts.

You can sense it. It's nothing to do with intellect or thinking. You don't need a high IQ.

It doesn't matter whether your IQ is high or low, whether you're educated or uneducated. You can sense this beyond what your personal history is, whether you're an abject failure in the eyes of the world or you're the greatest thing that ever happened, the greatest VIP that ever happened in the world makes no difference to this realization. This is the essence realization and it's very, very simple.

That's the kingdom of heaven that Jesus was talking about, that you cannot say, oh, it's over here or it's over there. You cannot, it's not an object. It's the subject, the eternal subject.

So for a moment, and you don't need to say, okay, I'm going to meditate on it. You don't even need to meditate. Meditation is wonderful for those who practice it.

But this realization can be there at any moment. Like now, when you become conscious that you are conscious and beyond that, you don't know much, you don't know anything, but you have gone deeper into yourself and you have touched a deeper dimension out of which all those things that can transform your life into something benevolent and fruitful emerge. They emerge from that deeper dimension of being itself or consciousness itself.

Now, what are those things that make your life into something benevolent, your contribution to life into something benevolent and fruitful and even joyful? Those things are creativity, creative insights. They come from the deeper place of the unconditioned consciousness.

So in other words, in order to be creative, you have to have some access to that dimension that is beyond thinking. Then perhaps the creative impulse comes. This is the evolution, the evolutionary process, your evolution and the evolution of this planet and life on this planet and the evolution of the universe, a single phenomenon.

Your evolution is part of the evolution of the universe, the evolution of consciousness. And that comes, these are vast subjects.

[Speaker 3] (26:15 - 26:19)

Each segment of this one could talk about for many hours.

[Speaker 1] (26:21 - 28:50)

When you, in order to have access to any kind of creative spark in your life, you have to have some access to that essence dimension, the light of consciousness, even if it's only brief. For a moment, the writers, the artists, or even the scientists or the business persons, for a moment, their mind stops, but they remain acutely alert and present. And then the mind starts again, and then their ability to bring some creative solution to whatever situation they encounter has suddenly increased dramatically.

Another way of putting that is you could, another thing that emanates from there and is inseparable from what I just called creativity is a term that's rarely used these days, but it's of extraordinary importance. If we don't, the world, if more humans do not find that in this world, then the evolutionary process is going to get much more difficult, but eventually it'll be fine. Wisdom, wisdom.

If you cannot find, if humans cannot find that dimension, then where does it emanate? That same place, wisdom emanates from that deeper place of presence, awareness, the light of consciousness. It comes from there.

The modern world doesn't even know what to do with wisdom, but I don't know. It's unlikely that you'll ever hear wisdom anywhere on CNN or Fox News or New York Times. Probably they don't talk about wisdom.

What is that wisdom? It's not intelligence, it's how to use the mind. The mind is, you can have very developed mind, but no wisdom.

[Speaker 3] (28:51 - 28:53)

That's very dangerous.

[Speaker 1] (28:54 - 33:04)

The more developed your mind becomes, which means your mind is separated. You can see, it sees isolated problems and tries to tackle isolated problems here and there. This is the problem, and this is what we need to do to solve this problem.

And at first it looks great, but because there's lack of wisdom, they have not looked at the problem in its totality. And so you have completely ignored the repercussions of what you're going to do to solve this problem because you focused only on this problem. But what are the repercussions of the action that you took to solve this problem?

You have not looked at the totality. And why have you not looked at the totality? Because you are trapped in your mind.

The mind can only focus on the particular. It cannot see the whole. Wisdom can see the whole, but in order to see the whole of a situation, for a moment, you need to come to a cessation of thinking and so that you have an awareness.

And then you look at the awareness, the awareness looks at the problem. And then you suddenly see things, first non-conceptually, you see how everything is interrelated. And then you see, if I do this, the repercussions will be that.

This is many times the world, the action taken to solve a problem, and this is important because the number of problems that we are facing collectively is increasing. We need wisdom to solve. If without wisdom, every action we take to solve a particular problem will actually make it worse.

Even if it solves that problem, it will have created two or three or four other even bigger problems. So wisdom is of extraordinary importance and wisdom emanates from that place of the realization of yourself as that spacious space, that space of awareness, of presence. Thought subsides.

So it's not only creativity and wisdom that emanate from that place. All the things that make, as I said before, all the things that make life fruitful and make you into a benevolent human being, what also emanates from there is empathy, empathy with other humans, empathy with other life forms, the ability to have compassion emanates. Because you're no longer trapped in your exclusive personal sense of identity, you cannot have empathy and compassion.

When you are trapped in this personally, exclusively personal sense of self, then all you need to do is protect this ultimately fictitious identity. And anybody who is engaged in protecting or enhancing and attempting to enhance this ultimately fictitious identity, this person cannot have empathy, cannot have compassion. It's not impossible no matter what, no matter how many religious books they read, they can't.

So it's empathy, compassion, and ultimately love. Love, which is, of course, these are all connected. They are, one could almost say, they are aspects of the realization of being, of your essence identity.

[Speaker 3] (33:04 - 33:18)

So they are enhanced creativity, wisdom, empathy, compassion, and ultimately love.

[Speaker 1] (33:19 - 45:19)

Now, love not in the conventional sense, which is egoic, which says, I want you and I need you. Don't you dare leave me. And don't you dare disappoint me or betray me.

And I'll get really angry. Not that kind of love, but a love that comes from the realization of being. When you realize yourself as the light of consciousness, you can sense that same light in every other being, even beyond their personality.

The personality may be, even if the personality is obnoxious, as many personalities are, even if the person is very difficult and many people, you might have experienced that many people are difficult. In fact, for many humans, their main problems in life come from other people. So people are very difficult and many personalities are obnoxious.

And yet there, even there, yes, you don't, you see the personality and the conditioned entity, but beyond the personality and the conditioned entity, you can sense the same beingness that you sense in yourself. There's a light of consciousness in every human, even if it might be veiled, heavily veiled, concealed by condition, heavy conditioning. And in some people, I must admit, the light is very deeply hidden, very deeply in some, in others, less deeply hidden.

And in many, the light shines, even periodically, sometimes it shines through more and then it's obscured again. There are other humans where it's so hidden that it might be even hard to sense it, but you can, if you sense it deeply within yourself, you can even, you can, and I have experienced occasionally in my life, meeting very difficult people, including, okay, on various occasions, mentally disturbed people, meeting them and for a moment sensing their consciousness by sensing my consciousness, it's the same consciousness, sensing that, and for a moment I've experienced, I'm not going into detail here, a deeply disturbed person for a few minutes, suddenly becoming extremely present and conscious, totally freed of their paranoid, in this case, paranoid delusions, completely free suddenly, less if the heavy clouds had suddenly parted. So there's a healing effect that you can have on other people, never in the sense that you have some kind of egoic identity that says, I'm going to heal the world, that's not how it works. Or then you meet somebody and immediately you tell everybody what's wrong with them and says, but I can heal you, that's all ego, so don't need to go there.

You're not doing anything. As the Course in Miracles says, a healer does not heal, he lets

healing be. He lets healing be.

And so, and be is kind of the key word here because that's how it happens to the realization of being, the realization of consciousness. And so then, that the essence then is this realization, then the way in which you meet or face the problems of this world, the difficulties of this world, whether they be of a personal or collective nature, changes, which means your entire reality changes because your reality is not what happens to you ultimately. That's not your reality.

Your reality is how you react or how you face the state of consciousness with which you face what's happening around you. So far, my iPhone has not become conscious. Every day I look at it and say, no, not yet.

Last question. Many scientists believe we will soon create machines which can think far more powerfully than humans. Is it possible that such machines could become self-aware and develop consciousness?

And if so, could a spiritual machine arise or can such properties exist only through a biological substrate that takes us into science fiction? A very fundamental question that mainstream science has an answer for that, but I believe a change will come. The origin of consciousness.

Is consciousness an epiphenomenon? If you don't like that word, let's use by-product. Is consciousness a by-product of the physical brain or in other words, is consciousness created by the material brain or is consciousness ultimately independent of the brain and only manifests in a particular way, through the biological brain in the same way that a radio receiver does not produce the radio program, but it receives it and then it gives it a particular form and so we can receive it through it. It's a medium for transmitting consciousness, but the consciousness does not originate in the radio receiver.

And as I've already dwelt for two minutes on this particular image of radio receiver, you see what I believe to be the case that the consciousness is not produced by the brain, but it uses the brain, but that's up to you. It's not ultimately decisive what you believe here. Is it possible that machine achieve such complexity that they can become vehicles for consciousness?

If the brain does not produce consciousness, which I believe we are going to realize soon, even in the mainstream, if the brain does not produce consciousness, but is a conduit for consciousness, is it possible that machines, they would have to become incredibly complex because even our most complex computers are very primitive compared to the brain. If they ever achieve such complexity that they become capable of transmitting consciousness, it is conceivable, or there could be a symbiosis, but being biological and non-biological, as we've seen in some movies, biological and non-biological and become a semi-biological computer. And so, yes, of course, there can be

all kinds of things.

The universe is infinite in its capacity for creating new forms. And it's well possible that it could create, through humans, another life form that is capable, not of producing consciousness, but of receiving consciousness. So, so far, my iPhone has not become conscious.

Every day I look at it and say, no, not yet. All right. Although sometimes it looks as if it had a mind of its own, as the expression goes.

This one could talk about for much longer, but it would also be interesting to write spiritual science fiction. Some of it exists already. Some episodes of Star Trek, The Next Generation, have a strong spiritual, as you can see, I'm a fan, have a strong element of spirituality to them.

I even played with the idea of showing an episode of Star Trek, Next Generation here, but we may not do it this time. Just present, just a space of presence. There's nobody in particular here, not a person, just points of presence.

All expressions of the one consciousness manifesting as little points of light, which sometimes mistake themselves as persons. They flicker for a moment and then they die down and another one arises. That's you, the light of consciousness.

You are that, and then it withdraws and then the body goes, gone. And then it comes again. Wonderful.

[Speaker 11] (45:49 - 46:40)

My question is around the issue of psychiatric medications and awakening. We have talked about this issue on ETT Forum. It is an issue in my life situation and the life situation of many others on the Forum.

Some believe they need to go off their medications to awaken and others say without the medication they would not have enough clarity to even begin to bring presence in their lives. My question is, can a person take psychiatric medication and still awaken? Will psychiatric medication hold a person back or slow down the awakening process?

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (46:52 - 46:58)

May I ask a personal question? Are you on medication?

[Speaker 11] (46:59 - 46:59)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (47:00 - 58:34)

But you're also here. That is already part of the answer because for you to be here, there must be some inner recognition of awareness. And so despite whatever the medication is or whatever the condition, your condition is, there is an arising of awareness.

So it's easier for me to answer this question because you are standing there than an abstract question. You are living proof. I'm not saying necessarily you don't experience periods when you are taken over by whatever patterns there are in the mind, but there is an opening into awareness, which is not the case with many people who are not on medication or who are considered normal.

They are not standing here. Many of them are not and wouldn't be. In them, there is no opening.

So one cannot say categorically under this or that condition, awareness cannot arise, awakening cannot happen. As a general rule, before anybody seeks help of that kind, I would advise to explore other possibilities. If you wish to gradually become free of medication, which in many cases can obscure the awareness that wants to arise, you would need to do it with a physician who is relatively conscious.

There are some. There may be a twofold question. One question is, with medication, is awareness able to come through?

And of course, that depends what kind of medication or what period of time and other factors. But in some cases, I believe it is. In other cases, it's not, but it can obscure the awareness.

The other question is a certain mental, what is diagnosed as mental illness, can awareness arise there? And again, that depends on the nature of the illness. Sometimes in the West, shifts in consciousness are misinterpreted.

If they happen suddenly, they can be misinterpreted and misdiagnosed by a physician. And Western physicians, because they're conditioned by the Western system, have no idea of shifts in consciousness. It's not part of the medical model.

There are no shifts in consciousness in psychiatry. So you can either, you're normal, but normal, of course, is insane, but they don't know that. Or you're ill, you're diseased, the mind is ill.

And there are people who are put on medication, unfortunately, children sometimes in increasing numbers, in whom there may simply be a change in consciousness happening. There are children who, for the most absurd reasons, are put on medication just to keep them quiet. And people like who in India, Ramana Maharshi, the Indian sage who, when he was 17, 16 or 17, suddenly did something that in the West would have

been regarded as a sign of severe mental illness.

He left his home, he went to, took a train, and he sat down by a temple and stopped doing anything, didn't even put food in his mouth, just sat. And of course, in the West, they would have put him away. And in India, they respected it and allowed him to sit there and fed him as people came.

And after a few years, he started to speak again. And it turned out that he was awakened, he had awakened. But the shift was so sudden that he became dysfunctional for a while, from a normal viewpoint, became dysfunctional, couldn't operate anymore in the world.

So this can happen to people sometimes, and it's totally misinterpreted. So often, what is called medical psychiatric illness, not always, can be a misdiagnosed shift in consciousness. At other times, there is actually a condition there with which it would be very difficult to live.

Many types of so-called schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is a huge term which can be applied if you don't know what exactly is wrong, you call it schizophrenia, it's almost like that. The same way in a physical body, it's a viral infection.

They don't really know, but this is a term that covers a lot of things. It's a viral infection. Oh, now I know what it is.

And then schizophrenia, now I know what it is. In many cases, it is true that in mental illness, the very cause of the illness can be total identification with certain mental movements. Lack of awareness.

I've had limited success when I worked with people one-on-one some years ago. I had some people who had forms of schizophrenia who came to see me who were on medication. And by sitting with them and pointing to the possibility of awareness, they were able to become free and eventually also become free of the medication.

For example, I remember one case, a woman came to see me who had severe auditory hallucinations, so-called voices. And again, we don't even know whether the entities actually are talking to her. That's possible, but it really comes to the same thing, whether it's thoughts in her head that take the form of a voice that she hears.

The voice tells her to do something. It's very insistent, or several voices sometimes, very insistent, telling her to do this, do that. And enormous energy behind that voice.

And the way I approached it was to point out the possibility of not giving, not paying attention to the content of what the voice says, but simply to be aware that there is a voice speaking and that it is a voice in the head. It is a thought. I called it a thought.

Maybe it's something else, but it comes to the same thing. It's a thought. It's a voice.

Whatever it says, there's a voice. Be the awareness for the voice. Don't fight it.

Be the awareness so that the voice, you don't do what the voice says because you disregard the content. So if the voice says, you are God, say thank you, there's a voice again. If the voice says, you are the devil, thank you, there's the voice again.

You are the awareness for the voice. Disregard the content. Then gradually, the voice lost its power because she disregarded the content of the voice.

Awareness grew. So ultimately, the healing in any case is awareness. So awareness can arise in the strangest circumstances.

And to people, you would never have predicted could arise to, and that includes even people who have a so-called psychiatric disorder or who are on medication. It can happen. Nobody can categorically say that it cannot happen.

In some cases, those people are closer than normal people. As you know, there was a movement in psychiatry in the 60s and 70s where they, some, it was called anti-psychiatry, where it was recognized that often psychiatric conditions are really something else. So it's really, it is simple in your case, that obviously, despite the medication, you are here and something, a shift is happening inside you.

Nothing can stand against the power of awareness ultimately because the power of awareness is the power of the evolution of the universe itself. So nothing really that it will, it seeks the slightest opening and it can come through that. So I would say that trust, that as it's happening, it will continue to happen for you.

And there may be a point when with help, the medication won't be needed anymore as awareness grows, but you need somebody who is conscious to help you with that, a physician who is conscious to help you with that. It's wonderful to see that it is working.

[Speaker 11] (58:38 - 58:41)

It's helped that I've disidentified from it.

[Speaker 1] (58:42 - 58:42)

Yes.

[Speaker 11] (58:43 - 58:44)

And I'm able to be the witness.

[Speaker 1] (58:45 - 58:47)

Yes, that's the power.

[Speaker 11] (58:47 - 58:51)

It's been, my symptoms, less power over me.

[Speaker 1] (58:51 - 58:52)

Yes.

[Speaker 11] (58:52 - 58:54)

And knowing that I'm not that.

[Speaker 1] (58:56 - 1:29:48)

That's right. So that's the key, to be the witness, to be the awareness for whatever it is. It's wonderful.

So I'm very grateful. I'm glad you asked the question and I'm sure there'll be many people who are in a similar position, have the same question. So yes, it is possible.

It is possible. Thanks. Thank you.

Thanks. So to completely rest within yourself, completely come to, the doing needs to come to a stop, but you cannot make that stopping into a doing because then, okay, I need to stop my doing mode. That's more doing.

Can you speak about how to be in this world with this constant push for connectivity on the internet without feeling that being present is another thing to do? You can make a list of things to do, answer emails, check Facebook, make these four or five phone calls, write the report. Call your stockbroker, therapist, whatever.

And number seven, be present. Yes, it's a good question. The being present isn't something, although sometimes when we talk about it, it sounds as if it were something that you do in the same way that when people meditate, many of you probably have a meditation practice and there's that sense that, okay, now I have to do my meditation.

It might even be on your list of things to do. But the very idea that you are now doing a meditation can be an obstacle to doing an actually effective meditation because you're still doing something. And so even while you sit and you, whatever the technique is, it could be that there's still that sense of doing.

And even there could even be a remnants of stress there because you're doing, but you also know that there are many other things that you still have to do, but now you really have to do this meditation. I'm doing it. Don't disturb me, I'm doing it.

I'm trying to do a meditation, I'm trying, but I have so much on my plate too. So the very sense that you're doing something can be the obstacle because we could say that meditation or being present is the realization of being that's always already there, but just not realized. So it's not doing at all.

It's the other dimension in which there's no doing, but there's being, and that is the fundamental dimension. Ultimately, there can be no doing without being. Being is the unconditioned consciousness.

So to completely rest within yourself, completely come to, the doing needs to come to a stop, but you cannot make that stopping into a doing because then, okay, I need to stop my doing mode. That's more doing. But if your approach is just be with what is, completely, nothing to do, nothing to achieve, nowhere to go, just being here, aware, aware of whatever appears in that space of awareness, and if possible, and it is possible, aware that you are aware.

That's it. So there's no doing. So you've gone into being, realized being.

It was always there and is always there. It's just overlooked continuously because of a certain state of consciousness in which the thinking mode has become so overwhelming that you have lost touch with the deeper dimension within yourself. Now, when I say lost touch, does that imply that once you, when I say you, I mean humanity or you, does it mean that once you were in touch with that dimension, perhaps you were in touch with that as a baby until you started to think?

But you went, if that is the case, you were in touch with it unconsciously, didn't know it, it was a natural state. But it seems that if you go back into prehistory, humanity, they, many, many, in many, many traditions and ancient civilizations, there is a myth of the golden age. Once we had that.

In the Old Testament, it's written of as paradise or the garden of Eden. And there are other myths from different parts of the world, including India and so on, of the myth of a very distant past when the suffering wasn't there. The unhappiness wasn't there.

It was the golden age. It's just, is that just a story, a wishful thing? Or is it something, some very distant memory of a different state of consciousness?

And I would suggest that it is a very distant memory of something that we kind of lost, that's not absolutely correct word. But it does not mean that those ancient humans in prehistory necessarily, well, we know very little about anything that goes beyond 3000 years ago, but, and that's little. But it seems that humans lived in connectedness with a source because the mind had not yet, either not yet started up, started to produce thoughts or only very rudimentary thoughts.

And they were still able to rest in the being. In the same way that a cat or a dog, I'm

using those two because many of you have observed them because you have lived with them. Many of you have lived with them.

When they rest, they rest completely. And you can become, if you contemplate a cat at rest, it can help you to actually become still. Or a dog, let's say, go completely, even if they're not asleep yet, they're just...

Some years ago, I saw a movie, I think it was called 1,000,000 Years B.C. It's just a ridiculous, ridiculous title, as if 2000 years made a difference in 1,000,000 years. But it was called 1,000,000 Years B.C. And you saw these transitional beings between animal and human. They were already walking and they had certain, already producing certain sounds, but not yet words, or just very rudimentary sounds that were beginning to represent things.

And then they got into a fight between two tribes, still making partly animal-like sounds. And then the fight comes to an end, a few get killed. And in the evening, they sit around the fire, and it's done very well.

I don't know if the rest of the movie is any good, but I just remember that particular scene. They sit around the fire. They have already discovered how to make fire.

That's an amazing thing. And they sit around the fire, and instead of talking, because they haven't got language about what just happened an hour ago, they just sit and they're completely just at rest. They sit around the fire and they all go, hmm, hmm, hmm, hmm, hmm, hmm, hmm, hmm, hmm.

No nervous excitement left, because it's not being kept alive by the mind and the memory. They're rooted, again, they're returned, they're rooted in being. And that's the, so every animal is more deeply connected.

It's still a deeper connection with being, but it's an unconscious connection. It doesn't know anything else. It's a natural state.

And it's quite likely that humans once had that in their evolutionary journey. And then they started to think, which wasn't a bad thing. It was an amazing thing that they began to think that was just associated with the creation of language, of course, also.

And that's an amazing thing. When they discovered they could produce certain sounds to represent things, amazing. And then they could produce sounds to represent activities.

And then they began to realize they were having these sounds in their head, too, that not, they were beginning to hear thoughts in their head. And some anthropologists believe that, not everybody agrees, they believe that at that time, humans mistook the arising thoughts as gods talking to them. So they heard their own thoughts and said, oh, what do you want me to do?

Kill that neighboring tribe. Okay, we must kill them. And then perhaps the first time, a few humans experienced sleepless nights.

And that was just the beginning. But an amazing, it was an amazing evolutionary step forward. In all this entire civilization, many civilizations arose out of that amazing thing.

But there was a huge price to pay. There's always a price to pay in this world of opposites. There was a huge price to pay for that.

And we all know what that is. It's loss of connectedness with the source. You are alienated from the source, unhappy.

People spend years trying to figure out what Zen is all about in monasteries and still can't figure it out. And this Zen master says, doing one thing at a time. Is that it?

Yes. Well, that stops your mind. Another question here about daily life.

Those are very useful questions to everybody. They're basically everybody's question. How do you balance just being on a moment-to-moment basis all the time with having to make a living and paying bills?

That has been the only difficult part for me. How do you balance just being on a moment-to-moment basis all the time? All the time.

With having to make a living and paying bills, that has been the only difficult part for me. Yes. In other words, how do you balance or bring together being and doing?

Otherwise, you can only experience presence and being when you're sitting absolutely still or you're not being disturbed by anything. That's fine too. At least you have it then.

But it's not enough. So yes, you rightly say, the question is a good one. How do you balance that with paying bills and so on?

In other words, activity in daily life. How can you have that awareness in your daily activities rather than lose yourself in the doing? Well, as a practice, any practice that we now talk about presupposes that there is a minimum of presence in you, because without that, you can't practice.

If there's a minimum of presence in you in any situation, then there's something that you can do. And a minimum of presence or awareness means you're not totally lost, but you can be aware at the beginning of an activity so that you don't get drawn into it totally that you lose yourself in it. And usually it means the future becomes more important than the present moment.

That means you're becoming lost in doing. That's a good indicator. The future moment becomes more important than this moment.

And you need to deal with that. So as a conscious practice, you can do, what do I need to do now? Okay, well, you mentioned paying bills and having to make a living, whatever it is that you do.

The present moment, is it a means to an end for you, or are you honoring the doing in this moment so that it is not primarily a means to an end? Are you trying to get to the future moment more than you want to be in the present moment? That's usually the case with unconscious living.

And usually people are stressed because of that continuous movement of the pull of future, which is no more than the pull of a thought of future, because there is no future out there. I've never seen it. So the future is the thought of future.

So you can, the balance between being and doing is done by being present in the doing, by giving your fullest attention to the doing, rather than believing that you need to get to the end of the doing. Give your fullest attention to whatever your activity is, in your daily activities. Don't make it a means to an end that includes any human interaction.

Low quality human interaction, we've all experienced that. Low quality human interaction is when you meet a human being who is treating you as a means to an end. And so you become reduced to, if you see somebody in a restaurant, you become reduced to a customer.

And so he's not a human being. If you see a doctor, you become reduced to a patient. He doesn't see you, unless he's aware, or she doesn't see you.

You become a patient. You become reduced and only wants to get it over and done with. The person who's trying to sell you something, to this person, you are a means to an end.

He wants to, he or she wants to get to the future moment where the sale is completed. If you refuse to go along with it, and you're not going to buy what he's offering, he's going to be in a negative state. And the negative state in him is already present, even while he's talking to you and still wanting you to sell something, because there's a strong desire for you to finally come to the end of it already.

He's using you as a means to an end, so that he can get to the future moment where he thinks he needs to be. And you can feel that, this is not a high-quality human interaction. And a lot of interaction between humans in our society is of that kind, because they are all just wanting to use the other in their desire, compulsion, compulsive desire, to arrive at the future point where they need to be.

So life gets reduced to something unpleasant, superficial. Nobody is really, nobody is here. They're not, they're not there.

So instead of demanding that these people should change, of course it needs to start with you. Don't make this moment into a means to an end, because it's precious. It's all you ever have.

And whatever appears in this moment is precious. It's the form that this moment takes. So if you're with another human being, it's a precious moment.

It's the form that this moment takes. Don't make it into a means to an end. Honor the form of this moment.

Honor this moment. So if you're dealing with another human being, let's say in business, you're honoring this moment. You're honoring this human being.

You give, in other words, you give this moment your fullest attention. You give the other human being who happens to be there at this moment your fullest attention. Your attention isn't 50, 60, 70 percent in the future where you want to be.

No, it's here completely. And then you, if you are a waiter, you will see that your tips increase a hundredfold if you give every guest your fullest attention and not treat them as a means to an end. If you're a salesman, you'll be extremely successful because the people will love you because everybody loves to be given fullest attention.

So you realize the second, it's second, the situation that every life situation is secondary. Whatever it consists of is secondary. Primary is your practice of presence, of attention, of awareness.

So you use whatever life gives you to do, bring that element of attention to it, of aware presence, and do it with infused, the doing becomes infused with presence. And it shifts. If you think, if you thought your job was boring, well, there was most likely not, not enough presence in the doing.

Even menial jobs, you can become transformed through presence. I have occasionally witnessed, not very often, people at a toll booth where cars stop every few seconds, a car stops and they say, two dollars please. Now, one would think that's not an interesting job where you can be present, but very rarely, once or twice in my life, I have seen somebody there who emanated awareness or presence and everybody was, everybody who stopped there, every driver, was given fullest attention in that moment.

The words didn't matter, thank you, two dollars, thank you, have a nice day. But the energy behind it, again, what we said earlier, situations are secondary, whatever happens. They're all, so treat your whole life as an excuse, whatever situation arises, it's an opportunity for bringing the dimension of presence or awareness in.

Don't believe that the situation is what absolutely matters. What absolutely matters is your state of consciousness, secondary is what you do. In other words, who you are or

what you are, the state of consciousness is primary.

The doing flows out of the being. It's a practice, daily life is spiritual practice. One way of talking about what is Zen, one Zen master simply defined Zen as doing one thing at a time.

That's Zen. You can't get a more simpler definition than that of people spend years trying to figure out what Zen is all about in monasteries and still can't figure it out. And this Zen master says, doing one thing at a time.

Is that it? Yes. Well, that stops your mind.

And then what's left, what's left for you to do is doing one thing at a time. Not be over there, but be here, be present in the doing. And already you are practicing presence, one thing at a time.

It's fullest attention to this one thing. There's only this moment. And this moment then becomes different.

It changes. Its quality changes from low quality to high quality. The doing changes.

The relationship changes to high, high quality. High quality, what I call high quality implies there is the awareness becomes part of the situation. You bring in a new dimension.

So the secret of life is to move in the world of object consciousness, where things continuously happen and have to be dealt with. Okay. Phone rings.

Demands. I want this. You should come and do this.

Are you going to lose yourself in these continuous, the demand of the world of objects, of things that gives, give me your attention. And I'm only speaking right now of the external world, which says, I need you. I need your attention.

This and everything that arises says this matters. Absolutely. And it's serious.

So this situation is very serious. We have to do something now. Okay.

And you can see how you're completely lost in form. You can see. What now?

Okay. And what decisions are you going to take on the basis of that state of consciousness? Oh, we have to do, we have to let these people go.

50 people. We have to let them go. We can't afford to keep them any longer.

Okay. Sack them. Sack them all.

What next? Complete lack of space, which means complete lack of wisdom. Just absurd decisions are being taken.

Nothing can come out of that state of consciousness that does not create more suffering. Because it's a state of ultimately great unbalance, to use a mild word. And a state where everything pretends to matter.

Absolutely. And of course there's continuous underlying fear because all you know is the world of objects, of things, of things happening, of things going wrong, of things that shouldn't be, of things that need to be added to make, so that we can be profitable and make success, become a success. What for?

I don't know. The company needs to grow. It needs to grow.

Grow. What for? So that more people can be part of it and more people can be unhappy.

And to a large extent this is the energy that's still behind a lot of the structures in our civilization. That kind of energy is behind it. It's mad.

Of course it's mad. What is missing? Space.

Can you be here as the bringer of space in any situation?

[Speaker 14] (1:29:58 - 1:29:59)

Hello.

[Speaker 6] (1:30:00 - 1:31:52)

I've been to several of your retreats and my friend encouraged me to ask the question. And I've been thinking about it. And at the last retreat I went to for helping professionals in California, you answered part of the question.

You had picked it and answered it. But both of my parents were Holocaust survivors. My mother was from Auschwitz in 1945 and my father from Bergen-Belsen.

And I had a brother who died in the Warsaw ghetto there. And I have this identification with this collective kind of unconscious where I constantly try to think about what you're saying and how to apply the feeling of there is no problem in the present moment. And I go back, it doesn't happen all the time.

But when you say that, I think about them and I think, how could they have done that? How could they have said in a state of terror, there's no problem right now? And I think about it often.

And I also just want to say that I find it really ironic that you have probably been the most influential person in my life in terms of healing. And I go to many of your retreats,

listen to the tapes, and you're of German descent. And I often think to myself, there is a larger picture here.

I mean, it's irony, isn't it, kind of? You know, I was a little nervous to ask the question and even to make the statement, but my friend was encouraging me to do it.

[Speaker 1] (1:31:52 - 1:33:27)

So thank you. Well, I can assure you my sense of self is not derived from any nationality. And there was a time, but I'll come to the main part of your question is, how could they at that time have said, how could they have said there is no problem in the situation that they were in?

That's your main question. I'll address that in a second. But first, interesting question about identifying with your national background or your family background.

There was a time when I was still in my egoic identity, when there was some feelings of unease, when I realized what the country that I was born in had done. And so there was some suffering there at that time. Later, when I transcended that sense of self, that evaporated completely.

But even at the suffering that had done, it had been worse if my family background, if they had been involved in any activity of that atrocious activity of that kind, it would have been far worse. But my dad was an outsider. He was actually imprisoned by the Nazis, not because of some deeply held political belief, simply because he couldn't keep his mouth shut.

[Speaker 6] (1:33:30 - 1:33:32)

My mother couldn't keep her mouth shut either.

[Speaker 1] (1:33:34 - 1:42:31)

And so one night he had been drinking, he just said, this craziness, we have to, how can this guy is so crazy, he's going to take us to our doom. And the next day he got arrested. And there's a long story that Monday I'll tell what happened to him after that.

And my mom escaped the work service that every young woman had to go to, to work on a farm or in a factory. So she was sent to a weapons factory to work. And she escaped after two days, she ran away, she got, she jumped on the back of a truck and escaped.

And then she lived in hiding for two years with her aunt in another city and police were coming to look for her. So that's the story of my parents. So that was a little bit of a relief for me at that time that they had absolutely no, not only not involvement, they were actually regarded as delinquents.

But now the most important part, in such extreme situations, of such extreme suffering, concentration camp and so on, and even nowadays there are places on the planet where people are in these situations of extreme suffering, where the death could come at any moment. They might only have, whether if you've been captured by some terrorists and you know they're going to kill you, whatever it may be. Now, there have been accounts of people who have, who were in concentration camps, who have actually broken through to a very deep level of consciousness by being in that situation.

So, and it doesn't happen in those cases by telling yourself that there is no problem in the present moment. That is, would be a very weak statement and not really, wouldn't work. So, but what does work is the situation like that can drastically burn up your ego completely so that there's virtually, there's complete self-annihilation before the body dies.

There's complete annihilation of the egoic sense of self and all that remains is an intense presence of consciousness. You are not there as a person anymore. I know that there are a few individuals who have gone there who have later been able to speak about it and I'm sure there are many others, a minority, yes, there are many others who never were able, they died there, they were never able to later on express what they actually went through, but I believe there is a considerable number of people who went through this, the deepest shift in consciousness that's possible in this impossibly painful situation. And it actually became totally awakened as consciousness and realized that there is no death.

And others, of course, went through terrible fear and died in terrible fear, but the essence of who you are is not subject to death. And there is a, when we see the dreadfulness of that situation, which is not to be denied, so we also have to see on a deeper level there is no death. And both exist to knowing that there is no death to the essence of who you are, knowing that from an inner realization does not mean that on another level the situation is not dreadful.

So we do not, one does not deny the other and it has to be recognized in its dreadfulness. That's part, in the same way that I sometimes speak of the how many people were actually killed by humans killing, murdering other humans in the 20th century alone. And the figure is that I quoted a figure in the Power of Now, but I later found out it was far too low.

Nobody knows the exact figure, 150 million, 200 million humans murdered by other, no natural catastrophes and so on, are nothing compared to that, what humans do to each other. And that's a form of collective madness. The Holocaust is one aspect of that.

Another aspect of that would be what happened in Soviet communism, millions killed. Also in China, millions killed within their own countries, not even in the conflict between two countries. First World War, the madness of that.

Second World War, the madness of that. The bombing of cities and entire civilian populations exterminated. Complete madness.

So we have to see that what the madness that is in the, ultimately the dysfunctional egoic mind and what it produces, and this is a dreadful, you need to recognize the craziness of that, the madness of that. But at the same time, if we are able to go deep enough, we can realize that, for a moment, regard humanity as of consciousness. There's human consciousness, which is a collective of humanity.

And every human being is an expression of the collective human consciousness. And the collective human consciousness is an expression of the universal consciousness. It's one strand, one ray in the universal consciousness.

So you have universal consciousness. Then you have the collective human consciousness on planet Earth. the collective human consciousness is evolving gradually through continuously, through billions of manifestations, humans are called human individuals.

It's evolving gradually. And it's, so another way of looking at it on the deeper level is the evolution of human consciousness is a very painful process. It's kind of, it goes to a nightmarish stage when humanity, when the history of humanity looks like the history of an, it's a nightmare.

And, but it is evolving. So we, it's, we ourselves are expressions of the evolution of consciousness. And knowing that we can still recognize the madness of what happened and to some extent still happening.

People often say, by the way, things are getting worse and worse. They say on the palm, they're getting worse and worse. Well, I say, if you look at the history, just look at the first half of the 20th century, it can't be worse than that.

We're not, so far, it's not definitely not worse than that. So, but this is a long answer to on two levels. No, they would not have said there's no problem in the present moment, but perhaps the situation forced them into a state of consciousness that we call presence that they didn't have a name for and eliminated the person completely.

That is always the possibility when it happens. So, and then we, for you, it's important to derive your sense of self from the arising presence in you, not from the historical past, your own historical past, or the historical past of your family, but to acknowledge it, what happened, but not derive your sense of identity from it. That is important.

Otherwise you get trapped in that sense of identity. Thank you very much.

[Speaker 10] (1:43:12 - 1:43:42)

Kirt, my question is around surrender. I'm curious, once the egoic shell has cracked open and the light of consciousness is peeking through, can the ego surrender itself to that light of consciousness or ultimately must it be surrendered? Kirt.

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:43:51 - 1:45:44)

The ego, I often talk of the ego as if it were an entity. It's not really an entity. It acts as if it were an entity.

It seems to be an entity that has taken possession of you, but ultimately what it is, it's only a particular way of your mind to function. A, an identification with the mind. So the ego itself is that dysfunctional way in which the mind works.

And when that comes to an end, the dysfunctional way cannot put an end to its own dysfunction. It can only dissolve when the mind, awareness arises. Awareness is not thought.

Awareness is consciousness prior to thought. And you realize that you are that and whatever the mind produces and says are thoughts, but the thoughts are then no longer endowed with a sense of self. And that's the end of the ego.

When you no longer identify with every thought that comes, that's the end of the ego. So that's what happens. So I don't know in the way you formulate the question, the ego cannot dissolve itself, but in the light of awareness, it dissolves.

[Speaker 10] (1:45:46 - 1:45:52)

Then what is that willingness to allow it to be seen?

[Speaker 1] (1:45:52 - 1:48:53)

That willingness is the evolutionary impulse of the universe, which created the ego in the first place in order to transcend it now. It was an evolutionary step for mankind. The ego was an enormous step for mankind.

A great thing. And then it came or is coming now to the end of its lifespan, that particular evolutionary movement or manifestation that we call ego. It had a lifespan.

It has outlived its usefulness now. We have learned a lot through it. And now it needs to go.

And that's always a critical stage. The transition from one state of consciousness to another is always critical. There could be a falling back.

There could be, we're at this transitional stage where the ego now needs to dissolve. The

caterpillar has come to the end of its useful life as a caterpillar. It's been fine.

The caterpillar was happy for a while, crawling up the tree and eating the leaves. Now there are no leaves left on the tree. And it's time for the caterpillar to cease being a caterpillar and turn into something incredible.

That little slimy thing. Suddenly it doesn't know what's happening to it. Caterpillar doesn't say, I must become a butterfly or I'm trying to become a butterfly.

But the caterpillar suddenly notices that crawling is becoming more and more difficult. And it's looking for leaves. It's eaten all the leaves of the tree so there's nothing else to eat anyway.

If it doesn't change now into a butterfly, it'll die. So that's what's happening to humans. The shift to a different evolutionary level or dimension.

It's, this is us being here. That's all part of it. It's part of the shift.

The butterfly is emerging right here. The caterpillar is not totally gone yet. It's the transitional period.

Thanks. Even you can notice in every one of you, sometimes you're still a caterpillar and at other times, you're already a butterfly. Present, aware, non-reactive, aligned with the present moment.

[Speaker 10] (1:49:13 - 1:50:18)

I understand, I think pretty well, the basic idea of leaving behind the conceptual thought and retreating, making a retreat to being in order to reposition and to cope and to start out with, again, in the conceptual world we must live in at some time with fresh thoughts and new ideas. But I'm asking you and not necessarily expecting the answer just now, today, but hoping that this is a challenge and a invitation for you to help us to have the one thing that I think I've not have been able to achieve in my own life and would like to. Even at 76, I'm still striving to have one, just one, really original thought.

That's what I'm looking for. And of all people in this world that I've heard about and met, I think you're the guy that might help us with that. Thank you.

Thank you, thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:50:20 - 2:20:09)

That's a lovely question, thank you. Well, there's one success to be reported. We already had an original question.

A very honest question and a question that actually, and surprisingly, nobody has asked

before. So there you are. I don't know if that's the whole answer.

But that's certainly the truth. It's asking questions is a wonderful, wonderful thing. And it is, I would even say, more important to ask an original question than to expect an original thought or original answer, because an original question is an original thought.

A question is a thought. And so you'll find that the ability to ask questions, when in any situation, when you have to arrive at an answer, at a solution, to try to work something out, to ask questions and to ask the right questions is more important than expecting the right answer. And often the answer is already hidden in the question.

When you can ask the right question and say, oh, oh, and this already, Socrates knew because his entire teaching is questions and answers. It's called the Socratic dialogues. The Socratic dialogues, he continuously asked, he encouraged people to ask questions, and then he didn't immediately give answers.

He gave, asked more questions and gradually leading people to the truth, to realization of this or that, whatever it may be. So in many situations, I often, people present something to me. Do you want to do this or do you want to do that?

And then I said, have you asked this? Have you asked that? No.

Well, ask this and ask that and ask that, and then we'll know. It's an art that you can develop, asking questions. You need an alertness.

So I'm really talking about, you already asked an original question and a very honest question. So this is certainly an original thought. And let's see what happens after that.

The more you get in touch with the alert stillness that is presence, the more likely it is that you will perhaps more, have more original questions. And sometimes perhaps, well, original thoughts, an original question is an original thought. It is true that in most people, the thoughts that happen in your mental field, most of them are not even your thoughts.

You say, these are my thoughts, but they have come into you from the collective, especially nowadays when everybody's connected with the collective through these weird devices, you just turn on your thing and you look and you're taking in collective thoughts. Bzzz, bzzz, bzzz, and then you start thinking whatever it is, either you agree or you violently disagree. Yes, yes, yes.

No, no, no. And then you, so you, what people don't realize is that the thoughts live in you and pretend to be you. You think they're yours, but they are thoughts that have floated into your mind, most of them collective thoughts.

And so it's almost like being, carrying something in you that possesses you. It's, you're in

the grip of certain thoughts. If you read social media and all that kind of thing on the internet, it's full of millions of people who are in the grip of certain thought movements and they are collective thought movements.

There are, for example, now that they're kind of, there's a separation of this one huge collective thought movement that goes one way. And there's another huge collective thought movement that goes another way. And you belong either to one or to the other.

You feel drawn to the one or to the other. And it's not ultimately nothing to do with you or who you really are. You are at the mercy of these energy fields that move through you.

And you say things and the energy speaks through you. The thoughts live in you, you're inhabited by thoughts. So the, as I mentioned before, somewhere, maybe not here, the people say, I think, but in most cases, thinking is not, you have no say in the matter unless there's some awareness.

You have no say in the matter as to what you are thinking. So there's as little truth in the statement, I think, as there is in the statement, I beat my heart because you're not doing it, it happens to you. Now, breathing is partly voluntary and partly involuntary.

You say, I breathe. Now you have some control over your breathing. You can stop it for a while, you can deepen it.

However, breathing also happens to you because although you can stop it for a little while, I don't think you cannot commit suicide just by holding your breath. Something in you makes you breathe. So breathing happens to you when you'd have to put some plastic over your head, oh, let's not go there.

But you cannot commit suicide, you cannot hold your breath for that long. So it's stronger than you. So breathing happens to you, the circulation of the countless, countless hundreds of functions that are being coordinated every second in your body, the temperature of the body, the circulation of the blood, every organ coordinating its functions with the other organs.

There's a vast intelligence operating continuously throughout your body. And it's happening to you, you are not doing it. You have no idea how the digestion works, you are not digesting your food, it's being digested for you.

You are not in control of the functions of your kidneys or your liver. Even now, the greatest scientists are still figuring out more and more about how these things work. It's just an amazing intelligence hiding there, but it's all happening for you and to you.

So you are not doing it, but you think that as far as thoughts are concerned, that you think your thoughts. You don't, unless there's an awareness in you where you become,

this dimension has emerged where you become aware of what thoughts are going through your head and you can even say, I'd rather not think that because it's totally pointless and futile. And then it dissolves, that is possible.

Or to simply observe a thought takes away the momentum from a thought that is not pleasant. When you observe what a thought is doing to you, how a thought makes you unhappy, when you observe that, there's an awareness there. When you can see that this thought is making me unhappy and you see, you can, then it begins to dissolve.

But for most humans who are not aware, they are at the mercy of their thoughts, although they continuously think, this is what I think, as if there was a volition there, but what really is happening, this is the thinking that happens to me. So there's no, it's completely conditioned. So instead of saying, I think it would be better to say, I am being thought, I am being thought.

There is an eternal life there. There is a level at which the essence of that person, you know it beyond explanations, is eternal. You speak often about non-attachment.

I can understand non-attachment to objects but I can't comprehend non-attachment to my children or family. How can one be non-attached to those we love? Good question.

The question I can understand non-attachment to things. Okay. Now non-attachment to things, let's talk about that for a moment.

Non-attachment to things does not mean not appreciating things but it means not seeking yourself or to regard things as an extension of yourself or think of things as needing them to add to yourself in order to be yourself more fully. That's attachment to things. It's an ego dysfunction but in a way in which the ego survives and it's not pleasant because you always need more and nothing really satisfies you.

Whenever you buy something and seek some kind of self-satisfaction through it, very quickly you realize it doesn't work and then you look for something else. However, there is a way of appreciating things, beautiful things or simple things. Appreciate is not being attached.

You can love, even love a piece of furniture or whatever it is, a little object or a piece of something you wear too. I'm not saying all this needs to disappear. You can like things and appreciate them, love them in a sense of having appreciated without the self-seeking in it.

And when the thing leaves you, you lose it or it breaks or it gets stolen or whatever, without the attachment you'll say, oh, it's a pity but you don't, there's no reaction and no pain. You're able to let go and that's a sign that something you appreciated and yet when it's not there anymore, well, that's all right too. I always appreciated since I started between the age of 30 and well, up to the age of 30, I don't know, 36, my main

transportation was bicycle and I always appreciated my bicycle and I developed a strange habit when I parked my bicycle and chained it to something, a railing outside or whatever.

I would take a few steps and look back on it and just appreciate its being. It's a very strange habit. You look back at it and look back one more time, there it is.

And sometimes people ask, why are you looking back at your bicycle? Are you proud of it? Well, it wasn't a particularly special bicycle, just a normal.

No, I appreciate it being there. And one day, I got a car, somebody gave me an old car and then I lent my bicycle to somebody and suddenly that person came and said, I'm so sorry, I lost your bike. I didn't lock it for a few minutes and now it's gone.

I had already gone through a shift in consciousness. So, I said, it's okay, it's gone, nothing we can do about it. Hopefully, somebody else appreciates it now.

Then I developed the same habit with my old car. I would look back when I parked it, I'd look back and just appreciate it being there. And I do the same now that I have a much better car.

And now with my good car, people think I must be proud of this car or something, but it's not that. I did the same with the bicycle. It's a strange habit.

I'm not recommending anybody that he should do that, but it's just a way in which I appreciate its being. And it's not attachment, but don't believe me, but the reality of attachment only comes out when it disappears. So, let's wait and see.

So, yes, it's wonderful not to be attached to things and yet being able to appreciate things. And then comes attachment to humans, attachment to human beings. And the questioner asks, I can understand non-attachment to objects, but I cannot comprehend non-attachment to my children and family.

How can one be non-attached to those we love? Well, you can't. Nor is it desirable.

Of course you are attached to those you love, and of course, if they should be taken from you, you feel pain and you weep. However, as you awaken spiritually, in addition to your attachment to a person that you love, there is a deeper level also present in which you relate to that person, not at all through emotion or the physical, but deeper through presence. You feel their presence.

You feel beyond emotion. You feel their essence. And that is vital because now it means that the love has become, well, what word do we use?

We could say, spiritualised. It's not just emotional, it's only a very limited form of love. But you also realise the formless dimension in the other human being and in yourself at

the same time.

And as if a person should be taken away from you, the level at which you are attached to that person, at that level, you feel the loss and the pain of it. At the same time, there is the deeper level present in which you realise that which is not subject to death. There is an eternal life there.

There is a level at which the essence of that person, you know it beyond explanations, is eternal. The essence of who they are, and you can sense that in yourself, even while you weep, a person dies with whom you love. So we are not aiming for non-attachment to those we love, but what we are aiming for is going deeper in our love, so that there is not just the emotional level or the physical level, but a deeper level of true, ultimately, that's the true love.

And don't wait until somebody whom you love is taken away from you to find that level. Find that level while they are here with you, but don't look for it in the other. Find it in yourself.

The entire teaching here is about that. Find it in yourself and then look upon the other and sense it and recognise it also in the other. So there are times then when you can relate to a loved one, and that's an important part of the relationship, not through words and thoughts, not through physicality, not through emotion.

Those are there, but from time to time, relate to the other on a level that's deeper than physicality, touch, look, deeper than words, speaking, deeper than thoughts, thinking about the other, deeper than the emotion that you feel, look at the closeness, and so you go to that, is that possible? Yes. Be with the other person in the state of the clarity of presence, just absolute spacious awareness.

Look at the other in spacious and through spacious awareness. So there's the formless essence arises. And then they die because everybody close to you, of course, is going to leave you or you leave them.

They die first or you die first. And it's absurd not to consider that. And when death finally comes, yes, of course you feel pain, but to react as if that were the greatest unnatural thing to happen ever in the world, of course, that's what it feels like if you've never even considered death, the reality of it, which is all around you.

But to go beyond death, don't wait for death, die now to that exclusive identification with form. Die to the mind-made self. And then when death comes, you will weep and feel a deep peace at the same time.

It seems almost paradoxical, but I have experienced it, and I know others who have. You weep and you feel deep peace at the same time. There's a very strong pattern in me that doesn't want to live anymore, and that is really hard to deal with.

Can you please advise me? Well, first you need to observe whether there's negativity in there. It's just like, I can't take any more of this, or whatever thought comes up when you feel that you don't want to live anymore, can't take it anymore, I've had enough.

In other words, is it a resistance pattern that's still egoic because things are not going the way you wanted them to go? Or there may be a kind of tiredness of life, sense-perceived existence, situations, and so on. A weariness, perhaps.

You are not here, so I cannot ask you to explain exactly what it is that you feel, and how you experience that not wanting to live anymore. But anybody, no matter what it is, I suggest that you practice dying by surrendering completely to the present moment. Don't demand anything that this moment should be different.

It is the way it is. Then the ego dies. Instead of committing suicide, I highly recommend surrender.

Much more effective. Die before you die. Do situations still have the power to induce in you negativity?

Do situations still have the power to make you unhappy? Events, situations, people. Is that why you want to not live anymore?

Let's not surrender. Try surrender and see what happens. Which means no complaint about anything anymore.

Mental. Complete acceptance of this moment as it is. And even the thought, I don't want this anymore, whatever, is a resistance to what is.

You don't need it. So if you feel the pull of death, die now to the mind-made self, the ego. Allow the ego to die.

Complete surrender to what is. And see what happens. You may suddenly find the peace that passes all understanding.

It means you've died. The ego is dissolved.

[Speaker 6] (2:20:51 - 2:21:36)

Yesterday you talked about listening from presence and from stillness. And when you're listening to people directly and looking into their eyes, I can feel that presence. I'm wondering if it's possible, if you have suggestions for manifesting that in communications technologies like email and conference calls.

In my work, I talk to people and work with people who I never see. I've never met them. I don't know what they look like.

And yet, I'm often on calls with four or five people. And I'm wondering if you think it's possible to, I mean, I can be from a place of stillness, and they might just think that I've gone for coffee. So do you have any ideas?

[Speaker 1] (2:21:36 - 2:32:33)

Yes. So if you don't see them, you're just on the phone. Although with the technology these days, very soon it will be much more common probably to have these visual conference calls where you actually see people on the screen and it almost looks as if they're sitting around the table.

I imagine you could even put, I don't know if they're doing that, probably not. You could have a conference table and put little screens where the chairs are. And then you switch on and you have six people sitting around the conference table.

You see the screens. But for the time being, let's just talk for a moment about the telephone. Now on the telephone, a long silence could easily be misinterpreted as an absence, that you're no longer there, or the line has been disconnected.

Or it could be interpreted as complete lack of interest on your part. Therefore, I would not recommend any kind of long silence. But I find in my personal experience, although I don't use the telephone very much, when I do use it, and even if it's only for booking a ticket for a ferry or something like that, when I do use it and there's a human being at the other end, most of the time I do detect something deeper in our interaction than just the words that need to be spoken in order to conduct whatever business it is that you need to conduct. And I find that even through the telephone, being still does not necessarily mean that you're not speaking.

So you can be connected with presence and speak at the same time. I'd like to book a ferry for such and such a time. I find very often I get a response from the other person.

The other person likes to talk to me. They have no idea, they don't have my name, don't know who they're talking to. They just, they like, I can sense that they like to talk.

And sometimes I say a few words that have nothing to do with the business at hand, just to comment on the weather or how are you, a true question, not just a superficial, how are you, how to connect on a human level, not just use the human being as a means to an end, but realize there is a being, there is a human being. You remember, there's a human which is form, and there's a being which is formless. You are a human being.

Don't just operate on the human level, which is whatever you need to do on the level of form. Bring in the being and then you have the two. So developing the ability to speak and to listen in stillness.

So when you're listening to them, you're still. And the words come out of stillness, not

out of nervousness, or out of a sense of impatience, because you have been waiting on this line for 10 minutes, and when finally somebody picks up the phone, you can feel that there's a tension in your voice, and you don't like that person anymore, because you've been waiting for 10 or 15 minutes on this call which says, your call will be answered very soon.

Your call is important to us, so please don't hang up. And in some people, they get more and more angry. And finally you talk to this human being, and then the human being can feel your upset and anger, even if you don't say anything.

Yeah, I want to book a ferry. So that doesn't work very well. So to communicate on the phone is a very subtle thing, in a very subtle way.

There can be a sense of presence that is detected by the other person, and that brings it to the being, the being level. It helps to initiate the call. Sometimes you can't always do that, obviously when you're ringing your credit card company, you can't start off by talking about the weather or something like that.

They want to know what the number is and why you're calling. But sometimes towards the end, you could say something, oh, I'm here, or where are you? They might say, I'm in New York, I'm in India.

Very often people are in India these days, and you talk to them. So you practice, and then you have visual calls, I don't know if you do that, and there you look at, you see the person on the screen, it's a little bit easier to connect, you have the visual dimension too. But in conferences and so on, it's always good to start in your company, or to have an agreement that you start with a moment of stillness.

So when you have a conference call, and all those people are conscious enough, you have to judge for yourself to see whether they would think you're mad if you suggest a moment of stillness before you start. I know people like Sounds True, I think Tammy told me in her company, often before the meetings, they start with a moment of stillness. Other companies I interviewed, or had a dialogue with, Eileen Fisher, who has a clothing company, they also, they always start with stillness.

Oprah also does it with her people before they discuss anything, they become still. So that's a wonderful thing to do. Yes, it's a very subtle thing on the telephone, but the few phone calls that I do have, usually somehow stillness manages to get in there.

You need to be aware of your inner state, of course. If your inner state is agitated when you pick up the phone, there's not much you can do. So if you cannot be still at the beginning of the call, you can be still perhaps just before you make a call.

Just before you make a call for half a minute, or one minute, take a few breaths, and then you make the call. That might help. Or if the phone rings, I've often recommended,

if the phone rings, don't be the slave of the ringing telephone, because many people, the moment the phone rings, they go...

and they might even interrupt a pleasant gathering. You're just talking about something even important, and some people think whatever it is, the ringing phone is always more important. So they must answer it immediately.

You don't have to answer it immediately, and I always recommend, if you do answer it, give it a few seconds. Every time the phone rings, it can be a signal for you to become present. Just give it five seconds.

Three to five seconds. Five seconds is not long. It's one, two, three, four, five.

Even three seconds will help. Every time the phone rings, before you answer it, never come into presence. So every time the phone rings, it's an alarm clock to bring you into presence.

You can make that a habit. And if you get many phone calls every day, that will become a very powerful spiritual practice for you. So instead of rushing to the phone, you just become alert and still.

And you wait, but it's not a waiting. This can be misunderstood as if you had to hold yourself back and exercise willpower so that you don't jump and pick up the phone. That's not how it is.

So you don't go, I have to hold myself back before I answer it. No. It rings and you go, ah.

You enjoy the space before you pick up the phone and let it ring two or three times without straining mentally to get there already. And then you pick up. That would be a great practice.

And after a while, it gets easy. And that means every time the phone rings, there's a space of presence. Isn't that wonderful?

You're hoping to get more calls. You could do the same with text messages. Whatever sound you have to announce that a text message has come in, all kinds of, from whistles blowing to beeping or glass, the sound of glass.

And when that comes in, you could do the same. Why immediately rush to read the message, which probably isn't important at all, just pretends to be. Give it just the same space a few seconds before you pick it up.

And again, don't get impatient and hold yourself. It's not holding yourself back. It's just consciously giving yourself space.

In that way, you can use devices that otherwise would continuously take you out of presence and help you to be present.

[Speaker 3] (2:32:33 - 2:32:35)

So you turn them around.

[Speaker 1] (2:33:45 - 3:49:16)

Can we trust our feelings? Can we trust our somatic reading of life? Are you able to say something about intuition, which is not the same, but interests me as well?

Can we trust our feelings? Now, often you hear people say, trust your feelings. I would suggest, however, that that's not necessarily true.

Acknowledge your feelings. Yes. Be there as the observing presence for your feelings.

Yes. Be aware of your feelings, accept that they are there. Trust, which means to take them to be the truth or the truth for you, or using them as a guide to correct or a skillful action that may be doubtful because it depends where these feelings arise in you.

A little anecdote from my life to illustrate that. When I lived in England, in the country, in that alternative town, Glastonbury, for three years, I lived in a cottage and once a month I would travel to London or other cities in my beloved Russian-made Lada car to do a workshop. And usually a weekend workshop called things like transcending time or be here now.

Nothing much has changed, except that the average number of people I had was about 10. And since my income was not enough, I had to rent out a room upstairs in my cottage. So I had to, over these three years, a few people, it was a second room, which I also occasionally rent out.

Anyway, the room became vacant. I advertised in the local paper. Several people came to apply and finally chose a young woman who had just been offered a job in that town.

She came, she moved in. And after the first night in her room, she came down for breakfast into the kitchen, which was a shared kitchen, and she said, I can't stay here. I said, what's wrong?

I just, it's just a feeling. I always listen to my feelings. I just, I just can't stay.

There's something not right. So I was very nervous. And I said, okay, that's fine.

And that she found that very disconcerting because she had expected a more conventional response, which would have been what I've interviewed all these people, I've chosen you. And now what you're doing this to me. I'm not getting your rent money

back that you paid in advance.

But I said, okay, I'll give you your money back. It's fine. So she was even more confused after that.

And I said, he said, I've spent one more night or two more nights. She spent the second night. And then in the morning she said, no, I think I'll stay.

I have a different feeling now. And I said, oh, that's fine. That's good.

And again, she was a little disconcerted because the conventional response would have been, which I did do, I just put another ad in the paper. And now you're telling me this. This, this is how to make the conventional responses are how to make life complicated for yourself and others.

But it's normal. It's how the ego responds. And so whenever somebody does not respond in that way, life becomes simple.

But when life becomes simple, people who expect the conventional responses become confused. This is a weird person. And so she decided to stay.

And a few weeks later, when I got to know her better, she explained to me that that first night she was in her bedroom and she said, I found you so weird that I thought you might creep in in the middle of the night and murder me. And later she said, living in the same house with you is like living in a float tank. I think she learned a lot, not so much through me explaining things to her just by being there.

Not that she didn't go through her episodes of neurotic reactivity, which is quite normal for most people, but that's fine. So feelings. Now, where did have the initial feelings that she experienced that she then believed that they were a correct guide for action?

Of course they were not because they originated in fear. And they also originated in a misinterpretation of reality, which is so easy to do for the mind, to misinterpret another person, to misinterpret a situation. You misinterpret because you see it through the conditioning of your mind.

You see it through your beliefs, your prior experiences in childhood. You see it through even other things that have conditioned your mind, maybe even scary movies about weird people who don't say much. And then just when you're having a shower, they creep in.

So it is not, therefore it's not that easy often to say, where does this feeling that I have arise? Where does this feeling originate? Now, does it come from a deeper, the intuitive place?

Intuition comes out of being present. Intuition is not, does not come out of the

conditioning of your mind. So if you have an intuition also, it is usually not tainted by negativity, such as anger or fear.

So there's something certain about it. There is a quiet strength behind your feeling, a quiet strength. There's not a nervous energy behind your feeling.

There's more. You just know this is, this is right. You may not be able to explain to yourself or others why as a different quality, there's a more peaceful quality to it.

Now let's just imagine to come back to the story that happened with this young woman. And of course it could have been that theoretically I could have been a psycho and actually could not be trusted not to kill her. Theoretically that's possible.

So I don't know what the answer to this is, but the, I know from my own life, whenever there is a deep realization of what the right course of action is, it is always, there's a peace with it. And even if it was a psycho there, you know, there was absolute certainty that this is not right for you. There's an energetic imbalance, which comes from a deeper place.

But I cannot really explain in words, you'd have to, through life experience, you have to find out for yourself what a deeper feeling that comes out of presence and is a true intuition, how it is different from something that is, that arises from the conditioning of your mind. Now, a lot of the time people misinterpret reality because they look at reality through the veil of their conditioning. And that contributes to a huge amount of conflict in life, in relationships and so on.

And not only they misinterpret, they add this, what I call unnecessary baggage to situations through their reactivity, which is an ego device in order to strengthen the ego's always deficient sense of identity. So coming back again to that story, what had happened, if I had reacted in the normal way, becoming angry and accusing her when she said after one night she couldn't stay, and that would have strengthened, it would have come from my ego, it would have strengthened my sense of self, the separate sense of self. And again, if the reaction had been when she finally decided to, after the second night, decided to stay, I could have again said, no, now I've just spent, I mean, it wasn't that much, an ad in the local paper is relatively cheap, but the ego would have dwelt on that and said, now I've spent that, and all these people that are already said they couldn't come, now they have already found accommodation, I would have again made somebody wrong. And the ego loves that, to make somebody wrong, because when you make somebody wrong, and you would be, the ego could even explain, you're totally justified, because that's not fair, the person shouldn't just change like that, she's just, but instead of saying how people should be, if you just, this is what is, you can either accept it, or you cannot.

I could have said also, in practical terms, when after the second night, she said, I've

decided to stay, I could have said, oh, it's too late, I've already had found somebody else, or I'd said, no, maybe it's better if you do go, because tomorrow night, you might again, after tomorrow, you might again not want to stay, all these things are possible, but the situation remained simple, because of non-reactivity, and this applies to so many cases, whenever there's some kind of, things do not go smoothly, because a person does not do what they're supposed to do, and then immediately, the ego constructs a narrative, and you know it, when you start telling other people about it, that strengthens it, so I could have picked up the phone, and said, you know, I had this girl, I rejected five other people for her, know what she's done to me, and then listen and tell the story, so satisfying to the ego, and then the person on the other end says, oh my god, you sort of, and then of course, I could have gone into thinking, oh, maybe she's totally neurotic, maybe she's a psycho, all spinning tails in the head, all kinds of things, there's a whole fictitious narratives that are taken for reality, and how simple things can actually be, if you don't add unnecessary reactivity to it, but in order to do that, it requires you to be present, not to be there as a person, because a person feels easily offended, so if you're there as a person, you get offended a lot, if you go on the internet, you'll find that the world is full of people who are deeply offended, and I can explain why, and it sounds totally reasonable, but the ego loves being offended, I'm not denying that there may be some remarks that are truly offenses, but that's a relatively small thing, and if it is something truly offensive, again, what could she have said, what that was truly offensive, she could have said, uh, I can't stay with you because you're too ugly, for example, now to the ego, that would be offensive, or she might have said, well, she happened to be white, but if you've not been white, you'd have said, I finally, I have this feeling, I cannot stay with a white male, okay, vigilance is required in your interactions with people, always a question, am I adding something to the interaction that is unnecessary, that is just there to strengthen my fictitious sense of self, to justify something, to make somebody wrong, big thing for the ego, because if I can make something wrong, there's always an element of victimhood, when I make somebody wrong, in relation to myself, there's always an element of, it may not be the main focal point, but there's an element of me being the victim, if I make you wrong, and the ego loves that, because it strengthens itself through that, and if I make somebody wrong, you know what he said, and what he did then, let me tell you about this, oh, how can somebody do something like that, and this means unconsciously, I'm always superior to the other, when this happens, when you're telling the story, what somebody did and said to you, you do it, because the ego, when you're telling, when you're making somebody wrong, because when you are right, now, you probably all know people in your life, when they talk, when you tell, when they tell you things, it's always others who are wrong, it's never them, it's very strange, why is it that I'm always right, and others are always wrong, they never ask that question, but that is a mystery of human existence, one of the great mysteries of life is, why I'm always right, and others are always wrong, I think philosophers haven't explored it in detail enough, and nobody has resolved this mystery, and everybody should ask themselves, how is that, I must be really superior to

everybody, weird, so if you think back, the last year or two or three in your life, well, I'm actually talking to a group of people here, who are much more conscious than the average human, but nevertheless, even here, some of you may find, if you look back the last few years, that whenever there was some kind of argument or conflict, perhaps it was, was it always the others who are wrong, it's very easy to deny somebody's perspective, but if it conflicts with your own, and make them totally wrong, you can also make a group of people totally wrong, an entire group, an entire nation, an entire religion, you can make everybody wrong, it's great, you feel stronger and morally superior, now, does that mean there are not people who are deeply wrong, because they might peeve them, but maybe people are to deceive you, you might go and want to, you might go and buy a secondhand car, and the person is so friendly and kind, and he sells you something, that just breaks down the next day, and it's clearly lied to you, what do you do then, and even then, it's important not to amplify what has happened, by going into your mind, and creating a whole string of narratives in your mind, of what an awful person that is, and coming to all kinds of conclusions about that, and tell the story to yourself and to others, and amplify it in that way, and then you go back to him, and then you tell him really what you think of him, and rather than keep it simple, what action can I take to remedy this, even if you go to court, you can do it in a detached way, I'm not necessarily saying never do anything, just put up with anything and anybody, it's just, that's not what it means, even if you go to court, in order to rectify a situation that is obviously wrong, you can do it in a way that is detached, and just keeps it to the, just the essentials of the situation, practical, without the whole superstructure of you are the evil one, you are wrong, I won't repeat it here, but I think you may all remember the story I told, I believe it's in a new earth about the Zen master, who was accused of having fathered a child, and what his responses were at every stage of the process, is that so, now that's an interesting, so if you may remember the parents accused him, that he was the father of their daughter's child, and then the parents brought the baby to him, and at each stage when he was, the parents told him something, you are the father, is that so, you bring the baby, now you look after the baby, we don't want it, you are the father, and he had lost his reputation, et cetera, people were commenting about him on the internet, and he did not participate in the story making, and he didn't defend himself, and he didn't, he just said, okay, so it means a total refusal to go into any kind of story, cut, is that so, yeah, oh, oh, and finally it all became, resolved itself, the daughter confessed that he was not the father, and so on, and the parents came, wanted the baby back, please give us the baby back, we now know that, oh, you're not the father, please forgive us, we did a terrible thing by accusing you, terrible thing, is that so, okay, that is, that's whether this story actually ever happened, I don't know whether it's just a teaching story, or actually happened, but it doesn't matter, it shows you an extreme form of not being engaged in a story, not engaging in the story making, that is ego strengthening, so you can practice that in many, many situations in your life, refrain from calling up people, or telling up people what other people, and tell them about what other people did wrong, or how they failed, how they were deficient, how somebody lied

to you, was dishonest, or expressed an objectionable opinion, and then conflict becomes almost eliminated from your life, or 90% of it.

Can we trust our feelings? Now, often you hear people say, trust your feelings, I would suggest, however, that that's not necessarily true, acknowledge your feelings, yes, be there as the observing presence for your feelings, yes, be aware of your feelings, accept that they are there, trust, which means to take them to be the truth, or the truth for you, or using them as a guide to correct, or skillful action that may be doubtful, because it depends where these feelings arise in you.

A little anecdote from my life to illustrate that, when I lived in England, in the country, in that alternative town, Glastonbury, for three years, I lived in a cottage, and once a month, I would travel to London, or other cities, in my beloved Russian-made Lada car, to do a workshop, and usually a weekend workshop, called things like transcending time, or be here now, nothing much has changed, except that the average number of people I had was about 10, and since my income was not enough, I had to rent out a room upstairs in my cottage, so I had to, over these three years, a few people, it was a second room, which I also occasionally rent out, anyway, the room became vacant, I advertised in the local paper, several people came to apply, and finally chose a young woman who had just been offered a job in that town, she came, she moved in, and after the first night in her room, she came down for breakfast into the kitchen, which was a shared kitchen, and she said, I can't stay here, I said, what's wrong?

I just, it's just a feeling, I always listen to my feelings, I just can't stay here, there's something not right, so I was very nervous, and I said, okay, that's fine, and then she found that very disconcerting, because she had expected a more conventional response, which would have been, what? I've interviewed all these people, I've chosen you, and now what, you're doing this to me? I'm not getting your rent money back that you paid in advance, but I said, okay, I'll give you your money back, it's fine, so she was even more confused after that.

And I said, he said, I've spent one more night or two more nights, she spent the second night, and then in the morning, she said, no, I think I'll stay, I have a different feeling now, and I said, oh, that's fine, that's good, and again, she was a little disconcerted, because the conventional response would have been, which I did do, I just put another ad in the paper, and now you're telling me this?

This is how to make, the conventional responses are how to make life complicated for yourself and others, but it's normal, it's how the ego responds, and so whenever somebody does not respond in that way, life becomes simple, but when life becomes simple, people who expect the conventional responses become confused, what, this is a weird person. And so she decided to stay, and a few weeks later, when I got to know her better, she explained to me that that first night, she was in her bedroom, and she said, I

found you so weird that I thought you might creep in in the middle of the night and murder me. And later she said, living in the same house with you is like living in a float tank.

I think she learned a lot, not so much through me explaining things to her, just by being there. Not that she didn't go through her episodes of neurotic reactivity, which is quite normal for most people, but that's fine. So feelings, now where did her, the initial feelings that she experienced, that she then believed that they were a correct guide for action, of course they were not, because they originated in fear, and they also originated in a misinterpretation of reality.

Which is so easy to do for the mind, to misinterpret another person, to misinterpret a situation, you misinterpret because you see it through the conditioning of your mind. Now, a lot of the time, people misinterpret reality because they look at reality through the veil of their conditioning. And that contributes to a huge amount of conflict in life, in relationships and so on.

And not only they misinterpret, they add this what I call unnecessary baggage to situations through their reactivity, which is an ego device in order to strengthen the ego's always deficient sense of identity. So coming back again to that story, what had happened, if I had reacted in the normal way, becoming angry and accusing her when she said after one night she couldn't stay, and that would have strengthened, it would have come from my ego, it would have strengthened my sense of self, the separate sense of self. And again, if the reaction had been when she finally decided to, after the second night decided to stay, I could have again said, now I've just spent, I mean, it wasn't that much, an ad in a local paper is relatively cheap, but the ego would have dwelt on that and said, now I've spent that and all these people that I already said they couldn't come, now they have already found accommodation.

I would have again made somebody wrong. And the ego loves that, to make somebody wrong, because when you make somebody wrong, and you would be, the ego could even explain, you're totally justified, because that's not fair. The person shouldn't just change like that.

She's just, but instead of saying how people should be, if you just, this is what is, you can either accept it or you cannot. You all, I won't repeat it here, but I think you may all remember the story I told, I believe it's in a New Earth about the Zen master who was accused of having fathered a child and what his responses were at every stage of the process. Is that so?

Now that's an interesting, so if you may remember, the parents accused him that he was the father of their daughter's child. And then the parents brought the baby to him and at each stage when he was, the parents told him something, you are the father, you, is that so? You bring the baby, now you look after the baby.

We don't want it, you are the father. And he had lost his reputation, et cetera. People were commenting about him on the internet.

And he did not participate in the storymaking and he didn't defend himself and he didn't, he just said, okay, so it means a total refusal to go into any kind of story, cut. Is that so? Yeah.

And finally it all became, resolved itself. The daughter confessed that he was not the father and so on, and the parents came, wanted the baby back. Please give us the baby back.

We now know that, oh, you're not the father. Please forgive us, we did a terrible thing by accusing you, terrible thing. Is that so?

Okay. That is whether this story actually ever happened, I don't know whether it's just a teaching story or actually happened, but it doesn't matter. It shows you an extreme form of not being engaged in a story, not engaging in the storymaking that is ego strengthening.

So you can practice that in many, many situations in your life. Refrain from calling up people or telling people what other people, and tell them about what other people did wrong or how they failed, how they were deficient, how somebody lied to you, was dishonest or expressed an objectionable opinion. And then conflict becomes almost eliminated from your life or 90% of it.

So in itself, of course, it's neutral. The technology is neutral. It's not either bad or good.

It depends how it's used. But it is, at the moment, it is to a large extent a reflection of the unconscious mind. So if you want to learn about human unconsciousness, if you want to learn about the human ego, just go there and read what people post and look at the reactivity of people on social media and so on, the comments they leave.

You can learn a lot about unconsciousness and identification with mental positions. So the first thing, of course, is be careful with what you put out there, what kind of thing you post. If you post things online, is it reactive?

Give yourself a moment when you read something before you type in an answer or a comment. Give yourself a moment and go within and avoid making people wrong. You can talk about issues, but don't make people wrong and amplify your ego by making others wrong, even though their position, political or otherwise, you may regard as completely misguided or erroneous.

There's still a human being behind that. So you can put forward arguments against somebody's perspective or viewpoint without making another human being wrong. So what you put out is very important.

Is your communication conscious or not? Or is it reactive? And then it can be used for other purposes.

I'm there too sometimes. There are certain places where I appear on could go to YouTube or whatever. And then suddenly there's a spiritual teacher talking and there are some meditation sites on all these things.

So there's a great potential for raising consciousness there. Somebody recommended to me several apps for meditation, which I now have on my phone. I haven't tried them yet.

I've been there for a while, but I have four or five that are there. I want to try them out. So that's the very thing that otherwise would clutter your mind can actually also be used to bring about space or spaciousness in your mind.

So it doesn't necessarily mean that when you have your phone or the 99% of cases, when people look there, their mind is being cluttered, but maybe they're on a meditation app. Maybe they're looking at a beautiful, spacious picture and all listening to some sound or saying, take a conscious breath, have a little reminder every two hours, take a conscious breath and bring spaciousness. Oh yes, spaciousness.

So the very same thing that otherwise clutters your mind can now unclutter your mind. It's possible. So I believe that is also going to grow now.

And it has to, because otherwise that technology could potentially drive humans completely insane, remove their ability to focus on anything for more than a few seconds. People create young people who are totally uncentered, have no spaciousness within, don't even communicate with humans anymore because they prefer to communicate digitally. So these things are important, but what you put out is important.

So always take into consideration whether this brings people to presence or whether it clutters somebody's mind. And perhaps you can combine. Of course, what you do needs to be also commercially viable.

So, but I believe you can combine the two. It's not necessarily a question of either it's commercially viable and it clutters people's minds or its presence. And we're not going to, we are going to go out of business.

It doesn't have to be like that. It's up to you to be creative. Use, the more still you are, the more creative insights you will have into, and you might get some amazing ideas of what is possible.

I can't tell you what is possible. I don't know enough about it. I know very little about it.

So, but you're in a wonderful position. So allow yourself to go deep enough within, because then it is then the creative ideas seem to come. And if you find a thing that is

not only brings people to presence, but also helps your company to grow, then that then becomes a conscious business, which is wonderful.

It's challenging. Of course, it's challenging. So don't let all your attention be absorbed though by that kind of activity.

Take still, you still need to connect with nature. Take it off as much as possible away from there, connect with nature and then bring it back. What tends to happen is that these devices, people are never, they're still in bed and they're still doing stuff on it.

And that takes you over there at dinner and they're doing stuff on it. It breaks the relation with other people. You're at dinner, I can see, I see people in restaurants, the couple sitting at having dinner together and both are on their phones.

Now that's probably means they have known each other for a while. If it happens on the first date, that's the first date will probably be the last one. But if happens after they've known each other for two years, then it's almost a normal thing.

So they're not present with each other or then they exchange a few words and then she looks at the phone again and then he stares into space and then she's still on her phone. I've actually observed it. She's still on her phone and he's staring into space and then finally he gets out his phone too because he doesn't want to be staring into space.

And then I wonder, are they texting each other? Two good things that I learned that in some huge companies, I believe it might be VW in Germany. Well, they've had enough problems, but now they tell their employees after 6 p.m. they're not allowed to use the company phones anymore, not to deal with emails or anything. They need to get off. And that's a very wise thing because the more people's attention gets absorbed by this, the more confused and non-creative they become, the more cluttered their minds become, the more ineffective they're even at their work. Not to mention as human beings, their quality of life decreases enormously.

So don't give yourself spaces. Don't allow these things to take over your life. That's vitally important.

So it's wonderful that some big companies like that have this policy now, no emails or anything after 6 p.m. Well, that's wonderful. I talked a couple of years ago to Ariana Huffington who has a famous news website and has also written some books. And she describes in her latest book how her life deteriorated more and more, although she was making a lot of money.

And finally she collapsed and hit her head on her desk and it was complete breakdown. And now she has, for example, in her private life, and that's a good thing, she has this policy of no digital device in my bedroom. So in her bedroom, she still has books.

Sometimes she reads in bed, but it has to be a book, not a Kindle, not the iPad, not the iPhone, no digital device in my bedroom. And that's a good thing to have that, at least you have that space for yourself. So everybody needs to be really conscious of the addictive nature of these devices.

Of course, there are certain questions that do not require an answer. Not all answers are necessarily conceptual answers. They may, when there's the non-conceptual space, the answer may come as an intuition, as a realization that you may not yet be able to formulate conceptually.

You just suddenly know, but you can't explain what it is that you know. And that certainly applies to your sense of who you are, which is you suddenly, there's a deep knowing inside yourself, perhaps because you asked yourself the question, who am I? And that's a beautiful question, it creates the openness.

And then you start to investigate, your attention arises, who, we talked about that before, but this is here relevant in this context. You ask, who am I? Question mark.

And there is a kind of looking, but it's not looking visually. There is a kind of searching. There is, the attention arises, right now the attention arises, who am I?

And it's looking, and suddenly it realizes what you're looking for is in the looking. There may be periods in your life when paying attention to your dreams, you can learn certain things. There may be messages there.

And the more attention you give to your dreams, the more the dream life responds. Are we able to control our minds while sleeping? Although I'm able to be present much of my waking hours, from the minute I fall asleep to the minute I wake up, my mind is chattering away.

I assume the question is talking about his or her dream life from the minute I woke up to the minute I wake, I fall asleep to the minute I wake up, my mind is chattering away. Well, it won't be chattering away during dreamless sleep. Every human, as you know, has periods of dreamless sleep.

And there's no mind activity there, where the mind connects with a source. But you don't know that. And then I assume, then you mean that you have a very active dream life.

There's not much you can do except go into sleep with as much presence as you can. So in the last 15 minutes before sleep, at least, don't engage in mind activity, television, no, listening to the radio, no, even reading a book, no. No, go into the body or use any other access point for presence or just go into presence directly and go into sleep from presence.

Don't confuse, this may not be the case with you, but it could be the case with some

people, don't confuse suppressing thought with being present. It is, for some people are able to suppress thought, which requires an effort, and you become a little contracted when you do that. So in other words, some people can will themselves to stop thinking, but it's not real presence.

You can't really will yourself into presence. It's not will, there's no contraction that goes with it, and it's not really, not even an effort. So let me just demonstrate, because words sometimes are not sufficient.

If you will yourself to stop thinking, the body contracts a bit and you're holding something in and you go like this, and you might even stop breathing for periods of time. So, and if you hold yourself tight and you stop breathing for periods of time, you may be able to stop thinking while you do that. Some people call that meditation.

And some people have perfected it to such a degree that they can sit for one or two hours like that. And that holds thought at bay. And then the moment you let go, come out of your meditation, the mind is more active than before because you were holding the lid on a boiling kettle.

You're holding the lid down. But real presence is simply a natural arising of awareness in which there's no contraction in the body and there's no willpower that is exerted, but presence is simply allowed to arise like this. And that's a state of openness.

In that state, thoughts tend to quickly dissolve. Very different from the state of closedness, the tight lid to that. So, make sure that presence is not brought about by an act of willpower, exertion of willpower because that's not presence.

Presence is powerful, but soft, gentle, open. Some people have an active dream life, other people less so. Of course, everybody dreams more or less.

Some people remember their dreams. Others never remember their, almost never remember. The more attention you give to your dreams after you wake up, the more you tend to dream.

And there may be something said for some time, there may be a period in a person's life where paying attention to your dreams can be helpful, such as it's practiced in Jungian therapy and so on. There may be periods in your life when paying attention to your dreams, you can learn certain things. There may be messages there.

And the more attention you give to your dreams, the more the dream life responds. But I believe that that is a period in a person's life. And then you move on.

And then dream life becomes of less importance or maybe still occasionally you might get a very insightful dream. The important practice is presence in daily life. Then eventually the rest will look after itself and dreams tend to turn more peaceful also.

And you might even lessen the amount of dreams that you have. Not that that matters really anymore. Dreams are less needed to give you important insights when you are present because in presence, insights tend to come to you directly.

So you tend to less need the intermediary of dream images less because you're already connected with the source of all insights and wisdom. Funny thing is, if you go to a Jungian analyst, after a while you begin to have Jungian dreams. Isn't that strange?

Not that that's not valid or valuable. That's how it works. Because life responds to your, or consciousness responds to your expectations.

And the universe is moving towards, continuously towards creativity. It delights in giving birth to form, to life forms. And that is reflected in yourself.

There is, you feel the desire to create, to manifest. Just one or two little addendums. I don't know if that's the plural of addendum to what we've been talking about earlier.

Manifestation and so on. It does work even for people who still have an ego. So it works better and becomes more beneficial for yourself and the rest of humanity.

If whatever it is that you want to manifest is motivated from a non-egoic place. But it's quite good to attain things that if the ego is still operating, the ego can sometimes, you can engage in sometimes helpful manifestation practices. They're not as powerful as when you are free of ego.

But whatever you achieve eventually is not going to fulfill the purpose of making you happy, complete, or fulfilled. Course in Miracles says you will always know that the ego was the motivating force whenever you have achieved something, it hasn't satisfied you. It can satisfy you briefly, but not for very long.

But I don't discourage anybody from practicing because if you find out things that don't satisfy you, then eventually you may realize that nothing out there can satisfy you because the state of ultimate satisfaction comes from the state of connectedness with being. Therefore, anything out there is simply an addition. Or as I like to call it, as I said, it's the skimmed milk, it's not the cream.

And the skimmed milk will never satisfy you. Sorry, if your anti-dairy is not a good analogy. Then the skimmed milk nor the cream will satisfy you, literally speaking.

But another little anecdote that came to me just now on the way here, I remembered a couple of weeks ago, there was a U.S. Open tennis championship. And for the women, it was won by a 19-year-old Canadian. Teenager, I suppose, still a teenager.

And she was virtually unknown before that. I was interested to hear in an interview, she said that she started practicing meditation at the age of 12 and also started practicing

visualization and manifestation techniques. She also said that when she's on court playing tennis, she's absolutely and completely in the present moment.

And she said three years ago, she wrote herself a check to herself and she knew approximately the amount of money she would gain by gaining the U.S. Open. She was $3.5 million or so. She wrote herself this check, had carried it for three years.

And last week, she received the check. A few years ago, Jim Carey showed me, he pulled out of his wallet a check. I can't remember how much it was, that many, many years ago he had written to himself, but he carries it around.

I think it was $10 million. And for after a few years after writing it, he received that check for a movie. So you can play around with that.

But remember, it won't make you happy. It's the game of form. So, and it's sometimes good to achieve a few things that you wanted to achieve and then realize that they don't make you happy.

And some often it looks as if you had made a mistake because you might have dedicated several years to something that ultimately was not right for you, but you were successful and you realized, well, that's actually making me unhappy. So a good thing is to realize that something you have been doing was not your correct path. One of the most useful things in life is mistakes.

Make as many mistakes, as many as possible. And then eventually you learn what your path is. And don't be afraid of making mistakes.

And retrospectively, once you become present, all these things are no longer mistakes because without them, you wouldn't be here now. You would not have become present. You needed to go through this journey, which in many cases is many disappointments.

Sometimes there's a disappointment of not attaining what you wanted to attain. And at other times, it's a disappointment that you attained what you wanted to attain, but it did not fulfill its purpose of making you happy or any kinds of deep, lasting fulfillment. So it's wonderful to have these disappointments.

And sometimes instead of being, what should I do? People ask, should I do this or should I do that? Some people become paralyzed through the inability to make a decision because which way should I go?

Should I go to a monastery and dedicate my life totally to, or should I apply for a job on Wall Street? And you may also notice you have different poles. You may have one pole that is a reflection of two universal movements.

One is the movement towards creation of form. The universe is moving continuously

towards creativity. It delights in giving birth to form, to life forms.

And that is reflected in yourself. There is perhaps the field, the desire to create, to manifest, to do things, to change as well, to participate, create something, leave a lasting mark or whatever it is. That's the outward movement of the universe.

And then that is the out-breath one could say. And then there's a reciprocal movement and that is the in-breath. There's also something in you that is more interested in being than in doing.

You feel the pull towards back to the source, back to awakening. And you may notice different times in your life or even at the same time in your life, both poles, and sometimes the poles can be so strong that you're paralyzed in the middle. This is why I gave the extreme examples of wanting to go to a monastery for the rest of your life and not anything to do.

And then the next day you think, oh, maybe it would be nice to participate and to become big and important and drive the big cars. And then Wall Street job looks suddenly enticing. So there's the doing and the being.

They need to be balanced in your life. Not everybody is completely in the middle. Nobody is completely in the middle.

You're either a bit more in the being dimension or you're a bit more in the doing dimension or you're very much in the doing dimension. You're very active, but there's always a remnant of awareness still there. So you don't lose yourself completely in the doing.

And then the doing can be quite fruitful. And the other way is possible too that you're very much in the being dimension without completely losing your ability to act upon the world, without completely losing your ability to do whatever your particular mission or task is in life. So you can, you're most happy rooted in being, but you're still able to do, to fulfill your, to do your work, your task, whatever it is.

Now, I'm always more pulled towards the being dimension, as you might've noticed. In fact, I must admit because of that, I'm not totally, I'm not really that well balanced, but I've come to accept that because there's no perfection on the level of the form. Sometimes I'm a little dysfunctional in the doing realm, but it's been fine.

So the world hasn't collapsed because there's still 300 emails I haven't answered. The world is still there. And I always admire Oprah.

She has a seemingly infinite energy to do, and she's continuously, how is it possible to have so much energy? And yet she is not completely lost in the doing. There's always some anchor in the being dimension.

So she doesn't lose herself in the doing, although she's so much better at doing than I could ever be. She doesn't lose herself. So in a way, we compliment each other quite well.

I'm much more in the being, but I can do, but I'm not that great at it. But I only become good at doing when doing is concerned with teaching being. And that's also a kind of doing, I suppose.

I'm doing now, I'm speaking. So it's a kind of doing. And you yourself will have to see where you fit in in the scale of the doing and being.

You will just, almost everybody has the two present within. And you may have, remember from one of the books, the term frequency holder that I used. And frequency holders in past ages would have been called contemplatives.

And in past ages, they would have lived in monasteries, people who have very little interest in achieving anything in this world, who just want to go within and be present. And there are a few, it's a very relatively small percentage of human who are real frequency holders who would find it very hard to function in this world. There may be one or two of you here, it's possible.

If you find it very hard to function in this world and you're able to function within a small sphere of activity, if it's a simple thing, if you lived in a monastery or in a commune, you would be able to fulfill your daily tasks, that's fine. But you're not interested in doing anything beyond that. Our civilization has no place for these people, unfortunately.

So we don't have monasteries really. There are still some, but not many people go there anymore. And so if that's your calling, then somehow you will able to be able to recognize it within yourself, if that is the case, and find some way of, find a sphere of activity where you can do little things and be like gardening is a lovely thing that can easily be reconciled with being a frequency holder or working something with your hands, making something carpentry, making something that you have your own place, your own job, you don't want to respond to anybody. And so frequency holders also have an effect on the collective human consciousness.

Because you affect whatever your state of consciousness is, you will affect the totality of consciousness.

[Speaker 7] (3:49:42 - 3:51:58)

Thanks for the opportunity. Over a period of six months or so, sickness or illness saw my dog get gradually sicker and sicker to the point where he was in much, much pain. The x-rays and pills and probing did not find a cause that was treatable.

We had a family meeting and collectively we decided to have the vet end his life to ease

his pain by injection. And you made a comment about a lady who felt more grief when she lost her dog than when her mother died. Although it sounds mean, I had the same uncontrolled times of tears for many weeks afterwards with the death of my little buddy.

I've considered the notion of ego and suffering and pain when remembering my companion in the now. I feel that in the final moments that I betrayed companionship. So my question, how do I remove the ego side of not having my buddy or companion around whilst not removing and dismissing the love I continue to hold for him?

I realise that he's physically gone, but like in a recent interview with a quantum scientist author, I wondered about the connection. I met a nice chap here who lost a partner and he said that your talks help. Now, of course, I'm not comparing that loss, but I'm hoping you might find or might contemplate and give pointers again to perhaps how I can let go of the form and then still remember the love part without getting sadder and getting attached.

[Speaker 1] (3:51:58 - 3:51:59)

Yes.

[Speaker 7] (3:51:59 - 3:52:00)

Hope that makes sense.

[Speaker 1] (3:52:00 - 4:00:51)

Yes, thank you. I understand. And the same question would apply also to if somebody close to you dies.

People who have not had a close connection with an animal like a dog may not understand you. Only people who have had that will understand that it can be as painful as losing a human. And we had the same experience when our dog passed away under similar circumstances.

And in the end, because she was suffering too much, we had to ask the vet to come back and she died peacefully. And she had a wonderful life, was loved and gave love for nine years. And her consciousness, she was a female, benefited greatly from being together with us, with humans and with us in particular.

And we benefited from her unconditional, continuously loving presence. She loved almost everybody. Same.

She loved almost every other dog or animal and almost every other human with very few exceptions. And whenever somebody, whether it's an animal that you are very close to or a human, the moment a person dies or an animal dies, you realize what you loved was not the physical form or the physical form may be beautiful and part of the loving

experience. But the moment the life is gone, that which you loved is not there anymore.

Something inhabits the physical form that is the essence, the organizing principle, the intelligence, whatever you want to call it, behind that keeps the molecules and atoms of the physical form together and organizes, holds them together. Science has not, doesn't know about that yet. It only, life, it equates life with matter, but life is beyond that.

And ultimately life is consciousness. And the dog is an expression of the one consciousness, different from a human. The human is an expression of the one consciousness or any non-physical entity can only also be an expression of the one consciousness.

The one consciousness expressing itself at different levels of evolution. So it's like a, you could say a ray of sunlight. You are a ray of sunlight and I am, and the dog is, and the flower is, all consciousness incarnating in form.

So that does not die. The essence doesn't die. And the dog, it's not a dog.

I mean, we think we know what we are talking about when we say a dog. No, it is a being, an energy field, a being, an expression of the one consciousness, we think we know when we label things and call it something, we think we know what it is. We don't know what a dog is.

And just by calling it dog, it's still, it's just pseudo knowledge. We don't know what a human is. Just the fact that somebody has a name, we think you know what that is.

No, it's an unknown phenomenon. It's through the language gives us the illusion that we know, but we don't really know. And so here you have the dog, this wonderful presence closed in matter temporarily.

And something happened because consciousness evolves throughout the universe and evolves in billions of ways and forms, in and through billions of ways and forms. It's a magnificent, ultimately totally incomprehensible miracle, totally incomprehensible to the human mind, but consciousness is engaged in this evolutionary process, the one consciousness, and whatever suffers is the one consciousness. It's not a coincidence that there's a religion on this planet where the main image is a suffering God.

Isn't that strange? I mean, we have some explanation for it. We say, well, that was Jesus who died for this.

Okay, let go of that explanation and just remain with the fact that here, the main image of that religion is a suffering, basically, although you call it son of God or God, doesn't matter, a suffering God. And there's a deep significance to that. You don't have to be a Christian.

In fact, if you're a Christian, you probably don't want to go there where I'm going now. There's a deep significance there because this suffering God is everybody. It is the fundamental human archetype.

It's the suffering that every human and every life form, but in this case, a human, he represents the human, that every life form goes through when this life form assumes the form of the material form, the separate, seemingly separate material, physical vehicle, and is then defined in form. There were ancient teachings. They are quite close to the truth that say that consciousness fell into matter as if it were a mistake.

But I don't think, I think it's a good image to say that consciousness, there was a kind of fall of consciousness into matter, but it wasn't a mistake. There is no, there are no mistakes in the universe. So, and if there is a mistake, it has a higher purpose for learning.

And so it's not a mistake anymore. So that, for those years that you lived together, you both, your consciousness and the dog's consciousness, which are not really separate, although we just call them that, benefited greatly and grew, evolved through being together. So it helped the dog and it helped you.

It added something to your consciousness, that being together with that entity, with that being. And that is not lost. I cannot tell you in what way this, that which animated that entity that we call dog continues on its journey back to the source, but it continues on its journey as you continue on it, not as a person, not as a personal identity that survives, but an underlying energy field, the underlying consciousness that gives rise to this form, of course, continues on its journey and ultimately is never separate from its source. It just believes itself to be separate.

[Speaker 14] (4:00:56 - 4:01:00)

What is the power of the dog's consciousness?

[Speaker 1] (4:01:53 - 4:02:17)

What does it feel like to be you at this moment? There is a powerful sense of presence there, which has no particular form, and that's you. And at that level, you are connected with something far deeper and more powerful than the little entity.

[Speaker 8] (4:02:22 - 4:02:30)

Hello, Eckhart. I'm so honored to be here. And I'm a little bit nervous.

[Speaker 1] (4:02:31 - 4:02:34)

That's fine. Nothing wrong with that.

[Speaker 8] (4:02:35 - 4:03:34)

I really have two questions, and I'm wondering if I can sneak one in really quick, an extra one. I work at the University of New England, and we have a Center for Global Humanities, and we have speakers come, it's like a public forum for discussion of problems that humans face. And we'd be absolutely honored if you would speak there.

Where is that? It's located in Portland, Maine. Oh, at a university?

Of New England. Of New England? Yes.

Oh, okay. And I organize the speakers, so. Oh, thank you.

And we have a really good group of followers who would just be mesmerized by you, so I hope you would consider that.

[Speaker 1] (4:03:34 - 4:03:49)

Okay, please mention it to Steven or Greg, and give your contact. I can't make any promises, but I've never been to Portland, Maine. I've been to Portland, Oregon, but not to Portland, Maine.

[Speaker 8] (4:03:50 - 4:03:53)

Oh, well, we have some really beautiful places in Maine.

[Speaker 1] (4:03:53 - 4:03:57)

Yeah, yeah, thank you. And the next question?

[Speaker 8] (4:04:00 - 4:04:39)

I'm wondering, you talk a lot, well, you know, being present, and you talk about conditioning, and how we are conditioned, and I think about my own negative thinking, and how some of that is conditioning, and then you know people who, they just seem to have this old soul, this spirit, and so I wonder about nature versus nurture, and what your thoughts are. Is there like a short gene for anxiety that causes all, I guess for me, being in the present, when you have that fight or flight, like how do you tame that?

[Speaker 1] (4:04:43 - 4:04:44)

How do you?

[Speaker 8] (4:04:44 - 4:04:53)

How do you tame that, you know, the fight or flight, when your heart is racing, is it just doing it, and being in the present?

[Speaker 1] (4:04:54 - 4:04:58)

When you are anxious, we mean, or nervous?

[Speaker 8] (4:04:58 - 4:05:01)

Anxious, and then it causes all that negative thinking.

[Speaker 1] (4:05:01 - 4:35:49)

Negative thinking, how to go beyond that? Yes. Okay.

Well, there are various ways, which I sometimes call portals into the state of presence. I just, for the previous questioner, we could break three really similar questions. How do I get out of my mind?

For the previous questioner, I talked about feeling the inner energy field of the body, but for you, I will talk about a different portal, and that is a very universal portal. All portals are closely related to each other. So this portal is called the present moment, and present moment awareness or attention to the present moment more than anything else.

It's a redirecting of your attention. As soon as you discover within yourself, you realize that you are entering a non-harmonious state of consciousness, through irritation, upset, nervousness, worry, anxiety, anger, subsisting for a long period of time, any kind of dysfunctional, non-harmonious state of consciousness, or to describe it in other words, unhappiness in whatever form, because unhappiness can take many forms. The moment you realize that, and for you to realize that, already requires a small amount of awareness, because the people who are really deeply unhappy, almost as their normal state, and there are many in this world, they don't even know it, because they don't know anything else.

So there are millions of people running around this planet in a state of unhappiness, in whatever form this unhappiness takes, and if you ask them, are you unhappy? They say, no, I'm not unhappy. What are you talking about?

I'm not unhappy. It's like listening to some machine that goes on, even let's say a noisy refrigerator that is always running in your room. You don't know it's running until something happens to it, and it suddenly stops, and you say, what happened?

Suddenly that dreadful noise is gone, and suddenly it's so beautifully still here. I never knew there was that noise going on all the time. So for you to recognize that you are in a non-harmonious state, requires already a small amount of awareness, because it's only from the awareness.

So we need to presuppose there's already some presence there, but you can recognize

that you don't want that. You don't want the disharmonious state. Then you go into present moment awareness.

The disharmonious state arises usually because you are not, you lose the present moment, and believe something else is more important than the present moment. It also often usually implies there's some form of resistance to something. So present moment awareness is a conscious redirecting of your attention, away from the thinking mind, into the direct perception of present moment reality.

And present moment reality starts with you coming to your senses. Coming to your senses means you sit, so let's say, let me act it out. You are trapped, and you go, oh.

Oh. And you get more and more unhappy, or anxious, or you can feel the anxiety, and life is a heaviness there, and then you notice, oh, do I want that? Do I need that?

Does it have a useful purpose? No. Redirect attention to the present moment.

Okay, where's the present moment? Okay, the present moment always starts with sense perception. You're looking.

Suddenly, what's around you? Look. Start, look carefully.

Then you go, oh. And to really look, you need to just be silent while you look. It's the silent looking.

And this is you beginning to enter the present moment, and then incorporate another sense. Listen. So you begin to take in what surrounds you in the present moment.

Become aware that you're breathing. It's all aspects of the present moment. Visual perception.

Be where you are. Be here fully. Be here now.

Inhabit the present moment. Be present to, because that's all there ever is. There is nothing else except the present.

The mind will tell you that there are many things much more important than the present moment, but it's a lie. It's a delusion, because there is nothing else. Even when your mind tells you there are many things more important than this moment, it can only tell you that in this moment.

So there is nothing. So give more importance to the present moment, and so bring attention to the present moment, first through sense perception, through becoming aware of your breathing. And then the next step can be, as you perceive the world around you, also feel the energy field inside the body at the same time.

So you're more and more, more and more present. And this is already a shift in consciousness. Very different from a few minutes before you were immersed in useless thinking.

So there's already a shift in consciousness happening. And you can notice the difference in the energy field as the consciousness shifts from being absorbed in thinking to becoming present. And so that is the, you're waking up, basically.

It's a process of waking up out of, not out of sleep, but out of what is like sleep, which is being totally immersed in the voice in the head, totally identified with the voice in the head. So you become present through sense perception, feel yourself breathing, and feel the inner body. And then you can go one step deeper into what is the actual, the deeper reality of the present moment, because the present moment has a surface appearance, which is fine.

It's often the first step. It's what is around you through sense perceptions. Then you go into the body, and then you go deeper and become aware that as you are perceiving the world around you, there is a presence in you, which you can sense as your very own being, through which you are perceiving.

Otherwise you couldn't, if you were not here as a conscious presence, you would not be able to perceive this room and the plants and the flowers and whatever is in this room. You would not be able to perceive it if you were not here as a consciousness. So whether what you are perceiving is a reality or a dream is immaterial.

The fact is, whether it's a dream or reality, it requires your presence, the light of your presence in which everything appears. Now, can you become aware of the light of presence or the presence directly in you? In other words, can you sense your own beingness right now as I'm talking about it?

I can feel it very strongly in me, the fact that I am. Before anything else arises in consciousness, I am. So I know that I am.

Not this or that, not that I am a man or a woman or have particular age or a particular function, deeper than that. Before you add anything to I am, the I am is there. Before you add any sense perceptions to it, the I am is there.

So another, give you another little pointer to point to that place. What does it feel like to be you in its most fundamental, its most essential way? What does it feel like to be you?

And as I said before, don't remember, no need to remember your personal history for that. In fact, that becomes an obstacle. It's nothing to do with anything that ever happened to you.

Nothing to do with past or future. It's only to do with this moment. What does it feel like

to be you?

And he doesn't have a conceptual answer, so don't answer it. What does it feel like to be you at this moment? What is the innermost self?

What does it feel like? And you will notice that there is a powerful sense of presence there, which has no particular form. You can't say much about it or anything really about it.

And that's you. That's the being, the self, the I am, that I am. And at that level, you are connected with something far deeper and more powerful than the little entity, the physical entity or the psychological entity.

It is there where you're connected to something vast. You're connected to the very core of the universe. And every human is.

That's the Atman, in India it's called, the divine within. And the divine within connects you to the soul of the universe, the outer, the Brahman, the divine without. What does it feel like to be yourself?

And then you suddenly hear, yeah. And you can't say anything about it. It's just a presence.

It's the presence of consciousness. It's consciousness. Another way of putting it, as you can see, I give you many different pointers because certain pointers work better for certain people.

Another pointer now, you become conscious that you are conscious right now. You suddenly realize that you are conscious. That's an amazing realization.

And to put it even more accurately, because if I say you realize that you are conscious, in that, putting it like that, there's still some duality in there. I realize that I'm conscious. No, you realize that you are consciousness.

Better way of putting it. You realize that the essence of who you are, your sense of self is consciousness, not anything that happened ever or could or will happen ever. And then this, as you, at first, perhaps it comes to you in little glimpses, and then gradually it becomes the backdrop of your entire life.

That continuously, no matter what situations you go into, or whether you're thinking or not thinking, there's always a part of you in the background that knows that you are consciousness. You know yourself as consciousness. Consciousness knows itself is another way of putting it.

And that is the transcendent dimension that can always be there in the background of your life. And sometimes it will come into the foreground when it obliterates every

thought. I'm talking from my personal life, the non-personal life.

It obliterates, it can, it obliterates every thought. And you just go, ah. You are nobody in particular when it comes to the forefront.

Then the human, it shines away the human dimension temporarily. And there's only the being. When spiritual teaching happens, the being takes over for me.

When spiritual teaching doesn't happen, the human, to some extent, comes back. But it doesn't obliterate the being. So there's always the being in the background there.

When I talk, and I'm talking about this because you will experience the same, and some of you already know exactly what I'm talking about, then the being talks, the words come, it shines through. So you will observe in your life as you become familiar with dancing between form and formlessness, between the human and the being, and bringing them together, you will notice that sometimes the being becomes very strong. When you get very still, you may be surrounded by nature and you go, or somebody comes to you who is in deep agony or suffering, and suddenly you find yourself becoming totally alert and still.

And perhaps you start even saying something to that person, which is just right for that moment. Then the being takes over. And then in other situations, you become the human takes over, and there's just 10% of being in some.

And that's fine. You still, there's still some awareness of consciousness, of space in you. This is a wonderful process.

And many of you are already beginning to experience that in your life, this shift from the mental self, the usual self, as I sometimes call it, the human form self, to the transcendent self, which the Buddhists call the no self, and other traditions call the higher self. These are just words. Somebody who has never had a glimpse of it, as many academics who study religions, they say there's a total contradiction between what the Hindus believe and what the Buddhists believe because the Buddhists say there's no self, and the Hindus say there's the higher self, totally different.

They don't realize they just use different words to talk about the same thing, or no thing. If they had a glimpse of it within themselves, they would know that, but because they only approach it to the conceptual mind, all they see is the differences. This is the practice.

And hopefully, as I've been talking, you and everybody here has, at least perhaps to some extent, been experiencing what it means to shift from the human to the deeper self, what I call the being self. Right now, even if you don't know it mentally, if you are attentive here, if you are not dying from boredom as you sit here listening to me, that means it's working for you. It's that simple.

But if your mind is saying, when the hell is he going to stop talking? That means it's not working for you. And, but you've probably left already by now.

If you're here and there's actually, there's something that captures your attention, that's the truth in you, that's the being level in you that recognizes itself and is coming forth. That's all it is. Because what I'm saying, otherwise, unless you have some access to it within yourself, what I'm saying otherwise would be absolutely boring and meaningless.

I'm not saying anything to just the mind. What the hell is he talking about? Being.

So you need to have some access to it in order to find this interesting or makes you feel more alive. Being here means, yes, you have it. It's there.

That's it. Even though your mind might say, do I really understand what he's talking about? If you enjoy being here and listening and something in you feels alive, then you understand it.

You don't need to understand it conceptually. You can't. You get it?

Thank you. Thank you. Is it really possible somehow to be present and work fast and nevertheless be conscious at the same time?

Interesting. Yes, it seems at first that when you are in presence, it almost seems to people that they are forced to do things slowly. And sometimes I'm described as slow by some people close to me.

And it's true. But sometimes I can be fast too. There are occasions.

There are occasions when I'm quite, when it is demanded, I can be fast. Its presence does not have to be slow. Remember the famous Zen saying, hurry slowly, hurry slowly.

Translated into Spanish, date prisa lentamente. I think that's a good translation. So what does that mean?

How can you go fast and yet be present at the same time? It has a lot to do with the focus of your attention. So you're working here.

If a large part of your attention is where you want to get to, the result you want to achieve, then you are working here. If you said, one can't really put it in numbers or percentages, but I'll do it anyway. So if 80% of your attention is where you need to be, I need to get this finished.

And in the meantime, it creates a tension in you. There's a mental projection where you need to go. And in the meantime, you're doing this in order to get there.

If you can be more present and have 80% of your attention reverse it, have 80% of the

attention in the doing itself and 20% on where you want to get to, because you have to get somewhere, then you can work fast. And working fast with presence implies enjoyment of the activity. And not being present usually implies lack of enjoyment of the activity and the arising of stress or to be working with distaste or some kind of resistance.

And that's not good for anybody. It's not good for you, for your physical body, the people around you. So you can practice with, just practice with practical things or even pretend that you're in a hurry.

So if you want to have just a trial practice, pretend that you're in a hurry and you need to get these things. Or maybe you don't even need to pretend because it happens often enough in real life that you're in a hurry, you need to get ready in order to leave the house or go out. And is it possible to do what you have to do within that space of a few minutes or whatever time you need to get ready and do it actually being fully conscious of every movement and enjoy the energy behind it, but it's really getting in touch with your conscious attention.

Enjoy the energy that's behind the doing rather than mentally projecting to the future, do it. And that's hurry slowly is the meaning, is what that means. Running the same.

If you have to run to catch a plane or a train or a bus or whatever, you can run and be totally centered and yet run fast. So it's a different kind of running. It's a smooth, more smooth, less stressful running.

You will actually enjoy every step of it because you're not excessively focused on the next moment. And of course, realizing as the Zen master says, Zen is doing one thing at a time. That's another way of pointing to this way of acting and working.

Zen is doing one thing at a time, which means giving your fullest attention to whatever you're doing at this moment. Then you know peripherally, of course, why you're doing it, where you want to go to. But in the meantime, you do it.

And then you're running. And it's not a stressful running anymore. You're actually, and if you miss the plane, what does it matter?

It's just, you're standing somewhere else and you're sitting somewhere else, not on the plane. Does it? And you're breathing somewhere.

I need to be on that plane. Maybe not. So that's, it's a practice of hurrying slowly.

There's also a tendency in our civilization to create more deadlines than are actually necessary for good functioning of things. I find there are often people create for themselves organizations and so on, create unnecessarily tight deadlines that often do not allow things to mature. And so that's, this has to be done by tomorrow night.

Why? And that often they don't even publish us do that. Sometimes they bring out books.

Some books have a slow time to, they gradually acquire their readers by word of mouth and so on. And some publishers, many publishers say, if not enough books are sold in the first six months, it's never printed again. There's not even given a chance.

There are some TV series that may actually be quite good. And they have one run and say, not quite enough viewers, but it was so good. It was just allow things to mature a little bit.

Why the constant deadlines, but you may be trapped in an organization that does that, which more likely than not, because of this world functions. So it's ultimately, you may have to create your own organization or if the organization is flexible enough, you may be able to create a different environment. I'm famous for not meeting deadlines.

And the world hasn't collapsed for some reason. But if I were an employee, I would have lost my job many times or probably would have walked out unless I could have introduced a different way of doing things. If there's room for that, that's good.

Life is so, it's extremely challenging. And those challenges of life, all the things that continuously seem to almost, almost designed to make your life difficult. If you look at your life, yes, there are interludes of we can suddenly, you can take a sigh of relief and you can say, ah, I've made it, I have arrived.

Something good has happened and here I am. But never for very long. Quite soon, something else comes up to spoil that lovely place that you thought you had arrived at.

Sometimes it's the case with relationships. Sometimes it's the case with your profession or what you achieve there or your social status or whatever it may be or possessions you feel. I made it and then these interludes are never last for too long.

And then life brings you another big obstacle. Now deal with this. And that brings about suffering.

If you don't know the deeper dimension of who you are, your reaction to the problems of life, the difficulties of life, the challenges of life, the manifold tribulations of life, then you begin, you suffer.

[Speaker 3] (4:35:49 - 4:35:58)

You get, become unhappy because you don't understand why you're here.

[Speaker 1] (4:36:01 - 4:36:16)

You're not here to find your comfort zone, although when you do have comfort zones for

a while, enjoy it while it lasts. It's fine. But you're not here to find your comfort zone.

[Speaker 3] (4:36:18 - 4:36:48)

You're here to, well, I will go so far as to say you're here to, to make you feel uncomfortable, uncomfortable to experience difficulties.

[Speaker 1] (4:36:50 - 4:56:14)

And of course you are experiencing difficulties both on a personal level and on a collective level. Some difficulties are of a collective kind, such as increasing in the time period that we are living now. The external challenges are increasing.

Sometimes externals seem to be, you live in a relatively stable external environment as far as the collective is concerned. Economically, socially, or politically, you live in a relatively ordered and stable environment. And then most of the challenges that come to you are of a more of a personal nature, challenges that concern your health, that concern your finances, that concern your relationships and your living situation.

And so then you have most of your challenges come on a personal level. You're then relatively, you live in a relatively stable external environment as in Western countries has been for quite some time now. There have been, there are other countries on the planet while the West lived in relative stability collectively.

Other countries, of course, have been in turmoil and still are in extreme turmoil, where the challenges that most people in those places face tend to be more of a collective kind and then of a personal kind when the economic situation is extremely bad, the political situation is extremely unstable, there's violence around that could threaten you at any moment. But now in the Western world, we are moving from a relatively stable collective environment to a more turbulent collective environment. And it's becoming more turbulent into various areas.

And we only see the beginning of it. Now, this is not something to be afraid of. It is part of a normal cycle of development, but it's the same for an individual as it is for the collective.

And there are cycles, both as an individual, you find most people find they move sometimes into a period of turbulence in their personal life, when they're not just facing one or two challenges, when many things seem to be happening at the same time, many seemingly negative things seem to be happening at the same time. You lose your job, then you lose your marriage, divorce, then you might not even keep your home, you're suddenly, and you fall ill. So this is not all that unusual for a person to have to experience a sudden influx of challenges on a personal level.

And if you don't experience that, if your life is so regular that you go, you have a job that

is not challenging, but you have almost 100% job security and you go every day, you go to the same office, come back, always, perhaps you have no, you're not married or not having no relationships, you're not challenged there. A few people may be like that until finally they fall ill or something, eventually something happens to all of them. But if not, if several decades, you had a very ordered life, that would be the most undesirable thing because there would be no evolution of awareness of consciousness in you.

You would remain stuck in your relative comfort zone and without any awakening of consciousness, you would not evolve as a human being. You remain stagnant. It's only by being challenged that you evolve.

And we have to look at why that is. But before we look at that, let's look for a moment at the collective again. Problems seem to be arising one after another in the collective and we can't even foresee what the next problem is going to be.

Suddenly something comes over, who could have foreseen what the 2020 would bring? Nobody foresaw it. Well, I haven't seen any psychics that foretold.

Well, there might've been one, I don't think so. So the important thing is to realize that whether the challenge or the adversity whatever you want to call it, whether it is mostly of a personal nature or whether it's of a collective nature, well, that's also personal. Collective just means that a large number of people in any location experience the same kind of challenge that is a collective challenge.

Of course, it still affects you personally. So a large number of people experiencing the same kind of challenge at the same time, the same location. So this is what's happening to many people now and it's going to continue to happen.

Now, what is the relationship of this? The relationship between realizing your essential identity as the light of the world and the challenges that you're experiencing that are coming towards you right now, more of a collective kind, but also of personal kind. The same external circumstances are experienced very differently by one person who is still very unconscious and another person who is much more conscious, which means more in touch with that which is beyond the conditioned personality.

This person experiences the tribulations of this world, the difficulties very differently from a person who is still deeply trapped in ego. The person is still deeply trapped in egoic identity that any challenge becomes very, very threatening. Not only that, even the possibility of challenges that might happen or going to happen, things that are going to go wrong is already an enormous source of suffering for many people who are trapped in their egoic identity.

They're even at night, they're in bed at night or doesn't have to be in bed at night, but then they're thinking, how much worse is it going to get? The world situation, for

example, how much worse is it going to get? And then you can play out scenarios and you're experiencing emotions that are the same emotions that you would have if these things were actually happening or worse, probably worse.

Very often the scenarios that the mind, the unobserved mind creates, and again, it's lack of consciousness, lack of the light of, not enough light of consciousness in you, then all we have is the unobserved mind that is creating an enormous amount of suffering for you of playing out scenarios that are not here. And not only that, also reacting to challenges that are here in a very limited way through the old conditioning of their minds. And this is a very important point.

For you to realize, for us to realize that the vital thing as we move into this period of turmoil, external turmoil, the way in which you experience this is largely determined by your state of consciousness. If it's purely reactive, then it's going to be extremely difficult. Not only that, the reactive consciousness, I pointed it out before, is largely dominated by fear.

And any action you take that is arising out of a fearful and very limited state of consciousness is ultimately not going to be helpful, and in most cases will make things worse. Any fear interferes with your ability to be aware, to be conscious, and even to think rationally. Even that becomes difficult when there's fear, because then your thinking is no longer your thinking, it's fear thinking.

Thinking becomes controlled by fear. It's all part of the egoic consciousness. So our greatest challenge does not come from outside, no matter what happens.

Our greatest challenge comes from the inside, from our conditioned minds. And that's an important realization. In any situation, be aware of, in any given moment, which ultimately means in the present moment, be aware of your state of consciousness here and now.

And make that your primary reality. If fear arises, ask yourself, how does it arise? Why am I fearful?

And then in most cases, you will realize that the fear is produced by your thinking, not by the situation. In fact, the situations you can always deal with, they happen in the present moment, and you face them in the present moment. But the fear is the realm where you're incapable of taking action while you're in a fearful state of consciousness.

Or if you take action, it's completely contaminated by fear, complete lack of wisdom. So the greatest challenge is how do I face the external situation? What action do I take is always secondary.

Action may sometimes be necessary. But prior to taking action, you need to be aware of your state of consciousness out of which the action arises. And if that state of

consciousness is egoic, then the action is going to, in many cases, make matters even worse, amplify the problem.

You know that when you meet a very unconscious person, just a simple example from your personal dimension, when you meet a very unconscious person, a person who is very angry, whatever, and what they want to draw you into their anger, how do you, what is your state of consciousness? Is your state of consciousness determined by this unconscious person? In which case you will react and amplify that person's unconsciousness.

And you yourself becomes drawn into unconsciousness. That's unconscious action. The same person, if you're aware of your state of consciousness faced with an angry person, you can stay present and you immediately know, even without any thought, that this person is in the grip of unconscious mind patterns, emotional patterns, and you can, instead of becoming reactive, you become more alert and thereby this difficult person, instead of making you as unconscious as they are, can actually help you become more present. In any difficult situation, whether it's a small difficulty or bigger difficulty, you can go either way.

You can go into reactivity. And once you go into reactivity, this reactivity is a force within you that has taken possession of you and it can grow in you. And then you try to still solve the external situation through this cloud of negativity, of reactivity, and you will make it worse.

You will amplify it. You will create more enemies of whether in the form of human beings or antagonistic situations, so to speak, adverse circumstances. So how things evolve in the externals, this is connected to your state of consciousness.

So it's vitally important for humans. You can try it out in your own life. If you're non-reactive, but present, when you're faced with difficult situations or people, and this applies to anything, whether it's lack of money, many people experience now lack of income, relationship difficulty, turmoil in their environment, make it your primary concern to be responsible for your state of consciousness first.

You can choose presence in your daily life. One thing, yes, as I said, is notice when presence arises spontaneously, when you can look at a person. Suddenly a person appears there in front of you, and you look at a person.

And again, for two or three seconds, there's no interpretation yet. And sometimes in those two or three seconds, you can already sense something about that person. You have an intuitive perception of that person.

How deep that is, we don't know. Perhaps you can sense something to do with the personality, or you can send something deeper that is the actual underlying

consciousness, the essence of that person. You can sense that when you are present, you can sense often the presence of the other before you start interpreting the other.

You can sense their inherent presence or consciousness beyond personality. You're also aware of personality, but beyond personality, you can sense, one could say, their beingness. And then the mind usually comes in and perhaps has something to say about the person and have some kind of judgment or whatever it may be.

And, but if you are able to catch them, always the first moment, catch the first moment before the mind comes in and become aware of that first moment, conscious, so it's just not, otherwise you overlook it. So often for people, the presence, many, many people, most people have brief moments of presence, but they don't know it, it's overlooked.

[Speaker 3] (4:56:16 - 4:56:21)

So one could say the most important thing is always overlooked.

[Speaker 1] (4:56:23 - 5:01:01)

And so once you know that and you become aware of this first moment, then it actually lasts longer. This is wonderful, for example, with human beings. You, another, you meet a human being, you look at him, her, whatever, and then you become aware that for the first two or three seconds, you're not judging, you're just sensing.

Through your own presence, you sense the presence of the other. And when you become aware of that, it can last much longer. You don't have to immediately compulsively judge the other.

And that's a wonderful thing. It changes the way in which you relate to other human beings. If you can refrain from judging, the compulsion isn't there anymore because there's something else that's deeper.

And that brings about a connectedness between humans that otherwise would not be there because the moment the mind starts judging, separation comes in, a sense of separation. And the other, the human being that's in front of you becomes the other. Now, that's very important because the other, if you are operating exclusively from a egoic state of consciousness, without any awareness of any transcendent dimension within yourself or the other, then the other, you depend on the other as an ego.

In the absence of awareness, you depend on the other to be as other as possible because you define your own identity through the other, what it is not. If you emphasize that the other is different from you as the otherness of the other, you emphasize it, that strengthens your own, the boundary around your own sense of identity as an egoic self. So the moment you can, there's the ego, the moment you can criticize another, gossip is often a very well-known phenomenon when you gossip about other people, you criticize

them in some way, in some way they are defective in one way or another.

What that does is it strengthens your egoic sense of self. The boundary becomes more rigid and you feel stronger in your sense of self because you are, the moment you judge implicitly, you are superior to the person that you are judging, that's implied in judgment, you are obviously superior. It's not fully understood by the conscious mind, but it's an unconscious egoic strategy to strengthen your ultimately fictitious sense of self.

So that's a very, very common thing and it can be done on an individual basis. It can also be done on a collective basis. Then you see that you, if you identify with a collective conceptual image of who you are, which could be whatever, these days, it could be political, or these days very popular things are gender and race.

So you identify very strongly with that, then the other becomes, the ego needs to make the other as other as possible. It's a crazy process.

[Speaker 13] (5:01:09 - 5:01:24)

It happens because you are unconscious, which means you're not awake yet.

[Speaker 1] (5:01:24 - 5:47:18)

That's when you're in the grip of these patterns, inherited, conditioned mind patterns. You're in the grip of them. And they have you in their grip and you don't even know it because you don't, you're so identified with the mind patterns that you are the mind patterns.

In other words, spiritually speaking, you are asleep. Who you truly are, the essence of who you are is not really there. Or very briefly, it has maybe little, then it's back into the sleep state.

Spiritually speaking, the sleep state is total identification with a stream of thinking, which continuously compares, classifies, judges everything. So suffering is one way and voluntary, entering presence voluntarily is a little easier. But you're only ready to do that now because you have had the suffering that you have had.

It has taken you to this point where you are, you realize the possibility of voluntarily entering by choice, a different state of consciousness. This possibility has arisen in you, which is an enormous thing in human evolution, where you are, in the past evolution has happened very, very slowly, a gradual increase in consciousness through multiple life forms over millions of years. And now for the first time, a life form can consciously cooperate in entering a new state, a new evolutionary stage, a new state of consciousness.

But you needed the suffering, it has had a function. And many of you know that you would not be here if you had not gone through states of unhappiness and varying degrees of suffering. So let's be really thankful.

You need suffering until you don't. And you have reached a point of realization where you don't need more suffering for your further, the evolution of your consciousness. But in case you do, life will give it to you.

You will continue, I'm not promising, I'm not telling you, you will not experience further challenges in life. The difference, however, is as presence arises more and more, you're not transforming the challenges of life into unhappiness and into an unhappy identity. You're not transforming the challenges of life into an unhappy self, a victim self, an angry self, a complaining self, a heavy self, a very dense self, a self that if you were conscious, you would never want to live with.

Unawakened people, in many cases, live with an entity, this mind-made self, that is so unpleasant, they would have left it long ago if that were a person that they live with. They would have said, no way, I'm out of here. I'm not living with you, I don't want to live with you.

You make me unhappy all the time. And in a way, many of you have reached that point where you realized something else is possible. There is another way.

And so that was the beginning of your awakening. For today's meditation, I'd like to have a little bit more silence. I believe we are ready for that, at least most of you.

I'd just like to explain how this works in the context of our technology here. When I'm not speaking, all you do is you look at the screen and you look at the image on the screen. My job is to be here in the state of presence, which means to hold the state of not thinking.

And as you look at me, please realize that you're not really looking at a person. It looks like a person, but when there's no thinking, no form consciousness, no concepts, where is the person? The person is generated by thought.

So when there is no thought, all there is is something that's prior to the person, more fundamental, more basic, more real, formless, just consciousness. So it can be helpful then if you're receptive to be with someone, even if it's only through the means of technology, to be with someone who is in that state of no thought, which means above thinking, not below thinking, because that apparent person has become transparent to the light of consciousness. And somehow if there's even the slightest opening in you to that, you can sense that there is something there that is deeper than the person.

In fact, the person becomes irrelevant. So, but that in you that senses that is of the same frequency is consciousness itself. So if you even have the slightest glimpse of there's

something that transcends the person when you look at the image on the screen, you're right.

But at that moment, you have already transcended to some extent your own person, person being form identity, psychological form identity. Consists of thoughts and images. So it may look at first a little weird as the human mind would tell you to be staring at a person on the screen who is staring back at you.

And perhaps once or twice, a thought will come into your head, this is weird. That's just a thought. It's not really weird.

It's much more weird to be trapped in your mental noise for most of your life and to live on the basis of that, which is a false sense of identity. So what you endeavor is to, as you look at the screen and don't wait for me to say, let's start now. Let's consider that we've already started with our silent meditation because silence underlies the words.

That is in between the words. All you need to do then, it's not doing at all really, is you're looking at the screen and you're aware of the sense perception and you're aware that you're aware. You can sense the presence that you are as you look at the screen.

So, and you're alert, you're aware that there is awareness. Otherwise you wouldn't be seeing anything or hearing anything. So the prerequisite for any sense perception is awareness, consciousness.

So you become aware of that in yourself. And what the technology here provides is a reflection of the consciousness that you are, a helpful reflection. That's all.

When thought comes in, you realize a thought has arisen and you watch it like a cloud and then it drifts past and there's a space again. Don't believe when any thought tells you as we sit here. Don't believe the thought tells you that this thought is more important than sitting here in presence.

Thought likes to do that. Comes in to think about this. No, you've decided that the most important thing as you sit here is to be just present.

If you like, you can think for the rest of the day when we finish here. Plenty of time for thinking. But this is a time for not thinking, rising above thinking.

Looking at the image on the screen will help you to stay above thinking. When you're feeling drowsy or sleepy, then it's a sign you're falling below thinking. So continuously looking at the image helps you to stay alert, connects you with alertness.

Those of you who find it hard to sit here in presence and whose mind is still very active, thinking, feel the inner body as you sit here. Feel the aliveness in the body as you sit and look at the screen. Feel the aliveness in your hands, your feet, your legs, your arms.

There's a field of aliveness, the life within the body. Feel that in the background. That takes attention away from thinking.

And then you have two things. You have the sense perception that is helpful, takes attention away from thinking, and the connection with the inner body. And those two should keep your mind fairly clear if you're able to hold attention there.

It's no effort, just effortless. Close your eyes for a moment. Presence, spacious awareness, aliveness, life itself, the life that you are, consciousness.

Open your eyes, present, within and without. Look at your left or right hand for a moment. See the hand, the skin, the texture.

How it reflects the light without thinking, just present awareness. Sense perception appearing in the field of awareness. Looking back at the screen, awareness remains.

What appears changes. That's sense perception form. Look away for a moment.

Any object where you're sitting in the room, no matter what it is, look at it for a moment. Take in its shape, its color. No mental labeling.

Just an aware presence behind the sense perception. Amazing shift from continuously labeling everything and just being there as the presence. Look back at the screen.

Space of awareness remains. This is how you gradually become free of being dominated by the person. Of course, you're still a person in your daily life, but there's something more vital and more powerful that arises from behind the person and begins to shine through the person.

Everything else is meaningless in this life. If that doesn't happen in your life, what's the point? It means evolution hasn't happened for you.

No, it doesn't matter to the universe, but to the little entity, it does. In ultimate terms, it doesn't matter at all, only in relative terms. Of course, in miracles, there's delay.

Does not matter in eternity, but it is tragic in time. Life is not meant to be continuously challenging, to bring up to pit obstacles in my path, so it seems quite often. And to say, well, what is wrong with life?

And some people take it personally. They say, what's wrong with my life? There's something very wrong with me.

Or they take it personally and say, there's some God or God who must dislike me because I encounter one obstacle after another. And so that is an underlying assumption in many people's mind, but that is delusional because these challenges are meant to be there. They are an essential part of being here for a little while in this dimension.

And if it were not for the challenges of everyday life, big and small, there would be no awakening of consciousness. So through the pressure of challenges, we are being awakened. And not only humans, every life form experiences life as precarious and fragile and often difficult.

Many obstacles have to be overcome, not only for humans, but for all other life forms. Even a blade of grass has to be overcome obstacle until it finally comes up out of the soil. And it's every animal.

So every bird can see how alert birds are when you observe a bird. You could say the bird looks really present and compared to many humans, not you, the bird is actually very present. When you observe a bird, you see the bird goes like, very present.

But it's been like that for hundreds of thousands of million years. It has to be alert because if this alertness is there, it has survived. This has been generated over thousands and hundreds of thousands of years, that alertness, all the birds that were not alert, they disappeared.

They got eaten up. You have to, the bird was, the livelihood, the survival of each individual bird is continuously precarious and the bird has to be alert. So the bird is being forced into that state of alertness.

This is just one little example. And I know from my own life and many of you know from your life that you have gone through a certain amount of suffering in life. There were challenges, there were problems.

You had to confront them. Unhappiness arose. And at some point, something shifted in you.

At some point, there was a deepening. There was an awakening. And at some point you realized that the greater part of, to use a generic term, suffering or unhappiness in your life, which unhappiness is huge in the human consciousness, a huge weight in human consciousness, the greater part of unhappiness actually arises through a dysfunctional use of your mind and not so much the circumstances of your life.

And that's an interesting realization that it's the unhappiness that you experience, even if there are big challenges, small or big, the greater part of the unhappiness you experience arises through certain kinds of narrative in your mind, certain stories that you tell yourself about life, other people, or yourself. And that's an interesting realization which you can verify at any time tomorrow, if you haven't done it yet, and is the moment slightest irritation arises in a situation, anger arises, discomfort arises, ask yourself, what is causing this? And the first answer will be, well, obviously this rude person causes me to be irritated and angry, or this situation that I'm stuck in, the place where I live causes me to be irritated or angry, or a certain condition that my body is experiencing is causing

me to be anxious or sad or angry that something has happened to me.

And so there's always, the first thing is you see the cause is there, there, there, that's the cause. And on the surface level, this is perfectly true, but that's only the surface level. And then, so next, tomorrow, when you encounter the first little thing that brings about perhaps a minor form of unhappiness in whatever form, be very alert like the bird, and say, okay, where does it come from, this situation?

I'm, let's say I'm stuck in the, I'm stuck at the airport, my flight's been canceled. This is a small, little situation, not a huge problem, but sometimes you might make it into a huge problem, the mind, so you're there and you can feel anxious, angry, irritated, ultimately you're suffering, it's a small form of suffering. So you say, well, this situation is, now ask yourself, if I did not add any narrative to this situation that I'm finding myself in, how would I experience this situation?

Narrative meaning certain thoughts that go through your mind that refer to the situation. Now, if I did not add the, ultimately, since we are using an airport analogy or example, this narrative you could consider to be excess baggage that you carry around and you carry it around in your life, you don't know it, and that becomes the burden of me. It becomes a burden of self, of a sense of a heavy sense of self, and you start discovering it in a little situation, like at the airport, you start discovering already the burden of yourself.

How would I experience this situation without the excess baggage of my narrative with which I judge the situation? Okay, you have plenty of time because your flight has been canceled, so you can experiment. Say, okay, now I'm here, now I am letting go of the narrative.

Nothing has changed in the situation. External situation is still the same. On the board, it says canceled, or maybe you're standing and there's a huge lineup, 100 people or more, which before, this was a terrible situation.

You're finding yourself absolutely dreadful. This airline is an awful, awful airline. That's all gone because now you're experimenting with experiencing the situation without the narrative.

So you remove the narrative. What remains then is the naked, so to speak, the bare, naked is-ness of that moment. The is-ness, the simple is-ness of the present moment.

And nothing has changed externally, but you have put down or let go of the excess baggage in your mind. And what is it that you're now experiencing? You're experiencing your body standing there.

You experience your sense perceptions. You look around, you listen to whatever sounds may be there, whatever other sense perceptions may be there. And you've realized that

you're breathing.

Oh, that's interesting. I'm breathing. And then you say, okay, this isn't as bad as I thought it was.

Actually, without the narrative, I feel alive, I feel I'm breathing. And I might, I'm even beginning to feel a little bit of aliveness pervading my body in this moment. I can feel that there's an aliveness in every cell of the body that pervades.

I feel alive, I'm breathing. And you don't even need to tell yourself that. You simply notice it.

You notice whatever sense perception is here in the present moment. And suddenly you're experiencing the same situation as no longer something that causes you suffering because you have removed the mental narrative. If somebody, you can go up to somebody and say, do you know who you are?

If they say yes, that probably means they don't because they only know that which they can name conceptually and they think that's it. But if they say no, but you have to listen to see what kind of no that is, whether it's a no that comes, that is a no that says, I don't know, but I really should know. No, I don't, I have no idea.

But if there is another no, which is a no of the Zen master who says, I have no idea who I am. And then he says, do you know who you are? No.

And this is the most wonderful thing to find that place in yourself that you cannot really know conceptually. There's nothing really you can say about it. One could try and say it's very still or something, but it's limited too.

And that is, that's the place of where you really know who you are non-conceptually, but from the level of concept, from a perspective of concepts, you don't know who you are anymore. So you become comfortable. On one level, you know who you are.

Obviously, you have a name and a past and a history and relationships and a work situation and a home situation and a health situation. On that level, of course, you know who you are. But on the deeper level, you have to become comfortable with not knowing who you are.

And only then can you access the deeper level of who you are. If you're uncomfortable with not knowing who you are, you will immediately jump out of that stillness and take refuge in the mind and start thinking about your life again. I must remember who I am.

Some people have a fear of going to that place of not knowing who they are. That place of not knowing who they are, by the way, also includes when you're very deeply in that, and you also don't know who other people are conceptually, and you become

comfortable, not continuously, there may be a time and a place for knowing people conceptually, but you can never relate deeply to another person if the dimension of depth is missing and all you're relating with is on the dimension of mental judgments of the other person.

So then you don't know them. So you become comfortable with not knowing who you are, and that includes not knowing who another person is and being comfortable with meeting a person and having no judgments in your mind, no conceptual thoughts about who or what kind of a person that is. And sometimes you can sense things about that person and without anything formulating in your mind.

And there you can connect on that deeper level. So becoming comfortable with not knowing, just like, as I said before, Socrates, the very foundation for all his teachings is he has no idea to start with. The starting point for, and Socrates, a great philosopher, the starting point for his philosophy, as he himself said, I am the wisest of all men because I am the only one who knows that he knows nothing.

What that really means is he is comfortable with a place of not knowing anything. And that place arises in the moment somebody asks him a question. What about this?

The answer doesn't start with some knowledge that he already has accumulated in his mind. The answer starts with not knowing and being comfortable with not knowing. And then at some point, we usually, with Socrates, he starts to ask questions.

He still doesn't know, but out of this place of not knowing comes a question. And then he listens to the answer. And then he still doesn't know.

And then another question comes. And another. Not as it's reported in Plato, as if he already knew he's just playing around with people.

No, I know that because I know how that kind of discourse arises. And it's a wonderful place to become comfortable with not knowing who you are or not knowing an answer or not having an opinion. At some point, you might have an opinion and sometimes opinions are fine.

You play around with opinions, not identifying with opinion, which is a mental position, but seeing that it's just a mental position that I happen to believe that this political party is better for the country than that political party. It doesn't mean you give up all that totally. You can still have those beliefs in your mind without being identified with the beliefs, which means you're not going to shout at people who have a different belief.

So not knowing who you are is a wonderful place. And because then you become the presence. Just spacious presence.

And that can be in your life, in the background of your life, all the time, in between your

thoughts, when you're looking at something, when you're listening to someone, be the space. You don't need to know the next thing you're going to say. A good practice would be to, maybe one day we'll practice it today.

There may not be enough time. Invite, I could invite somebody up on the stage and say, no, sit there and see what happens and become comfortable with not knowing what to say. For many people, it would be a nightmare.

Some people have had nightmares where suddenly the curtain opens and they're on stage and there are 2000 people there and you don't know your lines. And public speaking, therefore, for many, there are many people for whom public speaking is the most stressful thing ever. Yeah.

If they could go into that space of becoming comfortable with not knowing and just being the presence and for a while they would say nothing and then the word, some words would come and they might be words like, look, I have no idea what's going to come out of my mouth. And that's fine. Of course, I can't tell you what else will come because it's not my situation at the moment.

Well, it is continuously mine, but you have to experience that for yourself. Mm. So in that not knowing, there is a deep knowing because you're going to the source of all knowing.

So you can know anything through concepts or through the presence that is deeper than concepts. And the two may operate in your life. If you are balanced, then you go into a forest, walk through a forest.

And for a while you might say, oh, that's such and such a tree or this forest. You might have knowledge about this forest and the birds, whatever you see in it. And to apply it, you look at it through concepts.

You can talk about it. And then the time may come when you let go of that. And now you're looking at the same tree that before you named mentally, you're looking at the same tree without naming it.

And then you take in the totality of the forest without naming it. And it's only then that you can know the forest on a level that's deeper than concept. You would miss the essence of the forest if you only apply concepts to your sense perceptions and you look at the forest through the veil of your concept conceptualizations.

But if you let go of concepts and you have the presence, then you can sense something that I would, can't really be put into words, but it's the aliveness of the forest. This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

Unconditional love towards all humans is the transcendent love. You love the formless,

you recognize the formless as yourself in the other. Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (5:47:22 - 5:47:23)

Hi.

[Speaker 9] (5:47:24 - 5:48:55)

First of all, greetings from your fans in Poland. I promised them to tell that. We all have the very heavy pain bodies there.

So you're... As you probably know. So your teachings is quite a salvation.

And my question is again the same topic like a one track mind. Actually that question about sex triggered the question in my mind because I've just listened several times to the autobiography of a yogi, of Paramahansa Yogananda, amazing book. And those spiritual masters, they explain very clearly and logically all kinds of things, including the symbolism of the Old Testament.

And according to them, that snake is the nerve running through the spinal cord and activates the sex nerve. And the forbidden fruit was sex because it was predictable that if humans tried that, it would cause the fall of the humankind from pretty much a god on earth with powerful mind to the level of animal. So my question is, do you think that sexual life actually is an obstacle in spiritual unfoldment if someone wants to attain a high level?

[Speaker 1] (5:48:56 - 5:50:42)

Oh, thank you. In many cases, it is an obstacle to the awakening consciousness, but in essence, it is not, it doesn't have to be an obstacle. It's not, it can be transcended, which means you don't eliminate it, but there's a much vaster hole in which it loses its importance.

So you transcend it rather than eliminate it. The elimination of it, I would not recommend except for very rare individuals for who that is right. So it's transcendence rather than elimination.

But to me, the beginning of the fall, I would interpret somewhat differently from the Bible as the beginning of the identification with the mind, the human mind, the knowledge, the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the differentiation of conceptual thinking coming in. But that's one can interpret it in many ways. For most humans, I would say, do not attempt except with, unless you are one of the exceptions, do not attempt to suppress or eliminate sexuality, but bring awareness to it, and then it's no longer addictive.

And then it may fall away for some people, it then falls away by itself, but you don't need

to make an effort.

[Speaker 9] (5:50:43 - 5:51:01)

And that's what made me feel bad. That because, you know, that there is that union between a man and a woman, and there's a lot of beauty in that. So actually I was sort of turned off by that information in the autobiography of a yogi and said, hmm.

[Speaker 1] (5:51:02 - 5:51:36)

Well, he still, he came from an ancient Indian ascetic tradition and there's a place for everything. So for most, for Westerners especially, but probably even for Easterners, it's really awareness rather than elimination of something that is so powerfully built into the human organism and use it for awakening rather than for letting it draw you to unconsciousness. Thank you.

[Speaker 5] (5:51:37 - 5:52:30)

My question is on sexuality and like, yeah. I would say instinctive impulse. When I see, for example, a woman jogging, I tend to look most times and I look.

And also when the lady is beautiful inside also, how do I balance not getting too lost in the little play?

[Speaker 1] (5:52:31 - 6:12:54)

You know, that's my question. Okay. Thank you.

I know what you mean. You may have heard of something called tantra. It's a, that means basically bringing consciousness into something that is usually unconscious.

For example, sexuality. I would even include other things like eating, things that tend to pull you into unconsciousness. I don't know if you've observed some people who the moment they start eating, they become quite unconscious, relatively speaking.

And then when they stop eating, there's a bit more consciousness again, they go. And then they wake up. So eating consciously would be bringing some awareness into that.

Tantra is traditionally used to point to the possibility of bringing consciousness into sex. And sex starts the moment you're looking at a woman jogging. And basically what tantra means is not to make it into a means to an end, not to look to the next moment and the one after that, the final moment of man woman union, always being orgasm, but sex starts with looking and to be at every moment, honor the moment and enjoy the moment for what it is, which is there's nothing wrong when your body, mind, organism gets drawn to that.

You know that this is happening. If you don't know that this is happening, you become the reaction and then you are lost. But if you know that this is happening, you can actually allow yourself to be drawn.

You can look and enjoy just looking. There's no need to go beyond that. Can you be, I enjoy looking at all kinds of humans, including women or men, it doesn't really matter.

I enjoy the human form. I like to be sometimes sit in a cafe in a corner and simply watch the human beings come in, leave. Some are old, some are young, some are beautiful, some are not so beautiful.

They're all beautiful inside, but on the external, the variety of the human form is just quite wonderful to watch. And if you don't want anything, the question is whether the attraction turns into wanting. The attraction is the attention moves there and it's unconscious.

And then the moment comes when you realize that the attention has moved there. There's no need for you, as some spiritual additions might tell you, you must not look at a woman. If the moment you notice your attention moving, to look somewhere else.

By denying it, you really intensify ultimately the unconscious urge to look. There's even in Buddhist monasteries, the monk, when I first visited a monastery, I could see a woman was trying to give a monk something, a pencil or something. And he said, I'm sorry, I can't take it from you.

You have to put it on the table and then I'll take it. I'm not allowed to take something from a woman. And this is how, because the power of sexuality was so strong that for a long time in the past, people were afraid of it because you can't control yourself.

If you even just take something, there might be a flash of energy coming. Who knows what will happen next? If you just take a pencil from a woman, what's going to happen next?

So to enjoy, you can also, for Tantra, you can enjoy touching someone. There's no need to, it's all really connected with the self-sufficiency of the present moment and not always needing, wanting the end result. And that includes any kind of sexual attraction.

If you bring in present moment living into normal life, you can also practice it there where you simply enjoy whatever phenomenon is arising at this moment for what it is instead of it becoming some kind of wanting something in the future, wanting more. Observe the impulse. And if you get lost in it, then you have to wait until you wake up and then can observe yourself running after her.

I remember I had a friend in England many, many years ago who suddenly became very interested in spirituality and asked very deep questions. And a couple of times we were

sitting somewhere outside in a park or cafe and I was talking to him. That was my early form of teaching, individuals coming and asking questions.

And I observed a couple of times he was listening to me, which was so important to him, just this vital question was being answered. And suddenly I could see him, he was looking somewhere else behind me. And I thought, what's going on?

He stopped listening. And then I looked around and there was a woman sitting there behind and he, spirituality was so important for him. But then something else came up that was even more powerful at that time.

And that was the attraction. And then I pointed it out and he woke, he suddenly, he was like a man waking up from sleep or from a dream. Oh, it was completely lost.

And then it happened again. And after that, he was able to be aware of that pull. If you're aware of that pull, you are not the pull.

You're not in the grip of that pull. It's nature. If the pull is part of the physical nature, but then you're not aware.

If you are not aware, you become the pull and it dominates the next thing that you do. You may run after, or you may try to approach her, or you may lose yourself in fantasizing for the next 30 minutes. All kinds of things happen.

If you become the pull, the pull becomes action or it becomes thought. So are you the pull that you can sense or are you the knower, the one that knows that this is happening? And if you can be the knower, you can allow yourself or your body, your physical organism to experience whatever is happening at this moment without losing yourself in that.

It's a spiritual practice. So I recommend that you go into a place where you're likely to encounter many beautiful women. I don't know where that would be, the beach or the...

And practice, sit there and let your attention be pulled. Wonderful practice. And women can do it with men or with other women or men with men, it doesn't matter.

The important thing is, can you be the awareness of what's happening or are you losing yourself in the pull? So as a practice, just be there, space for the impulse, space for the attraction without believing that you need to change something. If you suppress it, I don't think it's the most skillful thing to do, to actually say, I must not look because it's something that will build up inside you, it will make it even more powerful.

And it will not become obsessive, the awareness will deepen as you practice that. And then you have a choice, there is always a choice. It doesn't mean you cannot act, you can act from the awareness.

You can still, if you want to meet someone, you can still approach her and say, I don't know what, nothing comes to mind. That's why I've never done it. It has arisen in the past and the question, what can I say?

Don't know, but you may be better at it, so. No. If let's say we love all, if let's say we all love each other unconditionally, how can I decide who is to be my partner?

Is this based on physical attraction? Isn't this a contradiction with this higher state of consciousness? Okay, so if you love everybody unconditionally, how can you possibly decide who is going to be your partner?

That's the question. Because it seems then there's no preference anymore. Or if it's physical attraction, isn't there a contradiction?

If you're in a higher state of consciousness, then shouldn't or not be physically attracted to anybody? Is that the implication in the question? Well, the love we're talking about, the unconditional love towards human beings and life forms, is a, is a, let's see, what is it that you love in the other when you love unconditionally?

You don't love their physical form. You don't love their psychological form, their personality. The unconditional love goes deeper.

It's a transcendent love that what you love is not the form, but the formless essence of the other. And you can only love that when you can sense within yourself that dimension of formless, when you can be still and present enough and then look at another human being. And then you can recognize something.

What you recognize is, for lack of a better word, the consciousness, which is the essence of the other human, as it is the essence of who you are. Consciousness prior to the consciousness being born into some kind of form, personality, which is there, and the physical form, which is there. But in every being, there is still the dimension of consciousness that is prior to form.

Although the human being has become form, consciousness assumed form has incarnated, so to speak. But that doesn't mean that the formless and timeless consciousness is lost. It's still there as the essence.

And when you can sense it in yourself, you can sense it because you are still and present enough. From that dimension in yourself, you can sense it in the other, and that is love. It's basically a recognition that, in essence, the other is the same as you.

But then, of course, there's always, that is the transcendent dimension to every human being. And in addition to that transcendent dimension, there is a form identity of every human being. Every human being has a physical form and an emotional form and a mental form.

That's the inner, that's the personality. So the physical appearance and the personality consisting of mental, emotional, conditioning, and so on. So there are the two levels.

The unconditional love towards all humans is the transcendent love. You love the formless, you recognize the formless as yourself in the other. But then you are still here as a form, too, and the form may respond to another form, the physical.

There can be physical attraction. It is not incompatible with a transcendent realization, although some ancient or not so ancient traditions may tell you that. It is not incompatible.

You can have physical attraction on the level of form. You can also have an attraction towards the mental, emotional form of that other human being because it resonates with something in your own form. So that means you may be drawn to another human being physically or mentally, emotionally, because you resonate with that.

And then perhaps you enter into a relationship. So the different levels operate. The transcendent remains.

It can become obscured through excessive attachment, of course, to the mental or emotional dimension in the other. So in a relationship, the realization of essence, identity, as I sometimes call it, can become obscured when form identity takes over completely, which could happen through the pain body, which could happen through emotional, getting identified with arising emotions and losing touch with the transcendent. Yes, that can happen, but it's not incompatible.

Everybody's challenge is to balance the two in their lives, in their relationships, to relate to the other on the transcendent level. And at the same time, if it's there on an emotional, mental, physical level. Without the transcendent dimension in a relationship, it's not ultimately satisfying and it cannot really, truly work for long if the transcendent is missing completely in a relationship.

It's physical attraction and attraction between personalities is not enough to keep it going. Can keep going for a while, but then it becomes frustrating and you see more and more of the limitations of the other person. And the other person sees more and more of your limitations, which are always there.

And when you live together, it becomes very obvious that the other person has his or her limitations. Now, as long as the realization of the transcendent dimension is there, that fine, those limitations can exist within the space of the transcendent and they're not destructive of the relationship. Now, you may find with, it's sometimes easier to have this unconditional love towards people that you don't know so well than people easier than towards people that with whom you share a lot of past.

Because they are the past, the form identity of that person can be very powerfully there

in your mind, in your interaction. So that's the challenge of being present with family members, parents, grown up children, and so on. And of course, as you know, Ram Das recommends, if you think you're enlightened as a test, he recommends that you spend two weeks with your parents.

And that will tell you whether you're really enlightened or not. Go and spend two weeks, stay with your parents for two weeks. In most cases, that is a good test, unless your parents are enlightened, in which case there's not much point in using it.

It doesn't tell you anything.

[Speaker 12] (6:12:56 - 6:13:52)

If one is in the surrendered state of consciousness, can they, I've heard teachings from my own experience and from just reading, with romantic love, there can be, I need you, behavioral expectations. And then there's like the selfless kind of love where there are no behavioral expectations and you still love the person. My question is, if you're in the surrendered state of consciousness, if you're completely surrendered to what is, do you still have that kind of selfless love for a specific person romantically?

Or does that kind of dissolve? Or is it just only the universal, which is wonderful, the universal love? It's amazing.

Wow. But can you also have that specific kind of love? Okay.

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (6:13:54 - 6:23:30)

So the question you're basically asking, would you then love everybody equally so there would not be one person singled out as special, as the Course in Miracles calls it special relationship, which the Course in Miracles says, of course, it's of the ego to single one out as special. Now, if you single one out as special and what you see in the other is the form only and you're attached to the form, which doesn't just mean the physical form. Of course, that's an important part of it because it is part of the sexuality and all that, which is part of the attraction.

But it also includes the psychological form of the other, who you think that person is, their psychological makeup, how they behave and speak and act. That is also a form, that's a psychological form. And there can be strong attachment to those aspects, both the physical come together with the psychological, which includes also emotions.

There's an emotional link also there. And those coming, when they all come together, you fall in love. And aptly, it's called fall because it's a fall in consciousness.

But that's okay. If that's what you experienced and that life wants you to experience

that, it's part of your learning, that fall in consciousness. Now, it's not immediately, of course, experienced as a fall.

It's experienced as a high. And only afterwards do you realize, oh, that was a fall. And afterwards can be after a year.

It can be after three months. It can be after the honeymoon. It can be soon after you move in together.

And so, and then the suffering starts. What before was the love now becomes the suffering. And then for a while, it can happen that you fluctuate for the next year or two or three between still feeling the love and the suffering.

And then usually it comes to an end after a while or you compromise and for some other reason, stay together. So that's the, now, if you are able to feel in the other, well, first of all, in yourself, that which is beyond form, the essence, the stillness, the presence, whatever we want to call it, and by sensing it in yourself and being it, then you recognize it in another. And that recognition that in the space of stillness is true love, which doesn't need the other because the other only reflects to you who you are.

But even there, it can happen that the form of the other, because you are not just the formless, temporarily, you're also the form. Temporarily, you are either a man or a woman. Temporarily, you have this body.

And this form, this man or this woman, and this body and the emotional field may find a certain resonance with on different levels, be it sexual, emotional, psychological levels, a certain resonance with the other form. And that resonance, that is what in the unenlightened romantic love makes up the entire relationship. But now, when you know who you are in your essence, all of those factors are still there, but they do not make up the entire relationship beyond the resonance between the sexual or emotional or physical resonance.

There's a deeper level present. So you can go through the motions of romantic love with the transcendent level also present in yourself and recognizing it in the other. So romantic love may, after a while, of course, for the relationship to be truly deep in any relationship, some transcendent element has to be there because it's not going to last otherwise.

It doesn't mean necessarily that people need to be totally awake already, totally awake knowing who they are, but some element of the formless must be there eventually in the relationship for the relationship to survive and be a true relationship. Otherwise, all you have left in the relationship is your judgments about the other and physical attraction and just mind emotional. And that's ultimately, it's not enough.

It's not enough. The added element, the transcendent element needs to be there. And if

the transcendent is there, you can be quite content even without the romantic relationship.

You no longer say, I need that. It's when it's there, it's beautiful, but you don't need that. Yeah, cool.

So the mind, it is often in relationships, the mind prevents the deeper level, the transcendent level from arising in the relationship. So the mind destroys the relationship, identification with the story in the mind, which is about yourself and the other obscures love. It might even say love, well, it's no such thing as love.

I read in a novel last year by a British writer, it does Mac Ewan, he's a well-known contemporary writer, Ian Mac Ewan. And he wrote this book about, it's called On Chesil Beach. It's about two young people falling in love in England in the fifties.

And these two young people, they feel the pull towards each other and they begin to fall in love. But sexually they are completely repressed and very fearful about, it's in the fifties, so the sex revolution hasn't happened yet about sex. So they're both extremely fearful about sex.

And then they get married and their first night, they stay in a bed and breakfast on near Chesil Beach in the South of England. And they're trying to have sex for the first time and it's a disaster, dreadful disaster. And she is so shocked.

She runs out of the room to the beach. Oh, they don't realize it's actually quite funny. I don't explain what disaster, you can probably imagine it.

So she runs out and the next day, so they don't see each other that night, that's their honeymoon, their wedding night. And the next day he goes to the beach, Chesil Beach, and she sees she's walking on the beach. They start talking to each other.

And both feel still, the pull is still there, but both their minds are bringing up stories why it's not possible, it's dreadful. They are projecting things onto the other, what she is. And so the pull is there, but they both create stories in their minds that cuts them off from the other and they separate.

And then they spend the rest of their lives doing other things. The rest of their lives in the novel is compressed to five or six pages. And that shows how destructive the mind can be of true relationship, how the mind imposes interpretations on the other, that are total fictions.

But there's so much, as Don Miguel Ruiz would say, there's so much faith in these fictions that it's an impossibility for the human being to see what the mind is creating is a fictitious judgment on that creates a barrier between yourself and the other. This writer is not spiritual at all. He just observed human nature and he presented it.

And that is the ultimate lesson is spiritual.

[Speaker 11] (6:23:33 - 6:23:34)

Thank you very much.

[Speaker 1] (6:23:53 - 6:27:17)

This is what Bodhidharma looked like or may have looked like. He certainly looks present. There's a story of, I believe it was a British writer, Paul Brunton, I think it was, who in the thirties visited the guru, spiritual teacher, Ramana Maharshi at his ashram in India in order to, he was preparing a book on the spiritual teachers of India.

The book was later published and under the title In Search of Secret India. And he visited Ramana Maharshi. The guru at that time was not too well known outside his immediate circle.

And he had a list of questions, very important questions for his book. So he came into Ramana's room and Ramana looked at him in a state of thoughtless awareness. And Paul Brunton looked at him and he didn't ask a single question.

All the questions dissolved in the presence. On that particular occasion, that was the first time he met him. He may later have asked him questions.

Another little anecdote connected with Ramana Maharshi. A famous British writer visited the ashram. Somerset Maugham is his name.

And again, he was preparing a book, a novel that involved an Indian spiritual teacher. And just before he was to meet Ramana Maharshi, Somerset Maugham fainted probably because it was so hot. So they carried him into a room and he was lying there on a bed.

And when he came to, Ramana Maharshi was sitting there next to his bed, looking at him. And he was confused and didn't know what to say. And Ramana Maharshi said something like, silence is the best speech.

And that was the end of that encounter. And later on, in a novel called The Razor's Edge, Ramana Maharshi appears as one of the characters.

[Speaker 4] (6:27:18 - 6:27:56)

But my question is, in The New Earth, you give an example of Hakuin, the Zen master, and he's falsely accused of false beliefs. Well, there's false accusations towards him. And he responds with, is that so?

I was wondering if you could give us some other examples of how a conscious person might answer or respond to that situation and how the ego might respond to the same

situation.

[Speaker 1] (6:27:58 - 7:41:40)

Well, the ego one is quite easy to imagine, isn't it? And the story, of course, is a story that's been around for some time about the Japanese, the Zen master, just very briefly to remind everybody, the Zen master who has a reputation, high reputation in where he lives, in the town or city. And then suddenly he is accused by the daughter of a neighbor who is 16 or 17, or something like that, who has become pregnant, that he is the father of the baby, the unborn baby.

And so the daughter of his neighbor tells it to her parents and they get very angry and, of course, tell it to everybody and they run to the Zen master and say, our daughter has just told us that you had sex with her and she is carrying your baby, the dreadful. And he listens and he says, is that so? Yes, you are the father, she told us, is that so?

And so immediately, of course, he loses his reputation. Nobody comes to him anymore and it doesn't bother him. He's completely self-contained, present, he is presence.

The baby is born, the parents come to him with the baby and said, here, you look after the baby, we don't want it, it's your baby. Is that so? They give him the baby.

He looks after the baby, feeds it. A year later, nobody comes to see him anymore because he's lost his reputation. A year later, the daughter becomes a little bit more mature and confesses to her parents that the Zen master is not the father, but the boy who works in the butcher's shop next door.

And the parents come to the Zen master and say, we're so sorry, we falsely accused you. She just told us that you're not the father. Is that so?

And he hands the baby back to them. And the baby had a very good start in life, of course. And so that was, the story is to show the absolute non-reactivity in very extreme form of non-reactivity, not impossible.

And the power that is in that, the power for good, because that situation, which potentially would be dreadful disaster and drama for anybody else with even the slightest ego left, would be dreadful, blowed, a disaster that gets transformed into something good through non-reaction, because all the good that comes out of it, the babies had one year with the Zen master, the first year of his life, and he's then going back. And then people come back to him. Okay, so you can see how non-reactivity transforms a potentially dramatic disaster into good.

Your question is twofold. You ask, how would the ego have reacted? No, I don't need to say too much about that.

You can imagine how an ego would say, how dare you accuse me? The daughter is evil. She's an evil bitch.

She accused me of being it. And the parents are just as bad. And then you talk to everybody about it.

You call them on the phone. You know what they're doing to me? They're trying to, and all kinds of things.

Talk to everybody about it. Blow it up more and more. Give interviews.

And of course you're the victim. You become the victim. That's the main thing.

So your victim identity becomes stronger and stronger. And you're angry. And anger, of course, is designed unconsciously as the Course in Miracles points out.

Anger is designed to make somebody feel guilty. That's the energy behind anger. So you want to make everybody, well, of course it doesn't really work.

And so you have a huge drama. So you can elaborate on that. You could write a play about that.

You could have a movie about that. The Zen, what happened to the Zen master with an interesting title, Zen Baby or whatever. No.

No, you couldn't have a movie about this, what actually happened in this story because nobody would watch it. There's no drama in it. Nothing happens.

He just sits there. So I don't think you could, even if you wrote a script, I think the producers in Hollywood would not finance it. It could be very nice.

Short film, it wouldn't be a long film. Now, of course, if you are present, that is not the only way. It's not what he's, the way he dealt with that situation is not the only possible way.

There are many other possible ways of dealing with the situation and still be present. For example, he could have said, well, is that so? But I would like to have a DNA test though.

So it's a practical step. You can still take practical steps. You're not condemned to complete inactivity just because you're present.

In fact, if action is possible, you do it. You could even state clearly, that's not the case. I'm not the baby, but there's a, you're not a victim.

You could simply state the truth. This is how it is. And the important thing is the unconsciousness of making yourself into a victim does not happen.

Anymore. And you are not imposing projections onto others, deep judgments, the little 17 year old daughter who is not mature enough to tell the truth. You don't need to say that she's evil and manipulative or whatever the ego would come up with.

No, you just state, it's not the case. It's fine. And whatever else comes out of presence, but there's always non-aggression, non-projection, non-judgment, because you see clearly that she did it because of her lack of consciousness.

So what judgment could you have? There's lack of consciousness. That's lack of consciousness is not a judgment.

But if you make that into something evil in the other person, that's the judgment. So all kinds of ways of dealing with it and still remain present. The story gives us the most extreme way because then we can really learn.

It shows us what is possible. So what a wonderful story. And the two, one could have, even tell two stories.

Tell one story of, this is an idea for somebody who likes to, who is a fiction writer here among you. You could have one story that tells its story from somebody who is dealing with something consciously. And then you have the same story where it develops into huge unconsciousness and drama.

Be quite interesting. So next time then, if something happens to us, see, bearing in mind, don't become a victim. Don't become a victim.

Don't make others into perpetrators and call them bad or evil. So the two go together. So wonderful, these challenges, aren't they?

I just got, as I was coming in, got inspired to tell you that little story. It only takes a few minutes about my mom because there's some connection with us being here and the event that I relate in that story that happened many years ago when I wasn't born yet. So my mom was 19, about 19 years old.

Of course, I wasn't there yet. It was in the war in Germany and she received notification one day in the mail to report next week to such and such a place a weapons factory, some one day's travel away from there for work duty, work service, which was a bit like military service but for women. And she got a shock and she ran on the same day to the government office and said, that must be a mistake.

I was promised I could do office duty. And they said, no mistake, you are to report next week to the weapons factory. So the following week she arrived.

After a long trip to the weapons factory with up to a hundred other young girls who were the same age and she was assigned to a bunk bed in the dormitory and work was going

to start the following day. And she was on the upper bunk bed and below there was another girl, same age and they were both crying. And my mom being already impulsive as she's been all her life, said she was trying to, I'm not staying here.

Tomorrow morning I'm escaping. And the girl said, are you coming with me? She said to the girl and the girl said, no, we can't do that, they'll shoot us.

And the next morning, my mom left the dormitory early and there were some trucks leaving, big military trucks leaving the factory. And she just stopped a driver and said, can you give me a ride? And the driver, assuming she had permission, she was on leave or something, he said, yes, jump in in the back.

And she got driven out of the factory. And at the end of the day, she reappeared at her mom's home, her mom's place and her mom said, what have you done? They'll put us all in prison.

You can't stay here. They'll come. So the next day she went to another city to live with her aunt.

And of course the police came a couple of days later looking for her and my grandmother, her mom said, don't know where she is, she just disappeared. We haven't seen her. Then my mom lived in hiding for two or three years until they stopped looking for her with her aunt.

And three months later, the weapons factory got bombed and virtually everybody who worked there got killed. So the impulsive decision of a 19 year old girl is everything is connected and interconnected leads to us being here. As you probably know, Buddhism arose in India.

A person, Gautama Siddhartha awakened about 500 BC, that's 2,500 years ago. And a teaching arose. People then called him the one who is awake.

Buddha means awake, the root of it in Sanskrit. So it's not a name, it's a title. And then it grew and then much about a thousand years passed and then a man traveled at that time.

Of course, geographically, there was not that much of the instances, the distances were so vast between countries. But a Buddhist monk traveled from India, probably it could already have been Persia, into China. And his name was Bodhidharma, a legendary figure in Buddhism, because he is the one, they say, who brought Buddhism to China, which was something when they arrived in China and started talking, people hadn't heard this before, wow.

But at some point they connected it with some native tradition, which was Taoism. The deeper aspect of Taoism could then merged with Buddhism after a while. And of course,

Taoism, the wonderful, one of the greatest books that I've spoken about, the Tao Te Ching, probably also originated 2,500 years ago or so, same time as the Buddha independently in China.

So eventually Buddhism became transformed in China because it mixed up with Taoism and a different form of Buddhism developed. But the interesting story is that this man, Bodhidharma traveled into China and he was the first, they say, and then the Chinese began to gradually adopt Buddhist meditation practices and so on. Fortunately at that time, the internet and Twitter had not been invented yet.

So nobody accused the Chinese of cultural appropriation. I've prepared, I'd like to, this is what Bodhidharma looked like or may have looked like. Let's see if it works to show the image of Bodhidharma.

He certainly looks present. And that is also, that is the beginning of Zen, that was the Chinese version of Zen and then in Japan, it became something else. So you can imagine the Chinese meeting this man, looking at them.

And then a problem arose because they learned about the Buddha and the Chinese writing, of course, is pictographs. It's not like Western writing where the writing represents a sound which represents the thing. So a Western language, Western writing is twice removed from the thing.

If you write table, the writing of table represents the sound and the sound, when you say table, it represents the thing. So they say, what can we do? But there must have been somebody awakened already there in China who came up with the Chinese character for Buddha.

They had to come out, create it, and there it is. And now the amazing thing is, it consists of two characters put together. The first one means man or human being.

You can see it's almost, you can see still, it's distantly related to a picture of a person. So that is the human being. Now, the next character is usually translated as no or not.

It's a character, it's a denial. It's also related to the idea of undoing or dissolving, but it's usually, it's the denial of not. So it denies the first.

So human being, not. And so if you go to scholars, they don't, they might say, well, they did this because they thought that Buddha wasn't really a human being. He was a super human, but that's not it.

There's a recognition there of the two dimensions that make up a human being. There is form identity and the recognition of the ultimate illusion of form identity. So there's form identity, the person, and the denial of form identity.

So the denial of form identity is the arising of essence identity. And so it's incredible how somebody must have had deep insight to create that character that explains the essence of what Buddha means, but it really is the essence of every human being. So in that sense, as you might know, the way I interpret the term human being is that the human is your form identity.

The human is the person that you are with a history and is both the body and the conditioned mind. That's the human personality. And the being is the unconditioned.

The being is your essence identity, which is the unconditioned consciousness. So you are a human being. And in a way you could interpret that character as also as the left side is the human.

And then there's the denial of the ultimate reality of the human and there's the emerging being. So that's just a, I mentioned that briefly also, I believe in a new earth. So it's wonderful to see that there's a deep understanding behind that character.

I'm interpreting that, I have no idea about Chinese. I'm not a scholar and I don't write or speak Chinese, but the moment I saw that and I was told this means Buddha, no, human being, human, no. Wow, that's amazing.

Do you remember, or maybe you don't, or you do in the gospels, there's a line that Jesus said, two words, deny thyself, deny thyself. And now look at that character, man, human, no. Deny thyself, which means recognize the ultimate unreality of what you call yourself.

Then the essence of who you are emerges, which is formless consciousness. To achieve the state of enlightenment as if it were something that you can add to yourself or something that will suddenly transform you into a miraculous being, which you already are, but you won't know it if you think that is going to come in the future. Enlightenment, or let's call it the ego-less state, okay, I want to achieve the ego-less state.

And of course, the ego-less state cannot be achieved in the future or in time. It is only by looking through it now that the ego-less state is here now. A state that you want to achieve is a mental concept in which that's endowed with self.

And as such, you can never reach it because it's an abstract concept of who I want to be, not realizing you are it already. So the ego-less state, it does not lie in the future. It has nothing to do with future.

You cannot make it into a goal. You cannot make, whether you call it the ego-less state or whether you call it enlightenment, you cannot make it into a goal. Goal implies future because the very entry point into the ego-less state or the enlightened state is the present moment.

If you make it into a goal that you want to achieve, you miss the entry point because

you're looking to the future because goal implies future. And that is the dilemma of all spiritual seekers. Because they listen to spiritual talk or read a spiritual book and say, there is such a thing as the ego-less state or the enlightened state, and perhaps I can achieve it too.

And immediately they make it into a goal, project it away, it becomes mind, a mental image of who I want to be, future. And not realize that their very search for to actualize that image prevents them from being it now because the entry point is here, this moment only. The ego can only be transcended through accessing the power of the present moment.

No other way. Enlightenment is only in the power of the present moment, nowhere else. So it's never, it's only humans who give up the search who realize it's already here.

So you have to, one way or another, either because you're totally frustrated with the spiritual search or because you suddenly see the truth of it, give up the search as if it were future. Now there's still, there seems to conflict with certain teachings that say, basically, there are two conflicting spiritual teachings. One says, that seems what I've just said, but it's not quite it.

One says there's nothing you can do and you might as well totally relax because you can't bring it about. There's nothing, absolutely nothing you can do about it. So let go, forget about all, some teachers say that.

Forget the whole thing, just have fun. The other teaching says, if you do not want enlightenment as intensely as a man, a drowning man wants air, you're not going to get it. Now, what I just said seems to be more towards the other, that you cannot make it into something to want or to get, but really the truth is hiding if you bring the two together.

And how does that look? If you bring, how can you bring those together? On the one hand, there's nothing you can do, that's true.

And on the other hand, an intensity is required. You bring the two together, the very intensity that is mistakenly interpreted as an intensity that's driving you towards a future goal can become an intensity that is driving you into the present moment. That's the uncompromising intensity of there's only this moment.

And that, yes, there's an intensity there that goes, takes you deeper into this. It's not an intensity that drives you into future. There's nothing you can do is true in the sense that if doing requires future and time, that doesn't help you.

And of course, going into the present moment and becoming internally aligned with the present moment isn't really a doing. In that sense, there's nothing you can do. You can only allow the present moment to be and go deeply into it.

It's a question of how you use language. But so in that sense, they are right. There's nothing you can do.

And the others are also right. The intensity is required, the intensity with which you embrace the now. So that's, there's the point.

No future state. You're not becoming something that you are not now. And so you may have heard some spiritual teacher saying, you're enlightened already.

And that's deep down, that is true. Every human being is already complete within. On the level of form, there are all kinds of things that perhaps you could still do and play around with and add to yourself and learn or experience.

But in the depths of who you are, your essence identity is already totally complete. It doesn't require more time or more things to be added to who you are in your essence. And really, that is what matters.

In that sense, only future can only prevent you from being it, finding it and being it now. So it's, for some people, hard to get rid of this idea because it's no more than an idea in the head that I need to achieve something, become something. But it's not really true.

So it's truer to say, you are already it, you just need to realize it. That you are already fully yourself. You are already fully yourself.

You don't need more time or more of anything to be who you are already now. You're already divine, timeless, eternal in your essence. Everything else is on the level of form and it's a dance, a game, a play of form.

There, sometimes you get more and then you lose again. You can play. So no more spiritual seeking.

Intensity, yes. But the intensity that drives you into the now. Not an intensity that wants to actualize an imagined state.

Me as the enlightened one, which you already are. A couple of weeks ago, I spoke briefly at a conference in San Francisco. A big conference, close to 10,000 people.

Annual conference, mostly for business people. But always towards the very end, they have a spiritual person. Which is better than no spiritual person.

And then the organizer invited a small group of people who spoke at the conference and some who attended the conference to his home for dinner. Small group, meaning 150. And he organized even some entertainment.

The main person providing the entertainment is a kind of yogi, magician. Nobody knows exactly whether he's more of a yogi or more of a magician. Or whether it's a combination

or whether everything is just tricks.

Anyway, this person, the main entertainment of the evening, when people had eaten in the garden, they had erected a tent, a big tent, enough for 150 people. In the middle of the area, there was a raised pedestal and on it was a gigantic water tank, glass, transparent. With a few fishes swimming in it.

And then it was announced that this man would now come and get into this tank and hold his breath for seven minutes. And that's what happened. He came, still wearing a few clothes.

And he climbed up. Submerged himself in the tank. And of course, everybody could see him.

He was floating in there. And there was a countdown for seven minutes. And while he was in there, he looked at everybody from inside the tank.

Like a fish would look at you. But completely, kind of still. And he managed to hold his breath for seven minutes.

And then finally he came out. And then after he had recovered from that ordeal, the organizer wanted me to meet him. So there were a few people standing around and he was there.

And one of the people standing around said, can you do that, he asked me. And I said, I don't think I can. But I can stop thinking for seven minutes.

And the man who had been in the tank said, it's very much like that. He meant, I suppose, being in the tank. And he probably meant when he's in the tank, he's not thinking.

Because if he were thinking, he wouldn't last for seven minutes. Presuming that it's not a trick, we don't know, but it didn't seem to be a trick. He was just in there holding his breath.

So I mentioned this story because I want to emphasize again this afternoon the main point of why we're here. And that is to fully realize that there are two dimensions, so to speak, to who you are. The one that is defined in form, which includes the physical form and the psychological form and the thinking entity.

So your consciousness has the two dimensions. There's an intermediate area, but we don't need to go there. There's the conscious dimension of thinking, and that creates your conventional sense of identity.

And there is the deeper space where there is a vast consciousness that is not defined in form. So there's the two of you, the known, the person, and the unknown, the undefined,

or as the Buddha called it, the unmanifested, the unborn, the uncreated. And the Buddha added, this is one of the sutras in my free translation.

So he said, there is the unborn, the unmanifested, the uncreated. If there were not, sorry, the sutras are a little bit repetitive. If there were not the unborn, the unmanifested, the uncreated, there would be no escape from the born, the manifested, and the created.

And I'm adding in my free translation, and you would be completely stuck in it and with it. So there is a dimension in every human that is far deeper than what you conventionally consider is the I. So you can say there is the I that is defined through thought, and there is a deeper I that is not defined.

And the purpose of your existence really is in evolutionary terms, is to find that deeper being, the undefined, the unknown, and bring that into this dimension and into your life. And you all make that you have made the discovery already that you don't need to think continuously and that your deeper sense of who you are does not depend on what your mind is saying about who you are. There is a more immediate, much more real sense of I than you could ever find through thinking about who you are.

So to access the unmanifested, the unborn, the uncreated, if you want to use those words, you have to find within yourself the space of no thought, which is always there. It's just covered up by continuous thought. Doesn't have to be.

So gradually you find that the unknown you comes through more and more. First, you have to become comfortable. I mentioned it briefly the other day.

First, you need to become comfortable when you enter that space with not knowing anything, because that is the, you're accessing the unknown, the undefined, which is primordial intelligence itself. Not intelligence that has become thought. That's the only thing you can measure to a limited degree, but there's primordial intelligence.

In order to access that, you have to give up, not completely because it's still there, but your reliance, exclusive reliance, and main reliance on accumulated knowledge and on thinking. If you don't give up your reliance on conditioned knowledge and thinking, you can never go beyond. So you would be very limited, not be creative, and ultimately not wise.

You can have a highly developed mind, but lacking in wisdom. And to have a highly developed mind and lacking in wisdom as an underlying guiding force, and that comes from the deeper level, to have that highly developed mind, whether it's a person or a society, culture, is a dangerous thing because that mind can create havoc for yourself and others. And the more developed it is, the more destructive it potentially is also.

So you find that often with people who, some people who run countries, of course they

have a university degree, and they, well, not all, but some might be considered intelligent in conventional terms. And yet very often their actions are actually very unintelligent. They don't take into account the totality of the situation, the deeper implications of their actions.

So they are not, whatever they say or do, is not connected to the realm of wisdom. Don't need to mention any names, but look at any politician that comes to mind, look at the past 20 years. Some may come to mind.

And such lack of wisdom, quite amazing. And then you have the highly developed industry that creates dreadful weapons of destruction. And these people who make these, they're all intelligent.

Otherwise they wouldn't be able to do that. But how can you build an atom bomb without intelligence? It requires highly intelligent people.

So wisdom, intelligence needs to be guided by something deeper. And that deeper then needs to, can actually use the mind, the human mind, as an instrument for its expression. And so, again, in order to get to that place, which is not a place, it's just a deeper dimension to who you are, you need to give up that reliance, that unconscious belief that you continuously need to think, to work things out, because otherwise things will get out of control.

So every moment you need to have some kind of, comes to some kind of conclusion about what's happening at this moment. Immediately have some kind of opinion and conclusion and call it something. And often at school, that quick, the quick, like very quick comeback is often encouraged.

The people who are, when the teacher asks questions, the one who can give the quickest answer is usually considered the best. And then there are others who may be slower and they don't even have time to raise their hand because they haven't, it hasn't sunk in yet. The question hasn't, the question needs to sink in for, and then at some point an answer may come, but they don't wait for them.

There was, for example, when Einstein was four years old, his parents became concerned because the serious concern was that he might be mentally retarded because he was so slow at thinking. So we need to have that courage to go into that unknown place. And what is that unknown place?

Which is not a place. It's not to impose immediately interpretations on the world and on situations and on people and whatever arises. So to be able to just look at things, look not just visually, but look in also use metaphorically, which means to give attention to whatever is here now and to feel the power of your attention itself, which is intelligence, like a light that shines on a situation or on a person, and to feel that inherent power of

consciousness that falls, is not, doesn't, is not produced by you.

It comes through you. Then you feel enormous amount of so-called self-confidence, not egoic self-confidence, but you are connected with, you can feel there's a power at the depth of who you are, and that power can flow into this moment. And it is there when you give your fullest attention to something and you're not thinking about it.

You're just looking, you're just giving attention. It could be a situation, a person you're looking at, whatever it is. You're just there as a field of attention, of awareness.

And so you are the bringer of awareness. And that flows from a deep place that is far transcends who you are as this physical form. That deep place connects you, not only with others or other humans, it also connects you with a source of all life.

And so you are not disconnected. You just seem to be. And the ego is a disconnected sense of self.

You are not disconnected from the totality of the universe. You are an aspect of the totality of the universe. You're not autonomous.

That's the delusion that every person is considered to be an independent consciousness, whereas the truth is every person is an expression of the one consciousness. So when you can feel that one consciousness as presence within yourself, you don't go around in continuous anxiety anymore. What's the next thing that's going to upset me?

And of course it always comes. So in other words, a certain confidence comes in that is not based on anything that you have perhaps achieved on the level of form. It's not confidence because you have an important position.

It's not confidence because you have accumulated wealth, not confidence because other people think you're great, or not confidence because you have a certain ability that you have developed that you're better at than most people. Usually those things, or you look better than most people, or at least above average, either good looks or you have a great body. So all those things could give you your sense of confidence.

So a person who is very good looking would gain most, unless there are other factors where that person is even more remarkable, but in the absence of other factors, the good looking person would predominantly gain self-confidence from looking in the mirror and seeing other people's reactions to who they are, which could be admiration and envy, depending on who is looking at you. And the ego would quite love that. It loves admiration and envy.

And so it feels, you feel confident because you're so good looking. And that lasts for, could last for a few years. And then it gets shaky because good looks don't last indefinitely.

And that's just one example. But whatever it is, it could be wealth, it could be what other people think of you. So you derive confidence from some source, but it's always very shaky.

And instead of then creating a thought in your mind and allowing this thought to survive and even proliferate in your mind and start complaining and so on, you can recognize that every human does that. When I lived in England, in the country, I had a cottage and there were two bedrooms, three bedrooms upstairs. And because my income was low, I had to rent out two bedrooms.

And so I had a succession of people renting over a period of three years or so. And probably about, it was a place where people would spend, come for a period of time and then move on. I had probably 10 or 11 people.

And out of those, eight out of 10, sooner or later developed, when I got to know them, lived in the same house with them, relatively small place, be displayed, there were areas in their behavior that were quite dysfunctional, almost called insane. And I don't just mean quirks of their personality, different ways of doing, no, some more than that. Patterns that led to complete distortion of reality in certain areas of their lives.

And that wasn't just one person, it was eight out of 10. And only one person didn't fit into any of these. Two people stayed relatively displayed, higher degree of presence.

There were certain variations also in them, but they didn't get taken over by personalities, temporary personas, sub-personalities, they're sometimes called, whatever you want to call them. They didn't get taken over completely, leading to almost total distortion of reality. I had one person, however, that she came, stayed for two or three months and was quite peaceful.

And a friend told me that she had told him, living at Eckhart's place is like living in a float tank. And the moment she moved out, I heard secondhand accounts, she was involved in huge drama, including physical violence with men and other women. And she was known for always generating huge drama in her life, except when she stayed with me.

I didn't know that, otherwise I probably wouldn't have invited her in. So somehow in the energy field of presence, she was able to drop into or rise into presence. But the moment she left, the old patterns came back.

Now that was an unusual case. Mostly you find humans are not one single being. This is the point of the story.

Once you know that, you can no longer perhaps misinterpret when humans shift and then do display behavior that is not conscious. So, and instead of then creating a thought in your mind and allowing this thought to survive and even proliferate in your mind and start complaining and so on, you can recognize every human does that, has that to a

greater or lesser degree. Okay, then that's a step forward to that realization.

And then you can allow them because you probably are the same. There are different people in you. There's a more conscious you and there's a more unconscious you.

And then the more unconscious you has many different facets to it, different sub, different ways of being unconscious. And then you can see, okay, now we know that we can't trust people, except in the sense as Byron Katie said, I trust everybody, said I trust everybody to do what they do. So you have to, you can't trust them to display consistently conscious behavior.

That would be absurd. So you go to a deeper place and see what the real trust is not from doesn't come from people. The real trust is finding that place of depths within yourself that does not.

And once you're there, then you can relate to humans from there. And you no longer say, I demand that you are conscious all the time. And if you're not, I'll hold it against you.

And then I'll never talk to you again. So it all comes back to that place of dropping down into where the mind activity subsides. And instead of always being trapped in your thoughts and relating to the world and to people through your thoughts, plus the emotions that accompany the thoughts, you go to that deeper place of just feel your own presence.

Let's put it like that for a moment. Feel the presence that you are, the beingness of you, the most, that deep level of I amness, the presence. The only thing that cannot be doubted that it is absolutely real, that exists.

That is the isness of you. And if that is in the background of your life, then you can allow others to do what they do. The likelihood is when you meet others from that deeper place, their behavior will become a little more conscious.

The very unconscious sub-personalities may manifest themselves less. Because when you erroneously mistake a person's unconsciousness, unconscious sub-personality, or whatever you want to call it, when you erroneously mistake that for who they are and mentally focus on that, you also bring it out more in them every time you meet them because those are the expectations. And quite often, unless humans are really present, they oblige and they give you what you expect them.

If you expect dishonesty, you're more likely to find dishonesty in humans. When you expect violence, you're more likely to find it. So trust, really another word for it in spiritual terminology is faith.

Because what is faith? Faith is not belief. Belief means you have a story and you say, this

story, I believe this story to be true.

And of course, you'd have no idea whether it is true. But you say, if you knew it was true, then you wouldn't say believe anymore. You can't say, I believe in this table.

You don't need to, it's here. So belief would be belief in some abstract story or whatever it is. It could be an ideology, something your mind tells you, but faith is very different.

In some languages, belief and faith, unfortunately, are the same word. Faith is trust. Faith is a sense of deep connectedness with being.

From that deep place of connectedness, you can also manifest things. But let's not talk about that right now. That is the conscious connection with source, the source of life, which is within you.

And it's so easy. It's you just become still and direct your attention to what? You direct your attention to nothing in particular.

You're just aware of attention and that's it. So if the attention is looking for your true self, it doesn't realize that it is your true self because it's consciousness. You are consciousness.

And knowing that, that's trust suddenly, because you're no longer dependent on the continuously shifting things out here for your sense of the beingness of who you are. Because not only humans are continuously shifting, but even things around you, they come and go. Situations continuously come and go, change.

Impermanence, as the Buddha called it, fleeting. And so as long as you look to externals for any sense of security, including humans, can I trust him? Can I trust her?

That's very precarious. And usually when I would say, no, don't trust him or her, trust yourself. But then you're no longer in a state of distrust.

No, trust then arises, but not from him or her. It's such essential teaching, but not many people seem to realize it yet. Now at that deeper level, really many things that are different concepts on the external level, they really all, they merge into one.

So when we speak of trust, or when we speak of presence, beingness, perhaps to put it more accurately, we'd say the connectedness with beingness is presence. And out of the presence flows trust. And out of the presence also flows, and that's also inseparable from trust, flows what you could call goodwill or benevolence towards other humans and other life forms.

Because when your mind is telling you something about another human and fixes, constructs an identity for that human by selecting the unconscious, one of the unconscious aspects of that human, by selecting that, then manufacturing a mental

identity for that human. And then for the rest of your life, continue to relate to that human through that mind form. Then you can, there is no, the goodwill cannot flow.

You can, there cannot be an outflow of goodwill anymore. It's blocked by the mind pattern. But if you no longer trap the other human and yourself in the mind pattern, then there is an openness for the outflow, let's put it like that, the outflow of benevolence towards the other person, the other human being.

Well, you could call it love, but it's not the conventional, better maybe to call it loving kindness. And that is a wonderful thing to experience in relation. It makes human contact much more pleasant if you can feel an outflow of goodwill, even towards a human that you might not meet very briefly.

And even there, sense it for a moment when you're not, there's no thought, there's just a presence, and you're looking at another human and you feel an energetic, one could say also an energetic connection for a moment, and it's an outflow of goodwill, no matter who, what their function is at that particular moment in your life. There's always then an added dimension. Otherwise you reduce other human beings to whatever their function have, whatever function they have in relation to you, the man who is selling you something.

Is he only the man who is selling you something? Is that, are you reducing this person to the function that he or she performs at that moment in relation to you? Or is there a deeper dimension so that there is a human being that you recognize?

And the way I, as you may, I don't know if you have heard me say that before, the way what I, how I interpret human being is you might notice that there are two words in the English language. In a way at first I felt it's a pity that English doesn't have one word for human being. It only has man, and that's supposed to include women.

So when you often, when you read, when people say men, it's supposed to include women too, but it doesn't, but it still means men. So some languages like German, they have a word that applies to man and woman, mensch. So that would be mensch is man or woman.

But English language, you need to have two words. You have to say human being. At first I felt, well, that's a pity, but then upon looking more closely at human being, I realized, oh, that's actually quite wonderful because there's a deep truth there.

You have the human and you have the being come together. The human is a form. It's the physical vehicle and it's the psychological form, including all the imperfections and all the accumulations and the conditioning, the person, basically the person who you think you are, the person who other people think you are, the person that you've been told you are, and the person you believe to be.

The person, ideas in your mind about who you are, that's a person and that's a human. Now, most people only know the human. They think they are the human.

They don't realize that they are also the being. But you have to know both really to be awakened in this dimension. You need to be awakened to the being dimension in you so that you can be in the balance between form, physical, mental, emotional, psychological form, the form who you are, the person, and the transcendent dimension, the essence of who you are, which is the being.

And your identity to awaken spiritually means that your identity shifts from the human to the being. And when your identity has shifted from the human to the being, the human becomes a more pleasant human. And it's more comfortable for yourself to be this particular human in that life, this particular lifetime.

And it's more comfortable for others to be with you as that particular human. And that's because you also know the being, the transcendent dimension. Wait.

That's good. Release it all, whatever it all is. Yes.

[Speaker 4] (7:41:43 - 7:42:01)

I'm very nervous to be asking my question because I feel like I have a lot of confusion. But I know that that's a good place to be asking my question from. I've been a financial planner for 33 years.

[Speaker 1] (7:42:01 - 7:42:02)

Sorry, what planner?

[Speaker 4] (7:42:03 - 7:44:07)

A financial planner for 33 years. And went back to school six years ago to become an energy healer. And I love it because I don't have to know.

As a financial planner, I had to know. You know, I had to give answers. But with energy healing, I get to hang out in the unknown.

And it's really fun for me. And I'm not attached to the outcome for my clients. I know something's happening, but I don't know what is happening, always.

And I love that. So the question that I have for you, wait. It has to do with something you said this afternoon that I got very confused about.

Any resistance closes the channel. Right. And I know that I have a powerful effect on anyone that I come in contact with.

I know I vibrate at a very high consciousness level. And that I'm here to contribute on

that level. And I'm very good at manifesting.

But the place that I'm confused about is that I don't know how to figure out those internal resistances. I'm not clear on that. I'm clear on all the external resistances.

Like, do you want to do this or that? No, yes. But I get confused about being in the source and knowing when I'm in the source versus when I'm maybe in my egoic creation, because I'm so good at manifesting.

[Speaker 1] (7:44:09 - 7:44:57)

So what is in your daily life, your state of consciousness? Do you undergo great fluctuations in your state of consciousness? Do you still experience the pain body occasionally coming up?

What are your thought patterns throughout the day? Do you have episodes of negative thinking that you identify with? To what extent are you able to be aware of your thoughts?

Do you get taken over by streams of thinking on a daily basis? What is your state of consciousness in your daily life?

[Speaker 4] (7:44:57 - 7:45:58)

I'm very good at witnessing myself. I'm fairly good at being able to make a choice in the moment, a different choice in the moment when I'm witnessing myself. I've done a lot of work on my pain body.

I think where I have a challenge is in something along the lines of clarity as to, there's like a fear or something that runs maybe in me along the lines of knowing that I'm good at manifesting and not wanting to go in a direction of manifesting when I'm not sure that that's the direction. So there's that confusion in the piece that you said this afternoon. Any resistance closes the channel.

I just keep sitting with that going, where's my resistance that's closing the channel?

[Speaker 1] (7:46:00 - 7:46:25)

Well, only you can know that resistance arises as negative thinking that you are identified with and then an emotional contraction that reflects the negative thinking. Maybe there isn't very much resistance and that's why you get confused. You're looking for something that isn't there anymore.

Maybe you think there must be some resistance. Where is it? I'm confused now.

[Speaker 4] (7:46:28 - 7:46:38)

It could be because I have spent my life on a very deep healing journey and been very open to always looking at those places.

[Speaker 1] (7:46:38 - 7:49:01)

Yes. So trust yourself and not only not the personal self, but the deeper self and what emanates from that. And it seems to me that you're fine.

You don't need to be concerned about resistance right now. There's already enough presence in you to dissolve it when it comes. Nobody needs to demand that they should be totally free of resistance or that they should be totally conscious on a continuous basis that is not necessary.

Just detecting when you're not conscious is fine. Every time you detect a dysfunctional state that you have slipped into in a relationship or at work or wherever you may be, then the moment you know it, the moment you lost it, so to speak, that's an expression, I lost it, which usually means in common usage, I got very angry. But here I'm using it in a wider sense.

When you say, I lost it, it means I lost presence. I lost consciousness. I got totally identified with the stream of thinking.

I got totally identified with the pain body. I lost it in the way we use it here, or I use it means I lost presence completely. So you may sometimes still lose it, but I believe you're fine.

I don't think there's that much resistance. Your mind is perhaps looking for a problem where there isn't one. And that, by the way, is not uncommon because the mind always looks for a problem somewhere.

It's amazing. You could take a person to heaven, a person who is not, no, you are okay. You'll be fine in heaven.

But if you take a normal person to heaven, normal meaning unconscious, he would get very unhappy because, well, why is the problem? He will find something wrong. Peace would be very threatening.

They're not ready for that. You are ready for heaven, it seems, so embrace it.

[Speaker 2] (7:49:03 - 7:49:04)

Okay, thank you.

[Speaker 14] (7:49:05 - 7:49:06)

All right. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (7:49:29 - 8:51:35)

So it's not really true to say, I am aware of the awareness in me. No, the awareness in you is aware of itself. When the person and the deeper I, the person that I call the surface I and the deep I don't exist as separate.

So one day you're, and then for a moment you're, but the two can come together. And so then you're able to function in this world as a person, but always with an additional dimension that operates now through that person. In other words, the way in which you deal with difficulties and situations and people changes, it's no longer an egoic way of dealing with things, but dealing with things consciously, this greater intelligence can now operate and use your flow into your mind.

And then their mind comes up with the right solution suddenly, or spontaneously you take the right action. Whereas before you would have been reactive out of the egoic conditioning, which usually is wrong. It just makes things worse.

So that's the, then the two you can have, I sometimes put it like this. You can have one foot in this dimension where you are a person and you have the other foot in the transcendent dimension. So, and then you don't lose yourself anymore in your, ultimately in your mind.

And that means you don't lose yourself in the world anymore because ultimately the so-called world and your mind are one and the same thing. So you don't lose yourself anymore. You can, you operate within this limited realm, but you're no longer looking for yourself or for some kind of ultimate completion or fulfillment in this limited realm of the horizontal dimension.

Which means you can now pursue a goal still because the surface eyes still operates here. You pursue a goal, but you do not make the mistake of overemphasizing what this goal can do for you once you reach it. Yes, you might be very dedicated to what you're doing, but there is not an excessive projection into where you're feeling you need to get to.

I need to get there. I need to have achieved the success that will make me feel complete and fulfilled. And then I will have made it.

Made what? The ego. That goes, you pursue a goal, but your attention is in the doing rather than where you want to get to.

You know where you want to get to, but your main attention is in the quality of the doing now. Whatever action you take now, you're able to be present with it rather than always devaluing everything you do now in the service of this greater goal in the future that will never ultimately satisfy you anyway. And that is a very dysfunctional way to live.

Whenever stress arises, something has happened. You don't want to be where you are, and ultimately you don't want to be doing what you're doing now. Stress means there is a projection to some future point where you want to be, rather than here, you want to be there.

So the quality of the doing diminishes. There's no, the consciousness doesn't flow into the doing. The doing is a means to an end.

It goes like, I want to be there and here I'm doing. Instead of, yes, peripherally, you know where you want to get to, but that's not where your main focus is, your peripheral, but your main focus is the doing itself. So the doing is no longer in the service of the future.

It is self-fulfilling, and then it becomes actually much more empowered. In other words, you enjoy the doing, no matter what it is. There is an enjoyment of the energy that flows into the doing, and that's enlightened or conscious action, as I call it, conscious action.

It's not reduced just to a means to an end. Yes, it is also a means to an end, but it is not only a means to an end. It is fundamentally an end in itself, the doing itself.

That's already, this teaching has already, the ancient scripture, the Bhagavad Gita, which if you haven't read it, you should. Nobody knows how old it is, maybe 2,000 years or more. Again, one of the main lessons in the Bhagavad Gita is it is possible to perform an action without losing yourself in some desired goal, which in the Bhagavad Gita is called the fruit of the action.

Don't give, it says, don't give excessive attention to the fruit of the action, but just be conscious of the action itself, and this is regarded as a spiritual practice, and this is the, it's called karma yoga. The yoga in the sense of, yoga here means spiritual practice, not necessarily body movement, but that's fine too. Karma yoga, karma means action, karma, action and reaction, karmas.

So karma yoga is the practice, the action as spiritual practice, and that's a very, very powerful teaching that's been around a long, long time. Any activity that you perform as a person, by performing it in this way, becomes actually empowered, and then you have a foot in both worlds. You have the unconditioned consciousness acting through you, giving your attention, your fullest attention to the doing in the moment, in this moment, whatever you do in this moment, and if it's not just doing, it might be something else.

One isn't, you're not always doing, you're always walking around this world, perceiving things, and talking and perceiving and so on. You may be familiar, I'm sure you are, with the term that's mentioned a lot these days as in New Age teachings and others, gratefulness or gratitude, and again, that is related to this. What does it mean, gratitude?

Well, people say, well, you say thank you for, okay, it sounds a little weird, you say,

thank you, thanks. Somebody asked me, I think it was a Buddhist, because Buddhists don't believe in God as such. It's not that they are atheists, but they don't believe it's a complete thing, but don't need to talk about this, but what is that, who am I thanking if I don't think of a God that has just given me something?

So why do I say thank you? I don't understand, who am I thanking? Gratitude is really appreciation.

It's an alternative term you could use, and what is appreciation? It is, again, it's related to be present with a sense perceptions, for example. You can have appreciation for anything by giving it attention, and to give attention, your mind needs to be free of the conditioned naming and labeling, so awareness, again, presence.

You give attention to this flower, for example, you give it attention, and so this is visual in this case, and you appreciate its beauty, but without mentally saying, you may, yes, the thought may come into your mind, it's beautiful, but you don't stay stuck in that thought, then the thought disappears, and you continue to be aware of that flower, and you appreciate its, it's just, if one had to use words, incredible presence and aliveness, and then a kind of thank you arises that is not necessarily verbal, it's a deep appreciation, but you can even do it with even so-called inanimate objects. There's a glass of water here, and I can see the reflections of the light in the water, it's really beautiful, and for a moment, the mind stops, and simply perceives the incredible beauty of this, without even calling it beauty. It's really, wow, and then you feel this, everything is a gift, there's a aliveness all around you.

Some people make a mistake with the gratitude practice, which is a way of being in the present moment. The mistake is they associate gratitude with a story in their mind, and the story would go like this, I really should be grateful what I have, because look at all these people who have less than me. Okay, well, this may be true, but it's not the path to true gratitude, because if you can only be appreciative and have gratitude by comparing yourself to others who are worse off than you, that is not true gratitude.

You're dependent on others to be worse off than you to feel a bit more grateful. I should be more grateful. It's just, don't look for gratitude on the level of narratives in your mind, but the immediate thing, sense perception, hearing birdsong, clouds, sky, whatever, even how light gets reflected off the surface, just this moment of pure appreciation of the aliveness of things, and there's always another factor that comes in, and it's important whenever you are aware of these things, whether you are performing an action, or you're simply contemplating something and feel this gratitude or acknowledgement of the being of whatever it is, there's a very subtle thing here. Again, let's make it experiential. Right here now, we take in the totality of this room and the lights and a man on the chair talking, and perhaps you're aware that you're breathing while you're contemplating all this, and now we come to the, perhaps the most

important point of realization.

As you're aware of all this and appreciate it, are you also aware of yourself at the same time, but not the person? As you are aware of all this and you're inside, you're still, are you aware of that still, let's say, what words to be used, are you aware of that still presence that is aware of all this? Are you aware of yourself as that awareness?

And that's a very subtle thing, but it's very important. So you have here the outer world of the senses, which ultimately is only the surface reality, but beautiful too, but you're also aware of yourself as consciousness, as the stillness, which is the unconscious, the unconditioned consciousness. Now, when I put it like that, in words, a little error arises, which is created by language, because I'm asking, are you aware of yourself?

And that seems to imply that there's a duality there, but it arises because we're using language. When you say, I am aware of myself, that looks like a duality. There's I, and there's that which I am aware of, but that's not how it is.

It only appears like that when you begin to talk about it. But when you don't talk about it, there's just the awareness itself, because you are not separate from the awareness. So it's not really true to say, I am aware of the awareness in me.

No, the awareness in you is aware of itself. That's perhaps a better way of putting it. And that is so, that's the secret of the awareness not losing yourself in the world and in your mind while you're operating in this world.

Can you be aware of yourself as, now I'm using another term now, but it's all the same. Are you aware of yourself as the space, which is the presence, the awareness? Are you aware of yourself as the space for whatever it is that arises in your awareness, the forms that arise, your physical body, even your thoughts and trans-perceptions?

All these things arise in the awareness that you are. The awareness is the space for it. And so to be aware of that space is ultimately to be aware of yourself at the deepest level where you find that far transcends who or what you are as a person.

So you're aware of, and that space of awareness is actually the true meaning of the presence of God. The present moment, that is the power of the present moment, the power itself, of consciousness itself, of life itself. And that power is the power of now.

Then you're aware of yourself as that, and there's the world, and there, this is the, in some spiritual traditions, called the I am, the beingness of you, the essence of you, that is the I am that, in the Old Testament, God replies when, I can't remember who, Abraham or Moses asks, meets God, so to speak, it's a story. I mean, you can't meet God like that, but there's a story there, there's a deep truth in it. God, what's your name, he asked God.

And God said, my name is I am, the I am that I am. And he's very surprised, oh, I am is the name of God, wow. That's very strange.

I'm sure that's what he said, it's not in the Bible, but that is so weird. And perhaps he realized something, when the essence, I am, it's not just your I am, it is the I am of the universe, it is the being itself, the beingness of the universe itself. You can realize that within as your essence, and that connects you to the one, God, if you have to be very careful with words like that, because they have been misused a lot and misunderstood.

But the way I see it or perceive it or sense it is that the consciousness that is the hidden essence behind all the phenomenal universe that we see with our perceive, with our senses, behind it, there is a vast intelligence operating that is not part of this dimension, but somehow flows into this dimension and gradually creates more and more complex forms. It gradually expresses itself more fully in this dimension. And this, it flows into this dimension from the transcendent one that we call God, but we cannot, of course, understand at all.

God does not exist in space or time, but is transcendent to all that. But just as the sun emanates light and creates life here by the energy that it emanates continuously, and that could be used as an analogy in the same way, this is my perception, and perhaps it makes, perhaps you can sense the truth of it too, maybe not, maybe yes. The God's, the emanation of God into this dimension is like the emanation of light that comes from the sun.

And this emanation is consciousness. And this consciousness is behind every form that arises here. It's an intelligence that operates.

You could also call it the soul of the world. The ancients had a term for it. In Latin, it's called anima mundi, the soul of the world, that everything ultimately is a manifestation of that deeper transcendent aliveness.

And so the, what you sense in yourself as yourself, as the consciousness, is the light of God in you and as you. It is the light of God in you. That's how I sense it somehow.

And so just as the light of the sun is not separate from the sun, it's somehow, it's an extension of the sun, one could say, in the same way, the consciousness that flows, that is the essence of what you are, is an extension of God, is an emanation of the one source of all life. And that is you. That is the essence.

But that is the transcendent self, which the Buddhists call no-self. That is the essence. So in essence, you are the light of God in this world, one could say, the light of consciousness.

You are the light of, you are the light of the world as consciousness. And that's exactly what Jesus said to his disciples. You are the light of the world.

So there's nature and there's the present moment. Here, now, here. Oh, and I thought there was nothing to be grateful for.

I'm breathing. Now, there may be one or two people being with us here, there, who perhaps are stuck somewhere in a room and can't get out because of physical disability or they may be in prison and they say, what can I do? What can we do?

We can't get out into nature. Well, you need to remember that your body also is nature. So you can start there.

Every time you take a breath, that's nature. Nature is breathing. The air that you're breathing is nature.

The very fact of breathing is a natural process. It's not choice. It's done for you.

It's not so much that you breathe, although we say I breathe, but you're not the body breathes. So it's a natural thing that happens. You wouldn't say I'm beating my heart.

You don't do that, but that's the same thing. The body does it. It's a natural process.

For some reason, we say I'm breathing because breathing is semi-voluntary. You can't stop it for a while. But not for that long, because if you stop it for too long, nature takes over and you go, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah.

So nature takes, as nature, you live with nature, with your body. So even if you can't get out, you can start by being aware of that level of yourself, the physical level, the natural part of who you are, the body, and not just by saying, okay, I'm looking at my hands or my feet, not just the physical, not the external image of the body, but you can go into the body with your attention. And that's, you're in nature.

Even if you're in a prison cell, you can do that. And even if there's no opportunity, you might be in an office block in Manhattan and you look out of the window and all you have is maybe a little bit of sky. Okay, there's a little bit of nature there.

You can look at that. But you have more nature than that in yourself. So as you sat in your office, wherever it is, go within first, be conscious that breathing is happening.

Hmm, the body is breathing. Be conscious also of the preciousness of the air. It's such a precious substance.

So to acknowledge that is actually part of what sometimes is called to live in a state of gratitude. Now, some people say, what can I be grateful for? There's nothing in my life that I can be grateful for.

Well, are you breathing? Yes. Well, you start there.

If you start being grateful for the tiniest things, then gradually that expands and that shift in consciousness of honoring life, no matter how small it is, the manifestation of life as yourself, by honoring that, gratitude arises and a totally different state of consciousness then brings about good things. But you have to start with the good that is already there. If you want, there's not enough good in my life, people say, I need more good.

Life hasn't given me what I needed. Start with what you have. And the most obvious thing to start with is I'm breathing.

And that's something, it's something very beautiful to feel that you are absorbing this energy that is air. That then merges with your being. It's an amazing thing to honor the process of breath, to honor the fact that you are breathing.

And that is, that you can start with that, that is being, becoming, honoring the present moment. If you're looking for the present moment, which is of course all there ever is, some people write it in the power of now and we're surprised. And they're still surprised when I say the present moment is all there ever is in your life.

There's nothing, there is no past and future in your experience except when you think about it, but not in your actual experience. Oh, well, yes, it's actually true. The greatest philosopher could come and he could not argue with the fact that you only ever experience the present moment, there is nothing else.

The mind asks, well, where is the present moment? Well, start with your breath. That will always take you into the present moment because you're breathing now.

And you're only ever taking one breath, this one. All other breaths you either remember or anticipate mentally. And it's actually said that the Buddha recommended this as a meditation, maybe even before the Buddha, but the Buddha certainly recommended that people should be aware of their breath as a meditation.

He didn't say, as far as I know, that that will take you into the present moment. And he didn't say that will actually stop your mind, too. He just said, be aware of your breath.

So breath awareness meditation has become a Buddhist meditation that's practiced, but the dangerous thing is with practitioners of meditation is they make it into something to be achieved through it. They want to become good at it. You can't become good at one breath.

This is just one breath. So there's nature and there's the present moment. Here, now, here.

Oh, and I thought there was nothing to be grateful for. I'm breathing or breathing is happening. And then as you become aware of that, you're beginning to feel that your

body is also alive on the inside, to feel that there's an energy that is pervading the entire body.

That's nature, and it's very close. That's the closest, and you can't get to a tree that close as you can to your body or anything else. So that's really the closest you can ever get to nature is there in yourself as the physical body.

But when you become aware, now, this is something for us, for each one of us to do right now, not to do, but to notice. There's no doing as such because we don't have to do anything. You can do.

Sometimes it helps to move about, to get a little bit of sense that your body is alive. It can help, but you can see this. The body is alive.

Can I feel that? Yes, the breath is happening. And there's aliveness in my feet, my hands, my legs.

Very subtle at first, but it's there. And there's nature, and that's already a deeper level than what you see. Out in nature, when you look at a tree, you can't, to get deeper than the image of the tree, you have to have gone deeper within yourself so that you can sense the aliveness of the tree.

You cannot sense the aliveness of the tree unless you can sense the aliveness in yourself. If you don't sense the aliveness in yourself, you're only approaching the tree with your mind, and your mind might say, oh, that's a nice tree, but you're missing the depth of it. You're missing the fact that there's more here than what the mind tells you there's here.

When the mind says there's a tree or a flower or whatever it is, what you're looking at and call a tree and then believe that the word that you have attached to it is actually describes its reality. No, it's a label. It's an abstraction that you put onto this thing that you cannot really understand.

It's a vitally alive, mysterious being with great depth. As much depth as you, because all life forms are connected and come out of the one source of life. So you're beginning to go to feel that when you feel the aliveness of the inner bodies, not quite the deepest source yet, but you're going towards the non-physical, the life energy that comes from the source.

So connecting with yourself through breath and feeling the inner body is part of connecting with nature. When you're in nature, you may be looking at something, whatever it may be, but then you can also take in the totality of where you are, whatever it may be, your surroundings, trees, mountains, the ocean, or just simple grassy surface, bushes. Take in the totality and then bring in other sense perceptions too, but that requires alertness so that you don't drift back into mental concepts.

Stay alert and you bring in, become aware, not just of the visual aspect of being there. You become aware of the sounds. There may be sounds, natural sounds, or there may be sounds that are not natural that are interfering, but that's fine.

There may be natural sounds, a breeze, you can hear the wind, the leaves are moving in the wind, or the birds, who knows, all natural sounds. Then there's also the air. You can feel the air, perhaps there's a very slight movement of air.

You can feel it on your skin. And then there's a sense of your smell. Maybe there's a certain sense arise as you become aware of your sense of smell.

Maybe you can smell the moisture in the ground or whatever. Be there with all your senses, all senses. You can also, for a few moments, close your eyes so that you can more focus on the other senses that tend to be neglected for many people.

So you just take in your, so you smell the air. You feel the slight breeze on your skin, sounds. It's a beautiful experience.

And you don't need to look for always the spectacular in nature. Sometimes nature can be very spectacular, but a lot of the time, it's just ordinary things. Yes, sometimes you have a beautiful, incredible flower or gigantic sequoia tree or whatever, incredible things.

And many other times, there's just normal nature there, nothing that says, pay attention to me. So you have to find, if you're alert enough, you will see the, concealed in the ordinary spectacle of nature, there is an extraordinary aliveness and beingness and presence. So you don't always look for the one, the great thing.

Just to be aware of all, many things that one would habitually overlook in a normal state of consciousness. It's just, there's a bush there. There's a grass here.

It's been cut. Nothing special. But if you really come alert, then you see everything is intensely alive.

There's a consciousness there. It may not be self-conscious, not conscious of itself. There is a consciousness that has manifested as the tree, the flower, the grass, the bush.

There's a consciousness that has manifested in that form. A different vibrational frequency, one could say to your consciousness, but it's not your consciousness. There's only one universal consciousness manifesting in countless life forms.

So you begin to recognize because, but only because you know yourself as consciousness, your mind has become still enough for you to know yourself as consciousness. You sense the consciousness that is inseparable from who you are, that is the essence of who you are, that is who you are. And then you can sense the

consciousness in other life forms, it's only then.

And that sensing of consciousness in other life forms is a deep state of connectedness. You're no longer separate from it, which you are condemned to this separateness when you only relate to things through conceptualization, because that becomes a barrier to everything. The concepts become the barrier.

When they are free of that, the sense of separation disappears. And there's a oneness, for example, of you and the flower, the oneness of you and the tree, because there's no longer an entity there that is me, the conceptual entity. There's only consciousness perceiving itself in a different form.

Welcome. I just want to remind you that we are not here to do anything. We are here to, one could say, experience something rather than do something.

And what we are here to experience, and even that's not quite right, I'll come to that in a minute. What we're here to experience is very subtle, but very powerful. Whatever name we give that reduces it.

It's not that. It's very vast. For the time being, let's just call it stillness.

Now, when I said we're here to experience something, that's not absolutely right, but whenever we use language, we are bound to falsify that which goes far beyond concepts. It's not so much that we're here to experience something as to find that which lies, which underlies all experience, a dimension that is deeper than any experience. Becoming aware of that within yourself.

So, some of you may have written down or have in your mind goals you want to achieve in life, and that's good. It's unlikely that achieving stillness will figure prominently as one of your goals, or even number one, and yet it's the most important thing in your life. But it's a good thing that it's not on your list of goals to be achieved, because if you make it into a goal to be achieved, it implies that you need the future to be achieved.

To achieve stillness, which is, of course, true for all other goals, but not for that which we call stillness. Temporarily, we just call it, for the time being, stillness. If you make it into a goal to be achieved, you place it into the future and you'll never find it, because it's inseparable from the present moment, the now, the now that usually people are not aware of as an actual presence.

And here we have another pointer we could use instead of stillness, and that is presence. And as the word implies, presence is inseparable from the present, the now. Now, for most people, yet the now is not a living realization.

They are only aware of what happens in the now, and even that's not quite right. They're not really aware of it. They are reactive towards it, and they are identified with it.

They are identified with their thoughts that arise. They are reactive to what happens outside. So I'm here just talking a little bit, giving you pointers with every sentence, every word is really a pointer towards that, and I trust that as we sit here together, giving up the idea that we are here to do something, as we sit here together, a realization arises within you that is the living presence within.

The thinking mind stops for a moment, and there's just spacious awareness, stillness. You haven't gone to sleep. You've become still without falling into dreamless sleep, without falling into dreams.

Just something has arisen that usually you would have overlooked, and our meditation here, if we want to call it that, is to become aware of the space within, another pointer, the stillness, the space. Becoming totally at ease with the present moment, a very rare state for most humans. Usually they're only at ease when some desire has just been fulfilled, and then they're at ease for a little while, a few minutes, perhaps.

Or they are at ease because they're so tired. They're moving towards sleep. So I'm here to lead you into that realization of inner stillness, of that dimension within.

Lead you through words, which are only pointers, and through the demonstration of presence, which you can sense if you pay attention to the underlying stillness that is here as I speak, behind the words, between the words. Tune into that. Nothing personal in that, nothing to do with this person.

And as you tune into that, the same dimension arises within you, which again has nothing to do with that person that you think you are. So there is a dimension that transcends the person. It's in this person, and it's in that person.

The dimension that transcends the personal and the person. And everything to do with the person, the personal history, the personal problems, the life situation, the ups and downs of the life situation. They will always be there, the ups and downs of the life situation.

But the miracle is finding the transcendent dimension within you, without which life cannot be a pleasant experience, not for long. It cannot be satisfying, not for long, never for long. So without the realization of the transcendent dimension, the formless, spacious, stillness, nothing will satisfy you.

It's frustrating. Life is very frustrating without that dimension. If you haven't found it.

But of course, the dimension is there in everyone. It's not something that you need to achieve. You can't achieve it, let alone achieve it in the future.

You can discover it here and now within. It's lurking there underneath all the doing, underneath all the thinking. It's always there, but completely, ignored by most people.

If you're comfortable with theistic terms, you could say God is always present, but completely ignored by most people. Because if God has any meaning, it is the transcendent dimension of life. It transcends, means it is beyond whatever arises in life, beyond thought, beyond physical forms, beyond form.

It transcends form. It is beyond past and future. It transcends time.

It has nothing to do with time. It is presence, eternal presence. And presence, eternal presence or eternity, is not some weird abstract philosophical concept.

It can be, and it points to a living realization. So the most precious thing to find in life is that there's stillness inside you always. Always.

You just have to pay attention to it. But then the strange thing is that when you become aware of stillness, you realize that the awareness and the stillness are not two but one. So it's only when we use language, we say, I'm now, I'm aware of stillness.

You put it into language. So when you're aware of stillness, there is a knowing where concepts are not needed. Words are not needed.

And there is no duality, really. It's only when you translate it into words, there's a duality, and you say, I'm aware of stillness. But what really happens is that awareness and stillness are a single realization.

There is no subject and object in this realization. When we talk about it, it sometimes seems that there is a subject. I am aware of stillness.

I can feel the stillness inside me. When you put it into words, that's how it's the subject and object. But when you look more deeply beyond words, you see that there's not me as an entity who is aware of stillness as something in me.

It's only when we use language and that duality appears. So when I'm aware of stillness, really, the awareness and the stillness are one.

[Speaker 2] (8:52:06 - 9:18:47)

Just feel your body. Feel the vibration, the tingling of your inner body. Just by feeling even your hands.

Can you feel your hands? And that energy body acts as a bridge connecting you to stillness. That one life, it's energy, pure energy.

The same energy that are in the plants and the flowers and in other human beings before it's distorted by thought, by emotions. So continue feeling that as we go deeper within, and perhaps you'd like to close your eyes, listen to that silence that is in the room, and who is aware of that silence, that awareness itself. When we become aware of

whether it's external silence or aware of some sort of object, whether it's outside of us or an object that is inside of us, such as thoughts or emotions, it's like turn that attention, your awareness onto itself.

By doing that, you tap into that stillness that is within, the stillness, the consciousness that you are, and that consciousness coming through your form and manifesting as your individual soul. It appears to be individual, but there is really only the one consciousness, the one life, the one spirit, and you are that spirit. And even though you may, on this level of form, be in different stages of consciousness, if you can say that, or as I was saying yesterday, some are buds, some are more open and flowering.

So you may be walking in, like both worlds right now, the world of form and that dimension that is stillness. It is the flowering of human consciousness, that unfolding that happens within, that we are moving, shifting from that material world, the sense world, the world of form into consciousness, into that stillness, into that dimension that is unconditioned, that is formless. And as we shift and move through that level, there are times where it's going to be challenging, where it feels up and down, and times that it just feels nice and smooth.

But remember that those times, if there is any movement, that is the movement of form, not your true nature. Your true nature is the stillness in which you are aware of the forms manifesting and moving through time and space. But the dimension, the core of who you are, that spiritual dimension, is the screen, the background, the ocean, the sky, the vastness, eternal, infinite, life in which forms appear and eventually forms dissolve.

The longer that forms stay in our field of vision or our life, and the more that we have that mind level, if we connect more to that mind level, we will grab hold of that form. And when it goes, it's more painful. There's more suffering involved as it dissolves.

There's a practice in India where people will go to maybe the Ganges or a place where they will burn the dead bodies and a practice where you sit there and meditate on death. Perhaps you can even go to a cemetery and sit there and meditate here in the Western world and meditate on death. But here in the Western world, we kind of like, we hide those things away.

Death? There is no death. What are you talking about, death?

We put it away, and yet in some cultures, it's almost like a celebration. It was in India one time, and I would hear all this music and this chanting as people are walking down the street. There's a stream of people, and I saw these people holding up this on a platform, a dead body with sunglasses on it.

I don't know why it needed sunglasses, but apparently it did. And they were just singing and chanting and dancing as they were bringing to the body to, I don't know where they

were bringing it to, but someplace where they will cremate it in front of you, and you watch it. And part of connecting to that spiritual life, the essence of who you are, which is the eternal consciousness, which is no form, is while you are here in this body and on this level of the human realm, it is beautiful to be able to practice or to be with, to meditate on the dying, the death, the letting go.

It's the ultimate letting go. And even when we are on our deathbed, it will be the ultimate of I'm leaving this so-called world, the form, the ultimate death. When Eckhart's mother was getting older, her body was failing her, and she was very attached to her body.

You know, oh, you know, I don't wanna see, you know, have people see me using this walker. And we had just put her into an assisted care home, and we just said, you know, have you looked around? Everybody else is using a walker.

So she was very attached to her body. And I remember having the thought, I really hope as I age, I will age gracefully. And there is that process, because there is a slight attachment where as I was aging and as my body started to change, and I realized, wow, this is harder than I thought to be able to let go of certain aspects of the way you look, you know, the wrinkles that come, or your body starts sagging, or you start gaining weight, or whatever it is that the change begins to happen from this age of this dimension of the world of really celebrating only youth, that youth is the best thing on the physical level. But we forget that there is the eternal youth within us, but yet we have this form. So we are in constant reminder that are you going to be one with that divine consciousness?

Are you going to be more attached to form? And it definitely is a process of what appears to be a process, unless you're really, really super advanced, and you age and there's no problem at all, with no attachment to it. But there was, and it's like, okay, how can I age gracefully here?

Because I could see that attachment, because it's all around me, I see it all around me in commercials, and on the TV, or in movies, and the female movie stars in America, they speak about this all the time, where at a certain age, it's like nobody wants them anymore. So they had all this attention, and given all this attention, and suddenly you're just no good, you're too old. So they get injected here, and injected there, and I look at all these women who have been injected, and eventually, there's something very similar in their face, even though they have different faces, there's something very similar with all these different injections of Botox, or whatever they do.

And we recently have got a place now in California, in Santa Barbara, and I'm like, okay, I'm gonna be faced with this all the time, when I'm down there. Here it is, right in my face. And it's this continuation of this, being very meditative on the letting go, because I am on that decline of going down and the body definitely changing, aging, and then at

some point, I'll leave the body, the body will be no longer this body anymore, as my consciousness is still here.

Her consciousness never dies, was never born, it is. So this is our practice in our everyday lives. Every moment can be used as a practice, and really is a practice if you are sincerely choosing and wanting the spiritual life.

There's nothing wrong with form, there's nothing wrong with having a business, having money, having a family, it's how much are you attached to it. If it all got wiped away from you, would that be okay? And really, the ultimate test is when it happens, or if it happens, because you really can't think how you were going to respond, you may think you know, but the ultimate test is when and if it actually happens.

So this is why we cannot think that we are so-called enlightened. We have no more attachments. We really ultimately don't know that until we are really tested.

So any thoughts you have about your spiritual life is a thought. So where does that leave you? It leaves you here in the present moment to connect with this present moment and be conscious, be aware, relaxed in this moment until something happens that you're called to action, called to speak.

But we rest in that stillness, in the soul essence of who you are without that desire to move outward, without that desire to speak or take action. Because if there's any desire in it, that desire comes from the mind, you have thought about it. Whereas a pure action arising from the stillness of who you are has no prior thought, no prior thought.

But when action comes, it comes. When words arise, they rise and you speak it. In the meantime, we watch our minds going back and forth, watch how the desires arise in us, watch how the concepts or the opinions or the judgments arise.

And all of that, as I mentioned yesterday, is on the level of the material of form. And how much of that material form life is causing you suffering will bring you out of that material world and into the essence of who you are. Because as we are, and everyone here, that you've come here this weekend, is on some sort of spiritual awakening.

So the mind, the mental level, the old sort of consciousness that is in you may think it still wants this world, the world of form. But the essence of who you are deep inside you is calling you to go into the life that is really meant as the truth of all beingness. So it's like we waffle back and forth because there is something that is undescribable, something that we cannot understand on the mental level, but it's bringing us home.

But your mind can still be in operation and still think, no, I kind of want this and I want that. And that's okay. You may have to go there and play that out and have that desire met before you get tired of it.

I met this one guy in India and we were visiting this guru who apparently grants wishes. Don't know how he does it, but anyways, it happened for him. And he desired more sex.

He wanted to experience more sex. So that's what he asked for. And he met this lady in India and of course he was thrilled, absolutely thrilled.

But then after about a few weeks or I don't know how long it was, whether it's a month or two months, I was there at that time for three months. So it wasn't more than three months. Anyways, he said, oh my, I go, how's it going, you know, with the girl there?

And he goes, oh my God, all she wants is sex. So, you know, oftentimes we get what we wish for until we realize, oh my God, you know, like it's way too much, slow down. I don't want this anymore.

So we get it and we play it out until it's absolutely, we get so tired of it, we can't stand it anymore. And then we go, okay, I've had enough of that. I'm going back to the essence of who I am.

Until life comes along and shows you something else, pulls at a different thread and say, you know, oh yeah, but you know, I want that big house, you know. And then you'll get that big house and you're happy and you might throw a housewarming party. And then all of a sudden it's like, wow, this house isn't so great.

Oh my God, my electricity bill is so big and, you know, whatever. So life will show us and it's showing you and it may show a few things at a time, one thing at a time and you get a break, it doesn't matter, but it will show you because you are on this awakening path, everything will be dropped away from you. And I don't mean in the literal sense, like your house isn't gonna drop away or, you know, I'm not talking about that.

I'm talking about that attachment to the things of this world. So we are shown, you will be shown what attachments you have and don't be afraid to look. Don't be afraid to even admit, wow, I have that attachment and, but you know what, I really want that.

Or even when the pain body comes up, there may be a time and it has happened with me where I feel the pain body arising, I go and I meditate with it and I ask myself, you know, I truly ask myself, do I wanna let this go? And there have been times where the answer is actually no. And as soon as that happens, whoop, I'm fully in that pain body.

So for some reason, you need to, maybe you need to experience that again, but you'll experience it and experience it until you just say, no, I don't want it anymore. That's not where I'm headed to. I don't wanna keep going, being pulled back.

And we'll keep getting pulled back until we're able to rise above it and choose only the one power, the one consciousness that truly exists as reality. For the forms that are impermanent is not reality. The forms that change and come and go is not reality.

So what is reality? But the one eternal life that is within you, deeper than that mind body connection.

[Speaker 5] (9:19:11 - 9:21:24)

And welcome. It's great to be with you. My name's Tammy Simon.

I'm the founder of Sounds True. And it's my joy and honor to welcome you to this special question and answer session about conscious manifestation with Eckhart Tolle. Our team has gathered many, many questions and sifted through them to select some of the most common and compelling questions about conscious manifestation.

And I'll be asking those questions to Eckhart in just a few moments. Here at the start of our program, for those of you who are unaware, I wanna let you know that Eckhart and his teaching partner, Kim Eng, are creating an in-depth teaching program. It's called The Spiritual Guide to Conscious Manifestation.

And it's a four-month learning journey that begins at the end of May next year with a four-day retreat in Huntington Beach, California. And then following the four-day retreat, there's a four-month online learning immersion and at-home curriculum that follows. And right now we're in the process of letting people know about The Spiritual Guide to Conscious Manifestation, the in-person retreat followed by the four months at home.

There'll also be a fully virtual version of the program that we'll announce soon. And also you can apply for scholarships to attend the program. So if you're interested in going even deeper into some of the themes that we'll be starting to explore here in this Q&A session, I encourage you to check out The Spiritual Guide to Conscious Manifestation.

You can just click the Learn More button that's under the player page. And with that, Eckhart, shall we move into the questions?

[Speaker 3] (9:21:24 - 9:28:25)

Welcome. Thank you, Tammy. Welcome, everybody.

Welcome to the present moment. Before we start, I'd like to mention that you might be hearing a strange pitter patter in the background, which is due to the heavy rain that's falling here at the moment. It's all part of the live session.

When I speak, you will probably hear less but when I stop speaking, you will hear it more clearly, for example, now. All right, Eckhart, shall we begin? Let's have a little meditative talk and then I will hand it back to you, Tammy, with the first question.

Wonderful. At any given moment, part of being present in the moment is what is conventionally called gratitude or thankfulness. I guess gratitude and thankfulness are the same thing in the English language.

Thankfulness is of Germanic origin or Anglo-Saxon and gratitude is of Latin origin, but they mean the same thing. So part of being present is when you're really in the now, almost inevitably, a certain appreciation arises for whatever is manifesting in the now. At this moment, what's manifesting, for example, here in the background, is the sound of the rain on the window pane or the external windowsill.

It kind of amplifies the sound and that's something to be grateful for because it's a life-giving substance that's just lots of trees here, very tall trees. It's actually not far from where I'm sitting. There's a rainforest.

Actually, this area of British Columbia is the largest temperate rainforest. And this is why they call it rainforest because it loves the water. It rains so much, it has created this wonderful vegetation.

It's been there for a million years. So you can be grateful for the sound of the rain instead of feeling it's something to be rejected or complain about. Gratitude arises for the life-giving substance of the water.

And this is only one example. Whatever arises when you're really present and give it attention, whatever manifests naturally, you welcome it. And even if it's something that looks like an obstacle or a hindrance, that can also be welcomed.

Life is full of these things that we call challenges. A real challenge always arises in the present moment and there are other challenges that arise in the mind. A real challenge arises something, an obstacle arises.

And again, there can be a kind of a gratefulness even for that because you realize that the evolution of consciousness requires obstacles. It requires the rising of a limitation in your life. Because only by encountering limitation do you become motivated to transcend or rise above the limitation.

And that requires more consciousness. In some simple cases, it may just require more physical strength. So, but whatever it is, it requires an influx of energy on whatever level, whether it's on just purely physical level or a more refined level of conscious attention, consciousness itself.

So, I'm just mentioning this importance whenever you are interested in manifesting. First of all, acknowledge what is already naturally manifesting in this present moment and see if you can become friendly with it. Instead of wanting to eliminate it in order to have something better, that's already an obstacle that arises when you're trying to, that you're creating an obstacle and you're trying to manifest something but there's an unhappiness at the basis of it.

So, when we begin to talk about, answer the questions, I'm sure I'll come back to that. It is a very common obstacle that arises and that is a dissatisfaction with the present

moment, an inability or unwillingness to acknowledge the aliveness of the present moment, no matter what way it is and what form it takes. And that becomes a hindrance to your ability to manifest, powerfully, because that's ego.

Ego lives largely through non-alignment with the present moment that keeps the ego going. But let's go to the first question and then we'll continue talking about this importance of being aligned with the present moment and that the power resides in the present moment, the power that is available to you to manifest resides in the present moment, here and now.

[Speaker 5] (9:28:28 - 9:28:45)

This first question, Eckhart, is directly on that point. It's from Jack from Massachusetts, who writes in, do you have to be, quote, out of your head, unquote, and totally present in the moment to consciously manifest something?

[Speaker 3] (9:28:48 - 9:40:11)

Well, yes, that's a good question. Out of your head, I guess the questioner means by that, out of the thinking mind, head is often used, meaning the thinking mind. Yes, the foundation for manifesting is to be deeply rooted in the present moment and in the dimension of being.

The dimension of being is there when the mind, you encounter this dimension, you access this dimension, when the thinking mind subsides for a moment, and let's not just talk about it, but actually experience it in this very moment, the possibility for the stream of thinking to subside just for a moment, and yet you remain very conscious of that, and you're not only conscious of the sense perceptions around you, which you acknowledge and perhaps find some sense of appreciation, that we sometimes call gratitude, an appreciation when you become present, appreciation for whatever surrounds you, even seemingly insignificant little things. They're all there, they have a certain presence, sense perceptions, and then the deeper aspect of being rooted in the dimension of being is to sense the presence, let's call it your presence or it's not yours, but just as a pointer, let's for a moment call it your presence, to sense your presence, not your story, which is a personality of a person, because when you're not thinking, the story disappears, so the personality as which you appear most of the time, recedes into the background, and what replaces the personality, which is a narrative in your mind, it's a story, that's your personality, or the conditioning of the mind, so when you get out of your head, out of your mind, that subsides, and what is something else arises, so this entity, the personality, recedes into the background, and what arises is a sense of alert presence, and at first you notice it indirectly, because you become more conscious, more aware of your surroundings, your sense perceptions, and you acknowledge that and you appreciate that, this is indirectly, you become aware of the beingness of the present moment, that's the first step, when you begin to appreciate whatever the universe has

manifested, or you have manifested in this moment, that's the world around you, that you take in your sense perceptions, visual, auditory, tactile, whatever it may be, so that is part of becoming present, an appreciation of what is, and then the deeper, we could call that, you become indirectly aware of the power of the present, the beingness of the present moment, and then you become aware of something deeper, that is there at the same time, and that is the presence itself, without which you could not be aware of anything, it's a very power of awareness, and that is very still, it is still, so there's no mental noise anymore, this is an alert stillness, stillness here means, absence of the thinking noise, the noise of thought, and what is left is awareness itself, we could call it consciousness also, consciousness itself, and that stillness is consciousness itself, in other words, you become conscious of being conscious, you know yourself, you know your essence, as that consciousness, that is much deeper than the person, as that conscious awareness or presence, as that you, you have no past, and no future, and as that presence, you have no age, doesn't matter whether you're 18 years old or 19 years old, that in that presence is ageless, and also that presence has no gender, man or woman, or any of the other many genders that people are very much concerned with these days, but as that presence, that is not male or female, it transcends that, and that is the point of power, that is the very foundation for manifesting anything in this world, is you have to go there first, and discover in that dimension, here and now, at this very moment, it is possible to let go of thinking, but not to become some spaced out state, or start, you're very alert, you're just present, and then you sense what we call stillness, is only one way of pointing to it or speaking about it, it is, of course, more than just stillness, yes, it's a good pointer, but stillness really means the absence of noise, in this case, mental noise, but this presence is not just the absence of something, yes, it is the absence of all my objects, it is the absence of all objects that may arise in consciousness, because it's the space of consciousness itself, but it's not just the absence, it is an absence of thought, and an absence of objects of consciousness, but there's also a powerful presence that is within you, but whether it is within or without, it's actually hard to say, but when you sense it within yourself, you also sense it is in the space that surrounds you, what we call space, is also filled with presence, so inner and outer kind of meet, become one, and that is a very foundation for spirituality, whether or not you're interested in manifesting or not, yes, if you are 95 years old, perhaps you've lost the interest, there's not much more that you want to manifest in this world, there's no need, or you might even be younger, you feel there's no need to manifest, that's perfectly fine, or you may be at a stage in your life where you feel the universe wants to manifest something through you in this dimension, but it doesn't matter what it is, but that is the foundation, so getting out of your head, as the questioner asked, yes, in that sense, it's important, but when you begin to manifest, then you will use your mind to some extent, you will, for example, you may, some people like to visualize something, so you begin to use your mind, or you may have affirmations, which is a controlled use of your mind, and yes, you do get, you need, first of all, you do need to get out of your head, as the questioner puts it, and then you sense the power of presence, once you

sense the power of presence, if it is your choice to manifest, you want to manifest something, then you may use affirmations, you speak a sentence, a few words, that point towards where you want to, whatever you want to manifest, even a simple thing, I'm filled with spiritual power, it's not an egoic statement, because power, spiritual power is not power of the ego, it's not power over other human beings,

[Speaker 1] (9:40:11 - 9:40:18)

but by saying, I'm filled with spiritual power, can actually deepen your ability to sense that power,

[Speaker 3] (9:40:19 - 9:44:03)

because that is the power of presence, so I'm filled with spiritual power, can deepen that, so you use that pointer, and in between the statements, there is a space of just, where you can sense the power itself, it's a wonderful thing, so you can use your mind, you may have to use your mind to some extent, but it is a focused way of using your mind, and the wonderful thing is that, that dimension, we could call, yes, the dimension of presence or being, it's so fulfilling or satisfying, to sense that within yourself, that all manifestation, whatever you can manifest out of that, becomes of secondary importance, that's another important part of manifesting, this realization, whatever you want to manifest in this world, people want what they want, better, more abundance in their life, perhaps material abundance, there's a shortage of money, you want to experience an expansion on this dimension, fine, or they want to find some companion in their life, or they may want better health, or a better way of contributing to this world, as the expression goes, to make a difference in this world, they want to be a positive force in this world, that's all, these are all wonderful things, but the primary thing is to touch that, to not touch just deeper, to access that dimension within yourself, and stay rooted in that dimension of being, presence, that in itself is so fulfilling, that anything you can manifest, becomes the English expression, if English is not your native language, I don't know if you've heard the expression, the icing on the cake, the icing on the cake is the stuff you put on top of it, you have a cake, icing on the cake is the stuff you put on top of the cake, you put little ornaments to make the cake look nice, it's the icing on the cake, but it's not the cake itself is more important than the icing on the cake, so the icing on the cake is the step of the realization of being, that is this, sorry, that is the cake, the icing is whatever you manifest, Jesus said the same thing, he didn't actually use,

[Speaker 1] (9:44:04 - 9:44:14)

he was not familiar with English, and the expression icing on the cake didn't exist, I don't know whether they even had cake at that time, but Jesus used the expression,

[Speaker 3] (9:44:17 - 9:44:57)

seek only the kingdom of heaven, everything else that you may think you, that you need will be added unto you, seek only the kingdom of heaven, everything else will be added unto you, it's only an addition, it's not the main thing, so whatever in this life, whatever you may want to achieve, it's an adding on to the main thing, the main thing is the kingdom of heaven, which is your realization of being,

[Speaker 1] (9:44:57 - 9:45:03)

the realization of that which transcends the personal personality,

[Speaker 3] (9:45:05 - 9:46:20)

the realization of being, you see, I am, without adding anything to it, presence itself, and so then, that's the foundation for all manifestation, and out of that power, maybe some people like to visualize the situation, others may want to use verbal affirmations, and that's fine, but as you use those things, you stay connected with that dimension, so that means when you want something in life, the wanting is very different from the egoic wanting, because you no longer, you don't need it to be fulfilled or happy, so it's the different kind of wanting, you don't need it to be fulfilled, the fulfillment you have to find in the present moment,

[Speaker 1] (9:46:20 - 9:46:30)

you have to go deep enough into the present moment, so you find, and again, quoting Jesus again, because he talked about it,

[Speaker 3] (9:46:31 - 9:47:14)

in the present moment, you find what he called the fullness of life, that's actually an expression that Jesus used, he said, I want you to have the fullness of life, in some translations it's called abundant life, I want you to have abundant life, in other translations it's, I want you to have the fullness of life, and that fullness of life does not mean many things, it means that the essence of life itself, that is the fullness of life,

[Speaker 1] (9:47:14 - 9:47:22)

then all those things that you may want, will be added, well, maybe not all of them,

[Speaker 3] (9:47:23 - 9:47:26)

but many of things will be added unto you,

[Speaker 1] (9:47:28 - 9:47:36)

so that is the essence of manifestation,

[Speaker 3] (9:47:39 - 9:47:43)

we'll talk about some other aspects, as I answer some more questions.

[Speaker 5] (9:47:46 - 9:48:20)

This question, Eckhart, comes from Wiebke, from Barcelona, Spain, who writes in, thank you very much, Eckhart, for sharing your wisdom with us, why is it sometimes super easy for me to manifest, and it arrives in no time, and then other times, it doesn't seem to work at all, does it have to do somehow with me not fully letting go of wanting it, or believing that I already have it, am it? Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (9:48:21 - 9:48:57)

Right, well, another good question, so first of all, congratulations that you're already quite successful in manifesting quite often, and sometimes, yes, you're right, sometimes it may not appear, or it may also appear after a much longer time gap than you might have expected,

[Speaker 1] (9:48:58 - 9:49:09)

so certain things appear when you almost forget that you attempted to manifest these things,

[Speaker 3] (9:49:09 - 9:49:55)

let's say you spent a couple of weeks, or three weeks, repeating certain affirmations and visualizing it, and then after a while, it's good to let go, give it some space, and then nothing happens, and it could be that a year later, the very thing you almost forgot that you practiced this manifestation method in order to manifest this or that, and a year later, it suddenly appears, and you remember, oh, that's what I worked on a year ago to manifest, and I'd almost forgotten about it, that can happen,

[Speaker 13] (9:49:58 - 9:50:00)

but other things can happen too.

Eckhart Tolle Talk YouTube 03

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 4:24)

Oh, and that is, there could be too much wanting, the wanting can be an obstacle. If you want some, if you want it too much, that implies you're not sufficiently rooted in the power of presence, and then the wanting takes over, and if there's too much wanting, by implication, you are saying that you don't have it. So in that kind of wanting, this is sometimes people try to exercise willpower, and they try to manifest, I really, I'm going to, I really want, I want this, there it is.

That is not necessarily a good way to manifest, because by saying I want it, you're also saying that you don't have it yet, but the most powerful way to manifest is the feeling that you already, that it's already here, and that only arises out of the fullness of being, of presence in the present moment, because then you merge the image of what you want with a sense of fullness, the fullness of being. So the image and the fullness of being come together, and that is a powerful way of manifesting it, which means you don't need that thing for your happiness anymore, you don't need it for your ultimate fulfillment.

The most powerful way to manifest is to regard it as a play, or a game, the game of life, the play of life, of manifesting, then there's also a sense of detachment from the outcome, an excessive attachment to the desired outcome is also an obstacle to manifesting. If you desperately need something, if you are unhappy, if you are unhappy, if you don't get it, then there's something wrong. So if you're unhappy, when you don't achieve whatever you want to manifest, then you didn't do it right.

So there needs to be a detachment, so to speak, from the desired outcome, so that you don't project this, whatever you want to manifest doesn't become a future projection, but whatever you want to manifest needs to be realized as already existing on some level in the unmanifested. That's why Jesus said, I want to go back to Jesus because whatever you want to learn about manifestation, just read what he explained it all, in very simple words, he said, whenever you pray for something, believe that you have received it and it will be yours. That's the entire secret of manifestation already there, and the importance of the words are not believe that you will receive it, because then there would be too much wanting, I want this, I will get it.

No, he said, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours, and it will be given to you. So believing that you have, in other words, it's already there, and how does that happen? How does it happen when your senses tell you that it's not there?

[Speaker 1] (4:25 - 4:35)

Let's say you live in a trailer, there's nothing wrong with living in a trailer, I love trailers,

but let's say you live in a trailer, but you want a nice house.

[Speaker 2] (4:36 - 6:03)

Okay, your preference would be a nice house, but are you unhappy in your trailer, or are you appreciate being in a trailer, and you can hear the pitter-patter of rain on the roof. Well, I can hear it now, I'm not in a trailer, I can still hear it from the windowpane. So in a trailer, but you want a nice house.

Okay, where's the house? Because you look around, it's not here. Are you creating some kind of dissatisfaction by telling yourself a story?

This is what my life has come to. I've reduced to living in a trailer. I need to get out of here.

This is all disempowering, all those narratives, telling yourself stories that are not good enough, all very disempowering. Yes, your senses are telling you that you're not living in a nice house, just in a trailer, but that's fine for the present moment. So where's the house?

The house is in your imagination, in your mind, maybe you visualize it, or maybe you have certain verbal affirmations that you have a lovely house that you live in, and

[Speaker 1] (6:03 - 6:14)

then the visualization and the verbal affirmation, you bring it together, allow the visualization

[Speaker 2] (6:14 - 9:33)

of the verbal affirmation to be empowered by that sense of presence, so that it meets the presence, so that house merges with the sense of presence, and then inside you feel you already have it.

And the weird thing is, when you do get it, let's say next year, or in six months' time, or in two years' time, or in three years' time, when you do get it, and then suddenly you sit in your nice house, it makes no difference to your inner state anymore, because when you were in your trailer, you were already in the same state of fullness of life, when you sit in a nice house and say, okay, it's fine, but you're not, you say, yes, a certain amount of satisfaction may be there, but basically, your inner state is the same as it was before, because you already touched the fullness, you were already rooted in the beingness, the dimension of being, the fullness of life. In other words, when it does manifest, you don't suddenly become, oh, I'm so happy, I got it, oh, finally, it doesn't happen anymore, you say, oh, it's good, but your inner state is the same as it was before, no matter what you achieve, you already have the foundation for everything, you're already rooted in that,

this is why Jesus called it, all these things will be added unto you, it's no more than that, an adding, or use the expression, icing on the cake, and you have an enormous sense of freedom, of liberation, because you're no longer, your inner state is no longer dependent on external conditions, there's something in you that is more powerful than any external condition, the inner state is not determined by external conditions anymore, and that's very different from when you achieve something, as I said, a certain amount of satisfaction may be there, but you did not need it for your fulfillment or happiness, you didn't need it for that, because you already found that. So, let's go on to the next question.

[Speaker 6] (9:35 - 10:19)

Eckhart, this is from Samantha in Tampa, Florida, who writes in, I understand that conscious manifestation means that I operate from a sense of the fullness of being, and yet the truth is I feel a sense of lack in certain areas of my life, and in particular with my finances, I can sit quietly and feel content and still, but then when I re-engage with my life, and especially my banking details, the feeling of lack returns. How do you advise that I work with this sense of lack when it comes to the practice of conscious manifestation?

[Speaker 2] (10:21 - 12:21)

Right, yes, another interesting question. The sense of lack, of course, is inseparable from the human ego. The human ego always operates on the basis of lack, whether it's financial lack, or other kinds of lack, in the human ego there's always a sense of, there's something missing here, and if you're wealthy, it probably won't be in the region of, if you have a few million dollars, maybe the sense of lack will come from somewhere else, it may not come from finances, it may come from something else, something very important that's missing in my life. Many people who are experiencing financial restrictions, or not experiencing that abundance that comes with having sufficient financial funds in their life, or income, they may believe that when they finally get enough, get this abundance in their lives, then everything will be okay, but that's probably not the case, because the ego will still be there, and you will sense that lack in other areas of your life, whether it's a lack of partner or companionship, or the lack of, inability to find any kind of real satisfaction

[Speaker 1] (12:21 - 12:28)

in any experience, no matter what you do and where you go, there's always an emptiness that you feel.

[Speaker 2] (12:28 - 14:24)

So I've met many wealthy people over the years, and many, some were able to, at least

to some extent, go beyond ego and go beyond the sense of lack, but in others I found a very wealthy people with a very deep sense of lack, sometimes deeper than in some people who had very little money, and this sense of something not right, something is missing, and often they don't even know what it is, and then they want to fill it up sometimes with drugs, or a desperate search for experiences, for sensory experiences, maybe a desperate search for or needing to whatever experience, sex, sexuality, or in taking in substances, or eating of substances, and I need this, I need all of this neediness that's part of the ego, and always looking for the next thing to fill that void that they feel, and so this void that they feel is part of the ego, but, so let's come back to the question of finances, it is, the sense of lack is an inseparable part of the ego, that is true, but of course, when you have a shortage of money that restricts your life,

[Speaker 1] (14:25 - 14:32)

you can't live where you would like to live, or there's not enough freedom of movement

[Speaker 2] (14:32 - 18:04)

because there's not enough money, there is a sense of something missing, and you see it's not just in your mind, it's also here when you look at your bank statement, you see it's not very much there, going beyond the sense of lack that is an inseparable part of the ego, you need to, I believe the questioner to some extent has already done that, you need to discover the fullness of life, to use Jesus' expression, which is the fullness of being, which is inseparable from the present moment, so when you go there, you can see that abundant, another expression is abundant life that Jesus used, you can sense this abundant life in the present moment, regardless of whether there is actual abundance in this manifested dimension, you feel the abundance of life, and you see, when you appreciate all the countless manifestations of life that are around you, that you perceive with your senses, and you acknowledge the abundance of life, no matter whether you go out into nature, you see the abundance of nature, the abundance of brain right now that's coming down here that I can hear, there's an acknowledgement, an appreciation, even a potted plant, I have a potted plant there, there's another one here, to appreciate their manifestations of the aliveness of the universe, and there's an abundance in everything, you live in a city, there's abundance everywhere, you can look into a shop window and you see abundance of goods there, you don't even need to go and buy them, you just appreciate, you go past a flower shop, and you see abundance of plants and flowers, and you appreciate and you feel abundant already, but the deepest abundance is the feeling of the fullness of life, and then, I believe what the questioner is asking, at times when he looks at his bank statement, the sense of lack comes back, because then you see, oh, I have very little, there's not much left, and then the mind will start creating a narrative of lack, and will tell you that you've been wronged, that actually you don't have much, and that can be a great hindrance, it will diminish your power of manifestation,

[Speaker 1] (18:05 - 18:21)

so what do you do when you look at your bank statement, or you go to the ATM machine, and you want to get out $300, or whatever it is, and it says, you put it in,

[Speaker 2] (18:21 - 18:47)

it says insufficient funds, and that's the time of, I'm not talking about right now, what you can do on a practical level, the question is, as much as possible,

[Speaker 1] (18:49 - 18:58)

do not succumb to the feeling of financial lack, even if there is financial lack in your life,

[Speaker 2] (18:58 - 19:33)

do not succumb to the feeling of lack, and that is, whatever you can do to generate a sense of abundance, and the main thing, of course, is going within, and sensing the fullness of life, even when you look at your bank statement, don't personalize it, don't have any kind of projection,

[Speaker 1] (19:35 - 19:44)

this is just factually, these are the figures, and then perhaps you have a certain course of action,

[Speaker 2] (19:44 - 20:08)

in addition to feeling the sense of abundance, you may have to work out a certain goal that you have, that may give you more abundance, so perhaps you have something that you want to do to create more abundance,

[Speaker 1] (20:08 - 20:17)

and then your manifestation can flow into that, so that the sense of abundance flows into the,

[Speaker 2] (20:17 - 20:40)

whatever it is that you are wanting to manifest in your life, you have to combine action and whatever technique you use, or whatever method you use,

[Speaker 1] (20:41 - 20:50)

it is to be recommended that you combine it with some kind of action,

[Speaker 2] (20:51 - 21:35)

so that you can generate abundance even on this outer level, so this applies in many cases, people have, let's say, you might feel a sense of lack, of something meaningful in your life, or you might feel a sense of lack, of feeling that you are not good enough, you are not enough in this world, and some people then come up with, what is it that I want,

[Speaker 1] (21:35 - 21:41)

and the egos, I might say, in many young people you have that,

[Speaker 2] (21:41 - 21:54)

you might say I want to be a famous this or that, I want to be, if you ask young people, because they are always online and doing things in the virtual world,

[Speaker 1] (21:54 - 23:20)

I want to be a famous YouTuber, I want to be a famous, okay, now what, let's say somebody says I want to be a famous YouTuber, that is not good, that is not enough, you can sit down and then you imagine, I am a famous YouTuber, and even if you feel the power of beingness, there is still something missing, and what is missing is in the dimension of doing, let's say you have the dimension of being, you are rooted in the being and you feel the fullness of life, and then you say, okay, I am an influential and famous YouTuber, but what are you doing, do you have anything to convey to people on YouTube, is there anything that you are enthusiastic about, is there anything that people would love to hear from you, or that people would find helpful, it is not enough, the foundation, yes, the foundation is to be rooted in the dimension of being, so that you sense the fullness of life within you here and now,

[Speaker 2] (23:20 - 23:27)

but then for many things, maybe not for all things, but for many things,

[Speaker 1] (23:28 - 23:51)

you need to also address the dimension of doing, you have the being dimension, that is the foundation, the doing dimension is, okay, let's come back to the famous, I want to be a famous YouTuber, do you have something that you feel enthusiastic about, that perhaps other people would appreciate, it would help them, what could it be,

[Speaker 2] (23:51 - 24:07)

is it music or singing or information, conveying information or entertaining, whatever it is, and then you focus on that, develop technical skills,

[Speaker 1] (24:07 - 24:27)

because putting things on YouTube, skills of editing and cameras, producing videos, and enjoy the doing of it, when you are engaged in the doing of it, this enjoyment of being flows into the doing, and again,

[Speaker 2] (24:27 - 24:34)

do not be attached too much to the outcome, that is very important,

[Speaker 1] (24:34 - 25:18)

but enjoy the doing of it, so that the being flows into the being dimension, flows into the doing dimension too, so you enjoy learning how to produce videos, learning editing, video editing, learning, and then whatever subject matter you have, that you feel enthusiastic about, that would help the world and other people, then you learn more about it, or you go more deeply into it, and then you begin to practice, and it's all a wonderful thing, and you're not attached to the outcome, but from time to time, then you're able to, from time to time, you go within,

[Speaker 2] (25:19 - 25:34)

and you imagine yourself as a famous YouTuber, that's reaching hundreds of thousands or millions of people, who are being helped, or you contribute something to other people's lives,

[Speaker 1] (25:34 - 25:43)

by doing whatever it is you're doing, and by doing that, you are a famous YouTuber, then it's more powerful, if you feel that this is already the case,

[Speaker 2] (25:43 - 25:52)

it's already, I'm already a famous YouTuber, perhaps for the time being, you only get 20 views per video,

[Speaker 1] (25:52 - 26:07)

that's fine, at the moment, that's fine, but even that you appreciate those 20 views, great, I've reached 20 people, and then you go within, and again, if you're already a famous YouTuber,

[Speaker 2] (26:07 - 26:20)

and you're helping, it's not just this image of me as a famous YouTuber, there must be another dimension to it, that relates to the world,

[Speaker 1] (26:20 - 26:24)

how does that affect the world, whatever you want to achieve,

[Speaker 2] (26:24 - 26:50)

that can be, that empowers you, what does, how do you help, what does the universe want to manifest through me, when I say universe, I mean the intelligence that pervades the universe, that's behind it all, the universe of the intelligence behind it all,

[Speaker 1] (26:51 - 27:00)

the divine intelligence behind the phenomenal world, what does it want from me, and maybe it wants me to become a famous YouTuber,

[Speaker 2] (27:01 - 28:40)

but the most important thing is not the famous, it's just, what is it that, the energy that's flowing through me, so in addition to visualization, or affirmation, in the being dimension, you may need to address also the doing dimension, and again, bring the two together, enjoy the doing, don't use it, don't treat the doing as a stressful thing, because you need to achieve this or that, no, you enjoy the doing of it, that's the power, the power of presence, has to flow into the doing, the doing is not just a means to an end, it's an end in itself, that is a very important realization, so that the doing does not become stressful, if it's stressful, it means you are excessively attached to the outcome, which means you want to be there, but you are here,

[Speaker 1] (28:40 - 29:26)

and that gap between there and here creates stress, and that's, and then you, as far as manifestation is concerned, that is disempowering, now some people who work very hard, with that mindset of stress, exercise willpower to achieve this, and sometimes they actually do achieve, occasionally it happens, but it doesn't make them happy, it makes them, when they achieve, they are still unhappy, and in the meantime, anybody else they had contact with, in whatever work they were doing,

[Speaker 2] (29:27 - 29:43)

they are made unhappy too, so if that is your underlying mindset, I will achieve sheer willpower, and of course it's stressful, you create stress for yourself, you create unhappiness for yourself,

[Speaker 1] (29:43 - 30:01)

and whoever you are in contact with, you make them unhappy too, some companies operate like that, everybody is stressed and unhappy, so if you work in a company like that, my recommendation would be to depart,

[Speaker 2] (30:01 - 30:19)

and so if your environment is dysfunctional, that can be a considerable hindrance to your power of manifestation, if you are trapped in a dysfunctional environment,

[Speaker 1] (30:33 - 30:50)

so look out for any sign of stress, when you are moving towards your goal, and you are active in whatever area, look for any kind of stress that arises, there is something not right, if stress arises,

[Speaker 2] (30:51 - 32:39)

now this is not to be confused with a kind of feeling, a low energy activity, when you engage in something meaningful, there is intense energy behind what you do, but this intensity of energy is not stress, there is an enjoyment behind it, so yes, you may be very intensely engaged, but as you are intensely engaged in whatever it is, let's say, let's come back to this person who wants to be a famous YouTuber, at this moment he or she is learning how to edit videos, how to do that, and again, enjoy the learning process, trying this out in bed, asking questions, what can I do here, there, and then there is the next thing to master, enjoy the doing of that, rather than, why am I not a famous YouTuber already, I need to get there to feel happy, no, you are happy in the doing, and then even if you don't become a famous YouTuber, you will still be happy, maybe you reach only a thousand people, or five thousand, or ten thousand, or two hundred, and even out of those two hundred that you reach,

[Speaker 1] (32:41 - 33:13)

some people may contact you, and something else will arise out of that, many things arise, you have to be always open to new possibilities, you haven't even thought of, not everything that you achieve in this life comes through wanting to manifest, often it's a good starting point, but sometimes, quite often, the best things may come that you never even thought of to manifest,

[Speaker 2] (33:13 - 33:55)

but if you hadn't started with this particular manifestation, the other things that you never thought of would never have arisen, so sometimes the universe, so to speak, may have greater plans for you than you could even think of, but you have to take the first steps, and sometimes the first step is, I want to manifest this now, and then you practice, you go into being, rooted in the fullness of being, then you visualize, or you affirm this or that,

[Speaker 1] (33:56 - 34:02)

and in doing that, you feel it's already there, in the unseen,

[Speaker 2] (34:03 - 34:07)

and then, in addition, you may have to go into the doing dimension,

[Speaker 1] (34:09 - 34:24)

and in the doing dimension, don't lose touch with being, because if you lose touch with being, you're lost in doing, and you're stressed, and you're not effective anymore, and even if you achieve what you wanted to achieve through sheer willpower

[Speaker 2] (34:24 - 34:31)

and hard work and stress, it'll make you unhappy, and make others unhappy, so it's pointless.

[Speaker 6] (34:38 - 35:05)

Eckhart, we have one final question, one final question here. This comes from Nadine in Denmark, who writes, Hi Eckhart, I'm very concerned about the current state of turmoil and disruption on the planet, and I want to help create what you call the New Earth. What role could conscious manifestation play?

[Speaker 2] (35:07 - 39:18)

Right, yes, yes, many people have this concern, not surprisingly. We are in an area of upheavals on our planet, increasing upheavals, so be prepared for more things to come. The greatest contribution you can make is your state of consciousness, because the upheavals are mostly caused by certain dysfunctions in the collective human consciousness.

There is something in the human consciousness that creates suffering for other humans. It's been there for a long, long time. This is not the first time.

Sometimes the world is in moments when it's not so... There have always been some areas on the planet where things are... There's violence and dysfunction more than other parts.

But then there are time periods when many parts of the planet become affected by upheavals, human suffering inflicted by other humans. The greatest enemy of humanity is the human mind, obviously, because it's humans who kill hundreds of thousands of other humans, millions in the 20th century, countless millions, 30, 40, the most exact number. So the greatest danger for humanity is something, there's a certain dysfunction in the human mind, and that manifests in the world.

Most of the things you hear about when you listen to the news or you watch the news are manifestations, yes, manifestations of the unconsciousness of humanity. And when I say unconsciousness, I mean lack of awareness, ego, unconsciousness, complete identification with the conditioned mind. And when you watch the news, almost all of it is manifestations of the most extreme forms of unconsciousness happening on the planet.

The dysfunction in the human mind that all the spiritual traditions have spoken of, there's something not right, there's something wonderful in the human consciousness, and the potentials are enormous, and humans have created wonderful things too, but there is an element of insanity that all humans inherit from the collective.

[Speaker 1] (39:20 - 39:24)

If you doubt that, listen to the news tonight.

[Speaker 2] (39:24 - 41:30)

If you doubt that, read a book on history, 20th century history, good place to start. And then you see that there is a, what we could call a mental illness in the collective consciousness of humanity that creates that suffering. Mental illness is one way of looking at it.

And at times, the mental illness becomes more acute. At other times, it's more latent in the background. And at other times, this mental illness comes into the foreground and creates an enormous amount of human suffering.

So, whatever world humans create, inevitably must be a manifestation of the collective consciousness of humanity. It comes out of the collective consciousness of humanity. And in this case, better say the collective unconsciousness of humanity.

Your greatest contribution is your state of consciousness, so that whatever the unconsciousness that you see around you, so it does not draw you down into unconsciousness also. Are you able to remain conscious? Which means, are you able not to succumb to either anger or fear?

These are two important things that I've observed many humans succumb to easily when they engage with the news and so on. Either anger or fear. And if that is the case, then be aware of that.

[Speaker 1] (41:31 - 43:16)

And it seems natural almost on a purely human level that one should feel anger or fear. There's a third thing that you could feel is compassion for human suffering. And that is beautiful and wonderful.

And the question arises, is there anything I can do? And whether you are in a position to

alleviate human suffering on a practical level, I don't know. Some humans are in a position, but in many cases, you may say, well, it's horrible, but there's nothing I can do about it.

I only see it. I watch it. What can I do?

Don't underestimate the importance of your state of consciousness, because your state of consciousness is connected to the totality of humanity on an unseen level. Don't underestimate the importance of staying conscious and present as you observe the suffering around you. Yes, compassion may arise.

Sadness may arise. But stay conscious and present and realize that what you are witnessing is a manifestation of where humanity is at present on its evolutionary path, where it is at present.

[Speaker 2] (43:16 - 43:41)

And the suffering is part of the evolution of consciousness and part of the egoic consciousness that is approaching its end.

[Speaker 1] (43:41 - 43:47)

The egoic consciousness in humanity has been prevalent for thousands of years.

[Speaker 2] (43:49 - 44:09)

And now the conflicts that are arising now, which are going to be even more serious than what we are witnessing right now, are the final manifestations of the egoic consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (44:16 - 44:45)

What you are witnessing on one level, yes, we need to recognize that the deep dysfunction, the deep unconsciousness that makes humans do these things, then seemingly many unconscious human beings get killed, suffer.

[Speaker 2] (44:46 - 44:50)

We need to recognize the madness of it. That's important.

[Speaker 1] (44:54 - 45:29)

But as you become very present, you may begin to realize there is another level of truth. There are levels of truth. On one level of truth, what we are witnessing is dreadful, and it needs to be recognized as such.

On another level of truth, what we are witnessing is certain events that are part of the

evolutionary path of humanity.

[Speaker 2] (45:33 - 46:06)

If you consider that a human being is a ray of consciousness that assumes a particular physical form, the essence of who you are, what you are, is consciousness, a ray of the one consciousness, like a ray of sunlight, one could say. We could say a spark of consciousness. That remains even when the body dies.

[Speaker 1] (46:07 - 46:20)

The essence of who or what you are, this particular ray, is still there. It's not dead. So there is an aspect to a human being that is not subject to death.

[Speaker 2] (46:20 - 46:22)

Only the physical dies.

[Speaker 1] (46:23 - 52:42)

And the consciousness that's behind the physical form, whether you call it soul or the divine spark or the ray of consciousness, that goes on. So every human is part of the evolution of human consciousness and goes on to another lifetime, another lesson to be learned, another incarnation, unless they no longer need to reincarnate, in which case you would go on to other dimensions where evolution continues there, too. Only the body dies.

And that's a liberating thing to realize. You need to realize it for yourself, too, otherwise you will be very afraid of death. Death is all around you.

But death is particularly awful to witness when it is violent death happening to children, to young people. But if you realize that there is an essence in every human being behind the physical manifestation that is not subject to death, then from that higher perspective, what we are witnessing is a kind of nightmare that humans can awaken out of. So we are witnessing a nightmare.

For many humans, their life has become a nightmare. And so we are witnessing a nightmare that's happening for many humans. And what happens is a nightmare is a dreamlike state, a state of unconsciousness.

Eventually, when you're trapped in a nightmare, a point comes when you awaken out of the nightmare. And then you look back and say, that was horrible, that was a terrible nightmare. So at some point, a human being can evolve out of that.

And every human that leaves, if you leave their body, you will find that you look back and say, that was a terrible dream, this lifetime was a terrible dream. And then there's a

collective dream of humanity, collective suffering, a terrible nightmare. Because what's happening, part of the evolution of consciousness is the awakening of human consciousness.

The key term is awakening. That's the whole purpose of us being here, not to witness, but to embody, to be part of the awakening of human consciousness. Now, what does that imply?

It implies that before it awakens, it's asleep. It's in a dreamlike state. That's the egoic state.

And that creates all the suffering that is created by the human ego, the collective ego and the individual ego. Collective ego in the form of a nation or a group of people, or the individual ego creates enormous suffering, but it's a nightmare. It creates a very painful dream.

But if within the dream you recognize, suddenly you recognize something, your desire to awaken will become very intense if you're in a nightmare. It will be much more intense than if you're engaged in a relatively pleasant dream where you're relatively comfortable and things are going okay and you have your little things that you drink and take But if the dream becomes very unpleasant, becomes a nightmare, your motivation to awaken will be much greater. So the awakening of consciousness and the intensification of the nightmare come together.

And that is the whole purpose of it, where you're witnessing the truth, both coming together, the intensification of the nightmare and the awakening of consciousness. The more painful the nightmare becomes, the stronger the motivation to awaken. This is looking at the whole situation from a much higher perspective.

And then every human who is engaged in the nightmare, at some point, they awaken. Not perhaps in this lifetime, but at some point they awaken and they look back and say, oh, that was a nightmare. I'm glad I'm out of it now.

That was a horrible nightmare. But if it hadn't been a nightmare, I would still be trapped in the dream. So the crisis of humanity that we are experiencing is inseparable from the awakening of human consciousness.

They come together. It's only under immense pressure that consciousness evolves. Only under immense pressure does consciousness evolve.

[Speaker 2] (52:43 - 52:54)

That is a function of suffering. Suffering represents that intense pressure under which consciousness evolves.

[Speaker 1] (52:55 - 53:22)

And once it has evolved, the suffering is recognized as a kind of nightmare. It is then transcended and is recognized as a kind of, very similar to a nightmare, a very painful dream. So that's the crisis we are going through and we're moving into.

[Speaker 2] (53:22 - 53:30)

But it's an inseparable part of the awakening of human consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (53:35 - 53:49)

It doesn't mean that we should not help on this dimension wherever we can. Obviously we do. It also means that we have compassion for humans that are trapped in the nightmare.

[Speaker 2] (53:49 - 53:50)

It's horrible.

[Speaker 1] (53:50 - 56:21)

I still have memories when I saw the witnessing the destruction in Israel and Palestine and the destruction of buildings and people dying and then the other side, terrorists. I remember when I saw the destroyed buildings when I was a child, I was born three years after the end of a horrible nightmare, a collective nightmare that was called the Second World War. And when I was a child, still, because all the cities in Germany had been, most cities had been erased through bombardment.

And as a child, my favorite playground was still the ruins of houses that had been bombed. We played in the ruins of houses and I remember that when I watched the ruins of houses in the Palestinian area, I said, oh, that's where, as a child, I was born at the end of this particular nightmare and it was a natural thing for me. I thought it's normal for almost every other house was still a ruin and that was my playground.

So these things have happened already many times before on a much larger scale, even in the 20th century, on a gigantic scale and it may get even, it will probably, the situation will most likely deteriorate more in the world in the next few years, but that's perfectly fine. It's all part of the evolution of consciousness, but your contribution is vital and your contribution is to stay present and conscious while this is happening.

[Speaker 2] (56:22 - 56:31)

Stay present and conscious while this is happening and do not succumb to fear or anger.

[Speaker 1] (56:32 - 58:59)

They're totally pointless. First of all, anger is totally pointless. Obviously, you would, and if you act out of anger, you contribute to the unconsciousness or fear.

Fear is not recognizing the essence of who you are as a human being and whoever every other human being, the essence of every other human being as conscious awareness itself, which is not subject to death. So recognize it. Ultimately, you do not die and no human dies, only the body dies.

Whether that is a belief that you have, but it doesn't need to be just a belief. It is possible to actually experientially realize that dimension in yourself that is the invisible you, which is you. Most of you is invisible.

I mean, nobody can find you by opening up your brain and looking for you. Nobody can find you because the essence of you is invisible. It's not part of this material realm.

The essence of you is invisible. And I can sense that essence and then there's a body that has a limited lifespan. So then the realization of immortality ultimately liberates you, of course, from the fear of death.

In essence, you cannot die and no human can die, but that's a wonderfully liberating realization. And that's why it has been said in some spiritual tradition where it originates, I don't remember, die before you die, which means die to the ego itself, the conceptual identity, the narrative, remind me, and identification with the physical body. Die to this.

And before you die, physically die. Die before, find death before death finds you is the expression. Find death before death.

[Speaker 2] (58:59 - 59:31)

Finding death happens when we started today with becoming aware of yourself as consciousness and ultimately the person subsides and this person is what dies eventually. So when you become aware of yourself as consciousness, you find death before death finds you.

[Speaker 1] (59:31 - 59:57)

It's only the death of the person, the accumulated stuff in the human mind that you identify with, the character that you play in this lifetime, the script that consciousness plays out when it is not awakened. When consciousness is not awakened, it plays out a script and that script is the condition, entity that you call I, the person.

[Speaker 2] (59:58 - 1:00:30)

And that is recognized as illusory when you go deeper and you realize, even when you let go of that entity, the script, the character that you play unconsciously, what remains is the light of consciousness itself, totally free of time and not subject to birth and death.

So therefore Jesus taught that also.

[Speaker 1] (1:00:31 - 1:00:53)

He talked about eternal life. He said, I want the possibility of finding eternal life. That's one of his main teachings and eternal does not mean it goes on and on.

That would be very boring. Eternal means timeless. The timeless life that is consciousness itself.

[Speaker 2] (1:00:53 - 1:01:10)

He used that expression, eternal life. It doesn't mean you live forever as this thing, but you find the essence of yourself. And in Buddhism, you have a similar term.

[Speaker 1] (1:01:11 - 1:01:31)

I'm just saying it because they all recognize this, but they use different terminology to express it. In Buddhism, we have the expression Amara. Amara is translated as the deathless realm or the deathless dimension.

[Speaker 2] (1:01:32 - 1:02:09)

The dimension in which there is no death. Amara. Amara means death.

A denies it. The deathless realm, which is a dimension of consciousness that you find within yourself. Jesus talked about the eternal life, which is the same thing expressed in positive terms.

In Buddhism, it's the same thing expressed in negative terms. So Jesus says eternal life. Buddhism says the deathless.

Buddhism says everything in negative terms. And Jesus sends the token of positive terms pointing to the same reality.

[Speaker 1] (1:02:10 - 1:02:30)

So you find that. Then you find death before death finds you. And when you find death before death finds you, you realize there is no death.

And then you're able to stay present when you contemplate what humans are doing in the state of unconsciousness.

[Speaker 2] (1:02:31 - 1:04:12)

And then you can say what Jesus said on the cross, supposed to have said on the cross, forgive them, for they know not what they do. They know not what they do. Which of

course means they are completely unconscious.

They don't know what they do. And when you realize that, you forgive them. You don't make their unconscious behavior, the behavior motivated by unconsciousness into their identity.

That is the forgiveness. And you recognize unconsciousness being acted out in this world, causing suffering. But you don't make an identity out of it for other people.

You recognize they are displaying behavior that is caused by the present evolutionary state of humanity. On its path towards awakening. So let that be sufficient for today.

I wish you well. Stay present. Stay conscious.

[Speaker 6] (1:04:19 - 1:05:41)

Thank you, Eckhart. And thank you everyone for being with us. For those of you who are interested in diving even deeper into this topic of conscious manifestation at this time, the most comprehensive offering that Eckhart and Kim have ever created on this topic is coming up.

It's called The Spiritual Guide to Conscious Manifestation. And it starts at the end of May in 2024 with a four-day in-person retreat in Huntington Beach in California. If you want to learn more, you can press the learn more button.

In a few weeks, we'll also be announcing that there'll be a virtual version that's available. And if you're interested in receiving a scholarship for the virtual version, you can write to support at EckhartTolle.com. Again, that's support at EckhartTolle.com.

And I hope to be with many of you at The Spiritual Guide to Conscious Manifestation. And thank you so much, Eckhart, for this fabulous and helpful and deeply instructive Q&A. Thanks, friends.

[Speaker 1] (1:05:56 - 1:15:46)

Problem solving is sometimes necessary in life because problems drop up all the time. Although I prefer not to call them problems, but that's a word that is mostly applied to situations that need some kind of response or action, challenges is another word. It's important to practice accessing non-conceptual intelligence before you apply, and even while you apply, your analytical mind so that you approach the problem both with the non-conceptual intelligence and with the analytical mind that looks at a situation, can divide up, for example, a complex situation into, for example, possible steps that I can take to solve the situation, one, two, three, four, course of action, you think about it, you focus thought, analyze, look at the possibilities, but fluctuate between, this is quite an art, between thinking about it, applying focused thought, which is different from

compulsive overthinking, such as happens when you are worried and so on, to apply focused thought, but to really skillfully and effectively apply focused thought, you need to have access to the non-conceptual intelligence in you that is beyond thought.

So there's a continuous stepping back out of thinking into, where you take in the totality of a situation without breaking it down, where you look at the situation without any verbalization or conceptualization, just being very alert and very still. And you look at it, look not necessarily visually, hold it in your awareness as a totality and then just become still. Even let go for a moment of the entire situation, just become still, alert and still.

And then an answer may come out of that or as you continue to, there could be one answer that solves the whole thing or you may continue to apply thought after that. And then perhaps again, step back into alert stillness and then apply thought if thought is called for. And there's so much intelligence in you that is not accessed, potential intelligence.

It's all this huge realm of non-conceptual intelligence that arises out of the unconditioned consciousness. So, and most people move only within the conditioned and they try to solve all their life's problems with the very same instrument that in many cases has created the problems. Because many of your problems without you knowing it are actually created by unconscious use of the mind or rather the mind being doing what it does.

You are not using it, it's using you. You're mistaking the mind for who you are. So that's a huge set of problems in your life comes from that dimension.

And if you are able to bring awareness into that dimension so that your mind creates as few problems as possible or perhaps even no problems at all anymore, then the mind can be left for solving problems. And what are those problems? Those are not the problems that are generated by the mind but the problems that come to you seemingly from the external world in the form of situations you encounter, in the form of things going wrong, so to speak, challenging people, very common source of problems.

But again, very important to differentiate between is this really a problem or am I contributing to it being a problem? Am I contributing all of it? If I did not argue with the is-ness of this moment, would there be a problem?

No. So there would still be a challenge perhaps to deal with. Yes, not a problem.

It's sometimes not easy to tell the difference between is this something that's actually mind-created or is it out there? Now, if you arrive home and your house has collapsed in an earthquake, that is clearly, perhaps on the very deep level, it's created by your mind too, but we're not going there right now. It would be the dream of your particular incarnation would have created that, but we don't need to go there.

On the level that we're dealing with it now is to say your house, it has collapsed in an earthquake, you did not create it. Although many new age people will tell you, why did you create that? What?

Yeah, if you experienced it, you must have created it. I never say that, although there are many, there are different levels of truth. So one does not invalidate the other.

I usually don't go there because I would lose, not that I mind, but I don't want to lose you because it's important for you. So, your awakening, I'm happy to lose you when you don't need me anymore, which hopefully will be very soon, but the mind, my mind suddenly stopped. Very weird thing, the mind, very weird.

Very weird. But when it suddenly stops, that's a good thing. If you're okay with it.

It's not a good thing if you think, oh, that shouldn't have happened. So the mind, let's see it start again. Again.

The different levels of truth at a deeper or higher level, of course it's true to say whatever there's a correspondence between inner and outer and whatever it is that you experience is part of your particular consciousness and so on. But I rarely say you created this if it's a bad experience because your mind would suddenly say, no, that's not true. And then you wouldn't be hearing the rest that I'm saying, which may be much more important than to say you created this.

I'm more interested in you waking up into awareness than believing in a particular perspective. Whatever perspective you need will arise from within you. Whatever perspective you want to approach reality through will arise from within you.

I don't want you to adopt a particular perspective. And in order not to generate resistance in you, I never really say that you created it if it's something bad, but I do say accept this moment and whatever arises in this moment as if you had created it. No, that's more acceptable.

[Speaker 8] (1:16:13 - 1:17:04)

I work with technology and I actually, it was quite interesting to hear you talk about technology a few times in the past couple of days and the way that you mentioned that smartphones are actually an extension of our minds and the way that the internet is actually, it's a space for our unconscious mind to actually be reactive. So one of the things I do for work is to raise a bit of the ethical questions around that and the thing that we usually call digital nudges, which is when we try to influence other people through technology. So I would really love to hear a bit of your opinion and then maybe your advice if there is a way for us to use technology as a tool and as a channel to actually increase humanity, our consciousness and presence.

[Speaker 1] (1:17:04 - 1:19:42)

Yes. So in itself, of course, it's neutral. The technology is neutral.

It's not either bad or good. It depends how it's used. It is, at the moment, it is to a large extent a reflection of the unconscious mind.

So if you want to learn about human unconsciousness, if you want to learn about the human ego, just go there and read what people post and look at the reactivity of people on social media and so on, the comments they leave. You can learn a lot about unconsciousness and identification with mental positions. So the first thing, of course, is be careful with what you put out there, what kind of thing you post.

If you post things online, is it reactive? Give yourself a moment when you read something before you type in an answer or a comment. Give yourself a moment and go within and avoid making people wrong.

You can talk about issues, but don't make people wrong and amplify your ego by making others wrong, even though their position, political or otherwise, you may regard as completely misguided or erroneous. There's still a human being behind that, so you can put forward arguments against somebody's perspective or viewpoint without making another human being wrong. So what you put out is very important.

Is your communication conscious or not, or is it reactive? And then it can be used for other purposes. I'm there too sometimes.

There are certain places where I appear on, could go to YouTube or whatever, and then suddenly there's a spiritual teacher talking so do you professionally work with, what exactly do you do in your work that involves the media?

[Speaker 8] (1:19:43 - 1:19:57)

Pretty much involves the creation, the ideas around the digital products and services. So creating the product that people actually use and designing the interfaces that people actually use on the phones and on the computers.

[Speaker 1] (1:19:57 - 1:32:05)

Right. There are some meditation sites on all these things. So there's great potential for raising consciousness there.

Somebody recommended to me several apps for meditation, which I now have on my phone. I haven't tried them yet. I've been there for a while.

But I have four or five that are there. I want to try them out. So that's the very thing that otherwise would clutter your mind can actually also be used to bring about space or

spaciousness in your mind.

So it doesn't necessarily mean that when you have your phone or the 99% of cases, when people look there, their mind is being cluttered, but maybe they're on a meditation app. Maybe they're looking at a beautiful spacious picture and all listening to some sound or saying, take a conscious breath, have a little reminder every two hours to take a, take a conscious breath and bring spaciousness. Oh yes, spaciousness.

So the very same thing that otherwise clutters your mind can now unclutter your mind. It's possible. So I believe that is also going to grow now and it has to, because otherwise that technology could potentially drive humans completely insane, remove their ability to focus on anything for more than a few seconds.

People create young people who are totally uncentered, have no spaciousness within, don't even communicate with humans anymore because they prefer to communicate digitally. So all these things are important, but what you put out is important. So always take into consideration whether this brings people to presence or whether it clutters somebody's mind.

And perhaps you can combine, of course, what you do needs to be also commercially viable. So, but I believe you can combine the two. It's not necessarily a question of either it's commercially viable and it clutters people's minds or it's presence and we're not going to, we are going to go out of business.

It doesn't have to be like that. It's up to you to be creative. Use, the more still you are, the more creative insights you will have into, and you might get some amazing ideas of what is possible.

I can't tell you what is possible. I don't know enough about it. I know very little about it.

So, but you're in a wonderful position. So allow yourself to go deep enough within because then it is, then the creative ideas seem to come. And if you find a thing that is not only brings people to presence, but also helps your company to grow, then that then becomes a conscious business, which is wonderful.

It's challenging. Of course it's challenging. So don't let all your attention be absorbed though by that kind of activity.

Take still, you still need to connect with nature. Take it off as much as possible away from there, connect with nature and then bring it back. Another thing that's just in connection with this, not perhaps directly related to your question, but related to this, what tends to happen is that these devices, people are never, they're still in bed and they're still doing stuff on it.

And that takes you over there at dinner and they're doing stuff on it. It breaks the

relation with other people you're at dinner with. I can see, I see people in restaurants, the couple sitting at having dinner together and both are on their phones.

Now that's probably means they have known each other for a while. If it happens on the first date, the first date will probably be the last one. But if it happens after they've known each other for two years, then it's almost a normal thing that they're not present with each other.

Or then they exchange a few words and then she looks at the phone again and then he stares into space and then she's still on her phone. I've actually observed it. She's still on her phone and he's staring into space and then finally he gets out his phone too because he doesn't want to be staring into space.

And then I wonder, are they texting each other? Two good things that I learned that in some huge companies, I believe it might be VW in Germany. Well, they've had enough problems but now they tell their employees after 6 p.m. they're not allowed to use the company phones anymore, not to deal with emails or anything. They need to get off. And that's a very wise thing because the more people's attention gets absorbed by this, the more confused and non-creative they become, the more cluttered their minds become, the more ineffective they're even at their work. Not to mention as human beings, their quality of life decreases enormously.

So don't give yourself spaces. Don't allow these things to take over your life. That's vitally important.

So it's wonderful that some big companies like that have this policy now, no emails or anything after 6 p.m. Well, that's wonderful. So I talked a couple of years ago to Ariana Huffington, who has a famous news website and has also written some books. And she describes in her latest book how her life deteriorated more and more, although she was making a lot of money.

And finally she collapsed and hit her head on her desk and she was complete breakdown. And now she has, for example, in her private life, and that's a good thing, she has this policy of no digital device in my bedroom. So in her bedroom she still has books.

Sometimes she reads in bed, but it has to be a book, not a Kindle, not the iPad, not the iPhone, no digital device in my bedroom. And that's a good thing. At least you have that space for yourself.

So everybody needs to be really conscious of the addictive nature of these devices. How I sometimes say, I even said that before these things were invented, the greatest addiction for human beings is compulsive thinking. They can't stop thinking.

What is the meaning of being an addict? Whatever it may be, if you are an addict it

means you have no power to stop, whether you are addicted to a drug or to alcohol. And many people who are addicts say, no, I'm not an addict, I could stop, but they can't.

So the nature of being an addict is you no longer have the power to stop doing this. And this applies for many humans. First of all, all humans are addicts, and that was already before these devices came.

All humans are addicts, addicted to their thinking, to their compulsive and unconscious, superfluous, excessive, often destructive thinking. They can't stop and they don't want to stop because they're so identified with it, the entire identity is in their thoughts. So they have to go on.

They don't even know it. So the greatest addiction for humanity is not heroin or whatever, it's the human mind that's actually, you're addicted to thinking. And now these devices are an amplification, externalization of the human mind.

And so that makes it even more difficult to deal with, because then you not only have your mind, you also have the collective mind that comes at you through your iPhone and the Samsung, which hopefully doesn't explode in your face. Well, if it did explode, that would make you present. And it might suddenly break the addiction.

So give yourself space in your bedroom, that this is a good policy and don't be on it at all times. And now the more, the younger you are, the more difficult this is for you. For old people like myself, it's still relatively easy.

But if you're 18 or 20 or 25, then you've grown up with these things. The older than us, they didn't grow up with these things. They're not quite, perhaps not quite as addicted and identified with it.

Another way to tell is whether they've grown up with these things is how they type into their phones. I always admire young people because they type, they go like that at enormous speed with their thumbs. How they do it with their thumbs, I don't know.

And they can even talk to you while they're doing it. And then I get a text message and somebody expects an answer who might not know that I'm not that fast because with a text message, you can actually see that somebody is replying. You know that he's replying.

And so they wait and say, why isn't he? He's doing something. They don't know that if I go like that, it takes time.

And that's a good thing because it's easy to be present when you're not good at this. You can be much more present. Where is the bee?

So it's a challenge. I hope you come up with something wonderful that promotes

presence in this world and helps your business. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (1:32:32 - 1:32:42)

So part of this is of course to give more attention to the present moment because the more you think, the more future you generate.

[Speaker 15] (1:32:46 - 1:32:57)

And the more attention you give to the present moment, the less thinking because to be really present, you don't think about it.

[Speaker 2] (1:32:57 - 1:32:58)

You just are with it.

[Speaker 1] (1:32:59 - 1:33:21)

Give it attention. I recommend the little things of life to be more attentive to all the little things that make up every hour, every day, every minute, every hour and give them more attention.

[Speaker 2] (1:33:28 - 1:33:33)

Walking steps, one step at a time. Objects that you're handling.

[Speaker 1] (1:33:34 - 1:34:43)

All the time you're handling objects in your life. You're always touching something, putting something here and there. Is everything that you handle just a means to an end or are you able to just appreciate the simple presence or even of a so-called inanimate object?

Contemplation also of all the lovely things that make up your environment, part of your environment. For example, if I were sitting here alone, let's say I'm waiting for everybody to arrive. I might be sitting here looking of course at the flower, sense of stillness.

And then there's a glass table here. And then there's a glass of water here. And there's a clock and a bell and tissues.

And they all reflect the light in different ways.

[Speaker 2] (1:34:44 - 1:35:09)

There's a little bit of a rainbow effect in the glass of water here. And then the lights are reflected on the bells, almost like a mirror. And there's the clock ticking away.

It's a beautiful scene.

[Speaker 1] (1:35:10 - 1:38:10)

Sometimes you go to an art gallery. Well, not so much with modern art, but a very favorite thing would be still life artists. And it took a while in art before they discovered the artists in the history of art, before they discovered the seemingly insignificant things and started to give attention to those.

Before that happened, they were very much interested in the huge things, the saints or the kings or the huge battle scenes or the big... They painted those things or the important people or some dramatic thing, volcanic eruption or whatever, a fire. And then at some point, they started to discover the beauty and the incredible sense of the quality that is in the little things.

They started painting, for example, simple people. The Dutch artists, perhaps they're not that knowledgeable about artists, but the famous Dutch paintings show not so much big, important people. They show simple people, a woman in the kitchen baking bread, simple people sitting around the table eating a very simple meal and there's a light, incredible light effects.

Light comes through the window. There's an incredible sense of presence and aliveness in the painting. And this is a scene that in normal life, you would never have, unless you're really very conscious, nobody would have stopped and said, oh, isn't that amazing?

These people are sitting around a table eating a simple meal and there's light coming through the window. Nobody would have done that. Perhaps after these, more of these artists depicted relatively, seemingly insignificant things, perhaps it motivated some people to give more attention to that.

But even now it's still, people very much overlook that. And you overlook then a large part of your life. You don't give it attention.

When I say give attention, there's an element of appreciation of everything, of the little things. And you begin to realize that your entire life consists mainly of little things. Even if you are VIP, it still consists mainly, you're always sitting somewhere, standing somewhere, looking around, handling things, going from here to there.

[Speaker 2] (1:38:11 - 1:38:14)

Either on a bus or your private jet.

[Speaker 1] (1:38:21 - 1:39:38)

And this giving attention, that is sometimes called gratitude. That's kind of part of it, this appreciation. But I don't necessarily use the word gratitude too often because it implies

that you say to somebody, oh, thank you.

But there's a simple appreciation of the isness of things, of their presence. So you no longer regard almost continuously your entire environment as a means to an end. And what's the end?

You need to get to some future moment where suddenly everything is going to be better than now. And so you're always on your way. It's a stepping stone to the next moment in every object that you handle has only utilitarian value, but has no value in itself.

It's never appreciated for its beingness. And then you do the same to human beings. They're only regarded, what can they do for me now?

How do they fit into my schemes, into my plans? Because there's a future orientation continuously, which is the mind. Because there is no future.

[Speaker 15] (1:39:38 - 1:39:57)

It's created by the mind. It becomes extremely enjoyable just to be contemplating the little things that surround you.

[Speaker 1] (1:39:58 - 1:41:18)

Then there is an element of gratitude that comes with it, this appreciation. It's an element where you appreciate the sense perceived world. This is an aspect of reality.

It's not the deepest aspect of reality, but it is the surface of the ocean and it's beautiful. And that also means it's not just when you are quietly contemplating, it's also when you're going from A to B to perform some action. You're going to buy something, going to the, whatever it is, post office.

Appreciate the journey and every step of the journey and look around so that the 10 minutes of going to the shop or driving to the shop or taking a bicycle to the shop isn't completely wasted and reduced to means to an end. And you can actually, that every moment is significant and ultimately it's only ever the one moment.

[Speaker 2] (1:41:29 - 1:41:34)

And then this waiting game comes to an end, waiting for the big break.

[Speaker 1] (1:41:34 - 1:41:50)

That's an expression. I don't know what break, what breaks, but waiting for whatever it is. Of course you have a goal.

You may have a goal in life and you're moving towards it.

[Speaker 2] (1:41:50 - 1:41:55)

But in the meantime, this is now and yes, you know you're moving towards it.

[Speaker 1] (1:42:03 - 1:42:20)

It becomes very enjoyable to be wherever you are when you have this ability to contemplate the little things, both when you're passively contemplating or even when you are moving, being engaged with things.

[Speaker 9] (1:42:45 - 1:43:47)

So when I'm not here in the greenhouse and I go back home and there's storms and chaos and I get tired and overwhelmed, the thing that I keep tripping on and struggling with is reaction. So when there's just pain, body calms, your teachings have helped a lot with that, but when the anger, reaction, particularly when there's stress and I've got three boy children, so when there's stress and there's demands and I'm tired, then I notice the reaction happens before I can, and I've heard you answer the question, but somewhere I keep, even as the presence I suppose is growing, it is probably less. It's hard to determine because I'm not in a relationship which is another trigger.

It's just me, kids, life, things that happen that are annoying or stressful. So there's that. Can you give some...

[Speaker 17] (1:43:47 - 1:43:47)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (1:43:52 - 1:44:10)

And then after the reaction, then you suddenly know, oh, there was the reaction again, right? Afterward, presence comes back, but in the moment, the reaction arises so quickly that it takes you over. I call that reactivity.

[Speaker 9] (1:44:10 - 1:44:19)

Yes. And sometimes what happens, particularly when it's with my children, I feel guilty, and so then I react more.

[Speaker 1] (1:44:24 - 1:44:53)

Yes, the human mind is complicated. Now in most people's lives there are certain situations that are more likely to provoke you into reactivity. In your case, it's perhaps to do with children doing things that they shouldn't be doing or whatever they do.

[Speaker 9] (1:44:53 - 1:44:54)

Some form of relationship.

[Speaker 18] (1:44:54 - 1:44:56)

Or relationships also.

[Speaker 9] (1:44:57 - 1:45:07)

Yeah, things that... Relationships and children, but demands from less outside, but then when there's a demand that I get overwhelmed by.

[Speaker 1] (1:45:07 - 1:45:13)

Yes. And what form, what are the usual forms that the reaction take? Anger, irritation?

[Speaker 9] (1:45:14 - 1:45:20)

Well, the anger is the one that I have the most trouble with. Okay. It comes quite fast.

[Speaker 1] (1:45:20 - 1:45:20)

Yes.

[Speaker 9] (1:45:21 - 1:45:21)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (1:45:25 - 1:57:55)

There are situations where you know, you can almost see it coming. You have to be very alert when you see people behaving in a certain way, like the children or somebody close to you starting to talk about something. You see it coming.

For some people, there are certain particular areas that provoke reaction. And there can be people who are already conscious in most areas of their life, but there are still pockets. There are areas where they lose consciousness and go into reactivity.

For some people, it's to do with intimate relationships. They can lose it there quickly. Or money matters.

Whenever I talk about money, they go, they get talking all about fear and reactivity. So if you are alert, you can look at a situation and you can see it's developing very quickly into the usual situation that makes me reactive. It's happening now.

It's coming. It's like a train coming at you. And just before it happens, you can see a minute before it's building up.

And that's the moment of practice where you realize the most important thing here is my

state of consciousness. And am I able to use this situation as part of my spiritual practice? Because that's how you awaken.

It's not by eliminating situations, but by using situations to incorporate them into your spiritual practice. Whatever situation arises becomes part of your spiritual practice and don't believe when the mind tells you if I had a more peaceful life and peaceful surroundings, it would be so much easier for me to awaken spiritually. It wouldn't.

Superficially, you might fool yourself that you're awakening spiritually, but it wouldn't be very deep. It would just be a superficial awakening. So these children and other annoying people around you, they force you to go deeper and they aren't a great opportunity for you to go deeper.

But how do you take advantage of that opportunity? So knowing that is already helpful. So when the situation begins to build up, an opportunity is coming right at you.

And then you can see what it is, suddenly the usual behavior of the children or whoever else it is, you saw it coming a few seconds before, but there was an alertness now that says, oh, it's coming. And when it comes, you have it suddenly, when the awareness is there, an element of choice comes in and the element of choice is you can react or you can allow the situation to be as it is. And people sometimes learn that when they do meditation practice, when you sit in meditation, of course you want everything to be quiet around you.

You don't want to be disturbed. The ideal situation people think for meditation is to be in a very quiet room and completely undisturbed. You certainly don't want to have children screaming outside.

You don't want to have a noisy drill suddenly starting up there, breaking up the road just outside your window while you're meditating and the drill goes. And your usual thing would be, you would react. You would say, I can't meditate under these conditions.

Why can't I live in a more quiet place? I need to, this is not the right way to do your meditation. So when you do your meditation, whatever happens, you incorporate into your meditation and you surrender to it.

So the children screaming outside, the drill going up on site, what is the most annoying thing about this drill? Is it the noise or is it your reaction? It's your reaction.

If you let go of your reaction, there's just the noise and you kind of, the ego itself kind of dissolves and the noise goes right through you. That's called surrender. So people can start practicing that when they meditate.

There's nothing that does not become part of your meditation. Then you're a real meditator. When you're complaining that things are not quiet enough around you, you

don't know what meditation is yet.

You're trying to. So sometimes people learn when they meditate how to incorporate seemingly annoying things into their practice of not offering any resistance to the present moment in whatever form the present moment takes. So in your case, it can be children are screaming, demanding this or that.

Are you able to accept that they are screaming and demanding because that's what children do without opposing or fighting internally? That's your practice. But if you lose it, if you find you've lost it, and suddenly you know you lost it, because in the moment of losing it, you don't know it.

If you knew it, you wouldn't lose it. I'm using this expression, I'm losing it, which real people sometimes use. But what are they talking about?

What are they losing? I'm losing it. I'm going to lose it.

What they are meaning by that is I'm going to get very angry. Usually that's the meaning. But it's a good expression because what they are really saying, I'm going to lose consciousness completely.

They don't know that that's what they are saying. But that's what is implied in that I'm going to go completely unconscious in a minute. So you better stop talking now.

Or run away from me. Now, so when you lose it, at that moment you don't know it. You just lose it because you've gone quite unconscious.

Then the moment comes after losing it that some consciousness comes back in and suddenly you know that you lost it. And the next thing is, guilt comes in, as you mentioned, in your case. Guilt comes in, I lost it, but I shouldn't have lost it.

You get angry with yourself. You're angry with the children, now you're angry with yourself. And that gives even more fuel to the anger towards the children.

So that's the mechanism. So at what point does consciousness come in? So when you lose it, you're gone.

Nothing you can do. Then, moments later perhaps, a minute, I don't know how long, two minutes, you suddenly, oops, I lost it. And then immediately comes a reaction to losing it, which is another reaction, which adds another layer of reactivity to the original layer of reactivity.

That's how complicated humans are. So one thing you can do if you do lose it, and you will again lose it, despite our talk here, it will still happen, but less so, there is a shift that's happening, but the old unconsciousness can and probably will from time to time reassert itself, but less frequently. And so if you do, the moment you do notice that you

lost it, surrender, it means you haven't surrendered at first, you offered resistance to the present moment.

And then you notice that you lost it and you accept that you lost it. You can practice there too, surrender. Okay, I lost it.

You're a human, nothing personal in it. You are one aspect of a universal shift in consciousness. And it's a monumental thing that the unconsciousness that has been prevalent on the planet for thousands of years, something is happening to it and it's awakening.

The consciousness is awakening through humans. You are part of that. So don't get angry with yourself because you are part of the awakening process because what's happening to you is part of the awakening process.

If it were not part of the awakening process, you wouldn't be standing here talking about it. You would simply continuously be acting out your unconsciousness day after day after day, and you would pass it on to your children and they would pass it on to their children, and you wouldn't even know what you're doing. You have no idea that you are unconscious.

You would just be totally in the grip of the conditioning which is inherited from our parents, inherited from their parents, goes back generation and generation and generation, and is passed on to the next generation until somebody like you awakens, begins to awaken. So there's no need to be guilty or angry because the moment you know that you lost it, there is an awareness. Otherwise, you wouldn't know it.

So that's your awareness. Oh, great, I lost it, but I know that I lost it. So you surrender to having lost it, and there is awareness.

But if losing it means you're immediately going to reactivity towards that, you become unconscious again, which means there's been a flash of awareness, I lost it, which immediately turns mentally into a judgment about yourself, which means you lost it again. So, again, you need to be alert in your daily life. You watch a situation develop in such a way that you feel, okay, it's happening, it's happening, I'm about to get triggered.

And then you have a choice suddenly. You can accept this moment as it is, and the children do what they do. It doesn't mean that you become incapable, by the way, of telling the children they're doing something wrong or they must stop that.

I don't know how chaotic your home life is, but some children are totally out there. So that's a different subject. But here we just talk about yourself.

Be alert when you feel a situation developing into what usually would provoke a reaction, and then stay alert. And then you may find your action doesn't come. If it does come and

you lose it, the moment you realize it, awareness is back and then you welcome, say, oh, I lost it, but I know that I lost it.

That's fine. And then you haven't lost, and then you remain present there. It's a very subtle practice, but being here, although I said that the old pattern will most likely still come up from time to time, but you can deal with it in a different way.

It doesn't have to turn into guilt or anger towards yourself. No, you accept because you've noticed. And so that's your practice.

I wish you well. That's your spiritual practice. Much better than living in a monastery for three years.

[Speaker 17] (1:57:57 - 1:57:58)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:58:10 - 1:59:06)

This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. The mother bird is taking the little chick and going, and then it will, oh, no, you can't fly like that.

You have to do this.

[Speaker 9] (1:59:11 - 1:59:37)

I guess just to go along with questions about boys, my daughter is 17 years old. There are times when, and many times recently, when she does not want to follow my direction. How do I stay present when she's doing, you know, meh, you know.

[Speaker 1] (1:59:42 - 1:59:44)

So she's 17.

[Speaker 9] (1:59:45 - 1:59:45)

She's 17.

[Speaker 1] (1:59:45 - 1:59:49)

So you've only got a few more months of control over her.

[Speaker 9] (1:59:51 - 1:59:58)

Let go. Well, she's been at this for a while.

[Speaker 1] (1:59:59 - 2:00:56)

So then the shift, then, as your children grow older, of course, the younger they are, the more you need to, in some cases, control what they do because they might do something to hurt themselves, like don't play with fire, don't walk on a high wall because you might fall off. So those things, then gradually the parent needs to learn to allow a bit more, always a bit more freedom and a bit more just give guidance rather than control. Some parents find it hard to shift from exerting control as they grow older and giving guidance.

And as teenagers, especially, they resent, as you know and everybody knows, they resent being told what to do because they're beginning to be independent adults.

[Speaker 12] (2:00:56 - 2:00:57)

Well, she knows everything.

[Speaker 1] (2:00:57 - 2:07:54)

Yes, of course, yes. So there's as much learning for you as there is for her in this situation. For you it's to do with continuing to give guidance without giving the impression that you're trying to control what she does.

And if guidance is not received, no matter whether it's given but it's not received, then you need to accept that, especially as soon as she will be reaching 18. And then compassion comes in. You continue to help her as much as you can, offer help or guidance, realizing that she now has her, she is autonomous now and will decide what to do on her own and she will make mistakes, hopefully, because if she doesn't, she's not going to grow.

She will make mistakes and you may see it and she won't. And ultimately, they're not really mistakes because they're all part of one's growth process and becoming eventually conscious of mistakes if they are leading to suffering and then can lead to awakening. And then retrospectively, they're not mistakes.

If a mistake leads to awakening, it's not a mistake. Eventually, so it's a letting go internally, compassionate letting go, like think of the image of a nest and the bird, the mother bird is taking the little chick and going. And then you go, oh no, you can't fly like that.

You have to do this. But birds have learned to fly for a million years and more without the mother bird telling them what to do, they'll learn. So it's trusting in the movement of life and realizing how that so-called mistakes are an important part of our growth.

We had somebody else before, we talked about allowing them to do that. So think of the

image and that will help you to be, your associated question was to do with patience or presence. This will help you, the bird, you let the bird fly off.

And the flight at first may not be smooth and they may have a hard landing. And you just watch and you know that's fine. Do as much as you can.

Patience is not quite the same as presence. In presence, the whole idea or concept of patience disappears. When you're present and somebody says, oh, you're so patient, you say, patient?

I didn't know I was patient. Patient is not something that you're trying to do, really. I'm trying to be patient here.

Here is the key word. I'm trying to be patient here. So the patience is something you're kind of holding back.

I'm very patient with you. But in presence, really, you're not thinking of yourself as patient at all. It doesn't come into it really anymore at all.

You're just present with what is. And as I said, if somebody called you patient, you'd say, what does that mean? I'm not patient at all.

It's like forgiveness also. In presence, forgiveness happens naturally. And so you don't need to make a big deal and say, I'm trying to forgive that person.

I had, again, in my life, I had for many years resentment towards my father until I finally woke up. And then the resentment disappeared and my relationship with him changed completely. There was suddenly love.

And until the age of 29, I had an enormous amount of resentment. I didn't realize, of course, that he did what he did because of his programming. He had an enormous amount of anger in him that comes from his childhood.

And again, I could explain why, but it's not necessary. It comes from his childhood and the way in which he interpreted his childhood, what his mother did to him, not actually rather how he interpreted her motivation. He was the seventh child, the youngest.

And then his father died when he was only 14. And then the family didn't have enough money to have all the children at school, at grandma's high school. So two of his sisters were kept at school and he was taken out of school because they didn't have enough money.

And he had to become an apprentice in some store, not supermarket, they didn't have supermarkets then, but some store where he had to make deliveries to big houses. And that enormous anger started to come up in him during all that time, what my mother did to me, what they did to me, and that never really left him. So living with him, the anger

was usually not directed to me, but was directed to my mother always.

And living there was like living with an unexploded bomb. It could go off at any moment. Whenever he was there, it was like a powder keg.

Any moment it could go off. One wrong word by my mom, and my mom was very good at saying the wrong word.

[Speaker 17] (2:07:54 - 2:07:57)

Oh, of course. Yeah. Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (2:08:00 - 2:09:34)

I didn't, I, that was his, he couldn't help that. And as I then disidentified from that, in his later years, there was a considerable degree of awareness coming in. Some remnants of that anger remained, but far less than before.

And he read The Power of Now a few years before he died, and it was meaningful to him. And there was quite a bit, in some areas of his life, he was virtually enlightened. And in other areas, there were still big pockets of unconsciousness.

But compared to what he was before, there was an enormous shift. And it has, I'm sure, something to do with the shift that happened in me towards him. So there was no longer anything to forgive.

That's the beauty of it. And it was all my, I had to, his ego was huge. So I learned about ego before I even knew the word ego.

Throughout all my childhood, I learned about how the ego behaves and what it does through observation, without knowing that that was ego. But I saw the dysfunction, normal dysfunction in relationships. It's all fine.

It's all fine. Trust, compassion, letting go, and then life will do the rest.

[Speaker 18] (2:09:35 - 2:09:37)

Wow, thank you very much.

[Speaker 1] (2:10:03 - 2:22:12)

My prostate was cancerous, and I had surgery on it. I had been cancer-free, or so I thought, but after seven years, cancer has once again reared its ugly presence in the region. I'm having difficulty coping with this, plus type two diabetes.

Well, it is, it seems the destiny of many humans to be confronted with something like that at some point, or something similar. So I will just explain what I have addressed

before a few times with regard to serious illness. And that is not to, as much as possible, avoid the mental, I'm not saying don't recognize reality like in the previous question, but what I'm saying is avoid an excessive mental dwelling on either the condition that has a name or me as the one who suffers from that condition so that your mind does not continuously strengthen that mind form of the illness mind form, or me as my identity as a sufferer from that illness by thinking about it, which of course creates a lot of fear and won't make you feel good.

In other words, in order to become free, now it is a secondary thing, what kind of treatment you go in for, whether it's conventional treatment, whether it's alternative treatment, whether it's no treatment at all, all that only you can know, but what is your state of consciousness? And it's a wonderful, it sounds strange for me to say that it is a great opportunity to have an illness like that. And this has been confirmed to me by a number of people that I've known who have had similar illnesses, one or two seem to get cured, others did not, but that was secondary.

They said that it forced them into very intense presence because they noticed when they were not present, they were very unhappy. So the illness forced them into just living more and more in the present moment. An extreme example of that was I read last year, I sent it to, I read it on the BBC news, my app.

There was a musician in England, popular music. I had never heard of him, but apparently he was quite well known in England who got diagnosed with cancer. And he reports in an interview that when he left the doctor's office, he felt ecstatic.

This is very rare. He felt ecstatically happy and he couldn't quite figure out why. And now he says, I now realize all the problems that I thought I had were completely meaningless.

And he lives completely in the now. And the rare thing with him was that that happened immediately as he left the doctor's office. I've never heard that before, that somebody, so can you be, allow the illness to push you into the awakened state?

Their motivation is very strong now. And it could happen to anybody who is Nuganti. I have not had a serious illness my whole life.

I haven't even seen the inside of a hospital, but who can say that it's not going to happen? Everybody is one heartbeat away from death. Well, the death of the physical body.

And most, if you don't die in an accident, if you die, you might die of old age, if you're lucky or unlucky, depending what your old age looks like. Or as somebody once said, old age isn't so bad if you consider the alternative. So it's either that, most people here, including myself, will probably die of something, which would be heart attack, cancer, stroke.

I think those are the main things. Could be an accident too, of course, or something more rare. Something eventually comes.

So ultimately how long your life is, although I must admit, if it comes to a very young person, it may be more difficult. A young person hasn't lived completely. But even there, the shift is possible so that you allow the condition, the illness to force you into just absolute present moment awareness in which you do not suffer.

A lot of the suffering of the illness arises from what your mind is saying. Of course, with some illnesses, pain eventually comes. That is pain.

When I use the word suffering, I really refer to psychological suffering. If there's pain, then perhaps something is done to alleviate the pain and you also need to surrender. But there may be many conditions where there is actually no pain for quite a long time, but you know there is that illness.

So go away from focusing excessively on the idea of illness in the mind. And in order to get out of the idea of illness, which is not a denial, it's not saying I don't have it. No, you're just not going there.

You're just being in the present moment. And several people that were part of, came to me over the years, especially at a time when I still had more personal contact with people who would come to me. I've seen several who had developed fatal illnesses and in the last months of their lives became quite radiant, quite awakened.

Really the flowering that is meant to be the purpose of human life, the flowering of consciousness happened. They didn't need another 25 years of life, which means 25 years of eating, 25 years of taking the dog for a walk, going on vacation, seeing a few more sunsets and adding more life experiences. You can add more and more, but is that the real purpose of your life, to add more?

And they're good, but then you need more and more and more life experiences and add more. No, there's something else that is more vital, more important. That's the flowering, the shift in consciousness.

Then time becomes immaterial, whether you have a few more months or another 20 years or 30 years. So it was wonderful to see those people becoming radiant and becoming like, in a way like little children, because the whole personality collapsed. The ego could not survive knowing that it had no future.

If the ego really knows it has no future, either it goes into intense suffering and complaining and victim identity. Why did this happen to me, to me? Or it dissolves.

And sometimes it happens to people spontaneously, even without any spiritual teaching or teacher. It just happens that they can't stand the pain anymore and then they just go,

oh, there's nobody left. Nobody who says, I have an illness.

No, there's just presence. And then they look at you as if they had just been born. So a deep shift happened inside them.

So that is the potential awakening that's there. That illness, so-called fatal illness, can help you with that. There are situations that force you, if you allow, they'd force you into the present moment.

And those are good things. They force you into the present moment. As you know, some people seek out activities that force them into the present moment, dangerous activities, where you have to be so alert.

If you think you die, so you have to... Some sports events are like that. Most of the people participating in the Olympics, the sportsmen, they have to be, while they are performing, whatever it is, the discipline is, they're all...

And they love it. They love that aliveness. They may not realize that they could have the same aliveness sitting by a fireplace.

And that is the same aliveness that can be there when there is a threatened life, so-called life-threatening illness. But it's longer. It's not just a moment like five minutes.

Mind-Made Sense of Self This Mind-Made Sense of Self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

[Speaker 15] (2:22:47 - 2:22:48)

Okay.

[Speaker 9] (2:22:49 - 2:22:54)

Actually, my question is already being answered.

[Speaker 1] (2:22:54 - 2:22:55)

That often happens.

[Speaker 9] (2:22:56 - 2:23:05)

And I think one day we're all going to come here and once we're all in presence, we won't have any questions for you.

[Speaker 1] (2:23:06 - 2:23:07)

That's true. That would be wonderful.

[Speaker 9] (2:23:08 - 2:23:10)

You're going to be out of business. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (2:23:12 - 2:23:14)

Yes. That would be wonderful.

[Speaker 9] (2:23:14 - 2:23:23)

Actually, my question was, could you elaborate on ego versus healthy self-esteem?

[Speaker 1] (2:23:23 - 2:33:27)

Ah, yes. Okay. Eventually, what we call healthy self-esteem, which is a wonderful thing, eventually that is not enough.

And as a human being evolves, that healthy self-esteem is no longer satisfying as you grow older and is transcended. And what takes its place is healthy no-hyphen self-esteem. The self-esteem, of course, means that you are reasonably satisfied with who you are as a person and the achievements of the person, what the person can do, or what the person knows, or what the person possesses.

And you compare what the person can do, abilities, what the person knows, knowledge, or what the person has in terms of possessions. You compare that with others, and you come out favorably. So either you can do more than somebody else or others, feel better about yourself.

I can do this, but they can't. I can, but you can't. Or you have more knowledge.

Did you know that this and such and such is such and such a case? You didn't know that? Well, let me tell you.

That feels good. These ignorant people, they don't know anything. Or you have more.

How many bedrooms does your house have? Four? Well, we have eleven.

Do you have an advanced degree? No? I have two PhDs.

And that's fine. It starts with a child already. It says, look what I can do.

I can jump further than you. And for the child, it's fine. There's no point in telling a child, don't do this, don't do that.

Your ego is arising. No, the child has to go through that. And it is better to have healthy self-esteem, as you describe it, as it's usually described, than extremely low self-esteem.

I'm no good. Everybody's better than me. I have nothing.

Life has treated me unfairly. There's a self-image there also. As there is a self-image in healthy self-esteem, one, of course, is much nicer than the other.

It's more pleasant to live with healthy self-esteem than with a low self-esteem, or unhealthy self-esteem, one could call it. But they're both identification with some kind of form. And you compare the form of who I am with the form of others, and you are better, at least in one area, you must be.

And that's satisfying. But there's still, you're trapped in form, and you're depending on, for your sense of value or worthiness, you're depending on, ultimately, to put it bluntly, others who have less or know less or can do less than you. And that's fine.

It doesn't mean you shouldn't strive to do great things or to have things or to know things. But the question is, ultimately, is that a satisfying basis for your sense of who you are? And in the long term, it is not.

It is not satisfying. That is why people who are maybe very happy with what they possess, after a while, there's an emptiness that comes, not the spiritual emptiness, the sense of emptiness of what's it all about. And even things you can do, a time may come when you can't do it anymore.

Whatever it is that you do, that's so great. Playing an instrument, the great pianist, wonderful, why not be a great pianist? But if you derive your sense of who you are from that, then one day you find arthritis in your fingers.

And who are you now? Or just the agility goes. It's not there anymore.

Oh, my God. Suffering comes. Or you invent the greatest new computer, some computer.

I don't know the expressions, but program or whatever it is. And everybody says this is the greatest ever, but three years later or two years, these things happen very quickly. Somebody else comes and makes yours obsolete, and then you have no new ideas, and there you sit, completely devastated, because you come from somebody great, you've become nobody.

But it was all illusion, because you derived your sense of who you are from something in the world of form, which is fleeting, not reliable, not solid, dreamlike. And so the true self-esteem comes from not identifying with form. Now, whether we even want to call that self-esteem, I don't know.

The true sense of worthiness and of power, true power, comes when you realize the formless in yourself, that dimension, and that all power comes from that. But it goes far beyond the person that you are. And then you are rooted in the formless, so to speak, or you are it, and that there's enormous sense of worthiness in there, but it's not

comparative.

It's not more than. You see the same worthiness in everyone, even if they don't know it for themselves yet. So there's power, but not more than.

There's just the power of life itself, and you know everybody is an expression of that, although they may not know it yet. Everybody. So this is, you transcend conventional self-esteem, and it doesn't mean you lose your sense of worth.

It shifts into something much deeper. So every human really is, there may even be some children these days who don't need to go through the egoic state anymore. That is possible.

But traditionally, and humans had to go, and some, many probably still have to go through the stage where they identify with form, develop some self-esteem, do something that you feel good about, you can do it, and then comes the time going beyond. Except perhaps, as I said, some advanced souls who may be coming into this world, already in this world as children, who don't need, even need to identify with that anymore. A question that comes from there also is, if a person has low self-esteem, in other words, a mental image of not good enough, then does that person have to go through the stage of healthy self-esteem before they can transcend it altogether?

I don't know. I haven't tried it enough with enough people. I don't know.

It may well be that the unhealthy self-esteem, if it leads to a state of suffering, great suffering, you may be able to, with the help of a teacher, go from there to no self. Because the way from unhappiness or suffering to transcendence is easier than the way from superficial happiness to transcendence. Superficial happiness keeps you in the dream world for quite a while.

It's not that bad. My life, I can't complain. It's not that bad.

It's going okay. I'm quite happy, just got a promotion. I'm so happy I just got my annual bonus from my Wall Street bank.

[Speaker 17] (2:33:30 - 2:33:31)

Great, I'm doing great.

[Speaker 1] (2:33:44 - 2:34:04)

So from there, the transcendence is not directly from Wall Street, probably not. But if you go from Wall Street to prison, then...

[Speaker 15] (2:34:04 - 2:34:05)

much easier.

[Speaker 1] (2:34:27 - 2:41:59)

Well, the ego lives in an almost continuous sense of not enough, we could say, a sense of lack. It may not be always in the foreground, but it's always in the background, at least, that sense that you're not complete, you don't have enough, you are not enough, you're not fully yourself yet, which, of course, is true on the human level, because on the human level, you can always achieve more, you can attain more, you can experience more. But it's not true who you are, who or what you are in the essence of your being.

In the essence of your being, you're already complete. So there's the depth dimension to who you are, and there is the surface dimension to who you are. The surface dimension is the ego.

The ego comes from a place of lack. And whatever you attain through the ego, and the ego has access to some power, obviously, it's a form that consciousness has taken, but you're a much less powerful creator as an ego compared to what you could be if you're aligned with the essence of who you are, and you're coming from a deeper place that is in alignment with what the universe wants and where the universe is going, which is greater consciousness. So if you come from the ego, there's a sense of lack.

You always know it retrospectively that after you have attained something through egoic endeavors, if you haven't attained it, then sooner or later, and usually sooner, it does not satisfy you. Whatever you attain, the moments of satisfactions are fairly brief, and then again, you fall back into the state of lack and dissatisfaction. So no matter what you create from ego and through ego, it won't satisfy you.

Now, you may not know this while you're engaged in the process, but retrospectively, you can always know it. And while you are creating, though, there are also certain signs that are indicative that the ego has gained the upper hand. If you might even have started your manifestation from a deeper place, and then suddenly something happened and the ego started to take over.

And so, for example, a good sign is that when you no longer enjoy what you're doing, you're engaged in a creative process, you're active, you believe that you can achieve it, but a time comes when you suddenly realize you don't enjoy the work anymore. And whenever an obstacle appears, because in any creative process, even though it may be empowered, you will still occasionally encounter obstacles. Anybody who has created something new in this world has experienced that, yes, you are assisted.

The more you are aligned with the depths of who you are, the greater the assistance you get. Nevertheless, even in those cases, you will encounter, when you create something new, you will encounter obstacles because there are certain structures in the world that

don't want to change. They are against change.

There's a certain inertia in the structures of this world. And if you want to bring about something new, then sometimes you come up against that and some of the inertia manifests through human beings who don't want the change that you are trying to bring about. So when you encounter obstacles, as you're bound to, when you're coming from ego, you will be upset and you will regard the obstacle as an enemy and you will start complaining or you will become discouraged.

You might become aggressive. You may become stressed. You can't sleep anymore.

So you're finding the obstacles create a dysfunctional state within you. And then your entire work becomes a source of stress for you. And when stress arises, it means the ego is there and is interfering, even if your initial attention might have been very good.

You say, for example, I want to create a great spiritual center where people come to learn to be more conscious. Now, what could be better than that? And that's great.

So the intention is great. Maybe the initial intention may be absolutely wonderful, but as you start working, then without you knowing it, the ego can come, can creep back in and claim, first of all, it says that you are in desperate need for this to happen and you cannot be fulfilled and happy unless this happens. These are the first thoughts that come.

They may not become conscious or at the back of your mind, this feeling arises. So you desperately need this to happen. Every obstacle and every person who represents this obstacle becomes an enemy and you get upset when you encounter them.

And so without you knowing it, if you fall back, if you fall into a state of lack, of neediness, of not enough, of the place you want to get to, the aim, the intention becomes so important to you where you need to get to. The end result that you want to achieve becomes so important to you that you neglect the importance, the primary importance of the present moment and your state of consciousness in the present moment. So instead of focusing on the step you're taking at this moment and giving your utmost attention to what you're doing now, and if you do that, you will actually enjoy what you're doing.

Instead of that, you're excessively focused on the desired outcome and the present moment is no more than an inferior moment towards this imagined future moment. So your fault is these are all egoic patterns that you fall back into and that is why it can become very frustrating. So a good intention is not enough.

You need to be conscious throughout the creative process because the ego can creep back in during the creative process without you knowing it. It's a very subtle thing.

[Speaker 2] (2:41:59 - 2:42:04)

You need to be really alert, but that's how it is.

[Speaker 11] (2:42:17 - 2:43:40)

I'm a quantum physicist by education. Now I work with blind people and people are losing their sight to try to preserve the sight. In doing so, I carry a lot of their pain with me all the time.

And wherever I look, I see your teaching. Whether it's quantum physics, whether it's how the body works. And I try to convey that to my colleagues to try and not only focus on saving the sight, but also, even in a very small part, healing these people.

Helping them deal with that. However, I'm in the investment world, so I'm always faced with a lot of resistance. Because it's not conducive to good business to spend too much time being too soft.

And I was wondering if you could comment a little bit on how can I help the patients and also help the people who are in the business side of things. Yes. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (2:43:40 - 2:43:48)

So you work in a hospital or clinic that specializes in helping people with their sight.

[Speaker 11] (2:43:48 - 2:44:12)

Actually, I'm an inventor and I take my inventions. We have an investment firm. So we work with people, not only in this country, but other countries to try and find solutions to restore sight for people who have completely lost their sight.

Or preserve whatever sight is left for people who have things like that. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (2:44:14 - 2:44:52)

So in addition to treating the eyes, the eyesight of humans, you realize there's more that you are able to do for them. There's an additional dimension there. And there's a little bit of conflict between this.

Again, we come again to the system that you work in and what you feel that you need to do to feel fulfilled and to help others becoming more conscious. Sometimes using their suffering to become more conscious.

[Speaker 16] (2:44:53 - 2:44:53)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (2:44:54 - 3:08:08)

So is it you need to see whether you can still... This is very important for you to continue to do that because this is why you are here. It's not just you treat the whole human being, not just one part of the body.

Are you able to still do that within the structure that you work now? Or can you change it from within? Or do you need to create a new structure?

It's basically, it's the same question as the previous question. I would not give up, do not compromise on what you feel you are called upon to do with other human beings. And don't compromise and say, okay, I'll just have to drop this and just treat them to like everybody else.

But see if you can still function from within the system and do what you feel you need to do. And if you can't, again, it's a question of doing it in a new way, creating something that makes it possible for you to work on both levels, on the outer level and the inner level with human beings. Thank you.

Again, this question comes up very often for many people in different ways. And many of you may find, because you represent the arising and the awakening consciousness, many of you will find that the existing structures within which you work are not able to carry the new consciousness anymore. Jesus used this funny expression, new wine in old bottles, because apparently at the time, the bottles were not glass bottles, they were kind of leather bottles.

And if you, for some reason, if you put new one in, they would probably burst. So what that means is many of the existing structures, social structure, that also applies to economic structures, the structures in medicine, psychiatry, psychology, education, school system, university system. Many of those structures, they were created not by the awakened consciousness.

They've all been around for a long time and they evolved out of the egoic consciousness. So many of the structures are the products of unenlightened states of consciousness. They reflect the unenlightened, unawakened states of consciousness.

So many of you will find it necessary to step out of, sometimes, as I said, they can make, in certain cases, they can be changed from within if there are enough people within who want to change it. But many structures are too rigid for change. So it is up to you to create new structures that reflect your, and come together, perhaps, with others who are also awakening so that the new structures will reflect your state of consciousness.

So this is what the world needs. The world cannot continue to function within the old structures that are a product of unenlightened states of consciousness. The economy, the political system, even here in the States, it seems to, compared to some other

places, functions quite well, but it's dysfunctional too.

The economic structure, certainly, you can see how dysfunctional they are. The educational system, how children are brought up, all those things, they require new structures to reflect the arising consciousness. So that's your job to create those.

And here we come to that part of manifestation, which the universe also wants. It does not, it wants you, yes, of course, it wants you to go within, realize who you are in your essence. And then from there, it also wants you to create.

It wants you to manifest. It will use you, it will work through you to manifest new forms because the old forms don't work anymore. And that's, it's a wonderful thing to do that.

And you will see how empowered you suddenly become as you go about creating new forms, how powerful your abilities to manifest will be if they are in alignment with what the universe wants, with what the one consciousness wants. They are not little egos wanting to create something. You are in alignment with what the universe needs right now, what the awakening consciousness wants.

If you then start manifesting from that deeper level within yourself, you will be amazed how empowered you can be in your own manifestation. Sometimes there is a time gap. So sometimes manifestation happens very quickly.

Sometimes you need to, as you are inspired, so to speak, a blueprint of what is possible, of what you, or not so much you, of what consciousness wants you to create may arise in your mind. And this mental blueprint of what you want to create, this may be there for a while. It might attract others with similar mental blueprint.

And then at some point, the manifestation begins. Some action may be necessary, but again, the action that you take will be inspired by the consciousness and it will not be stressful. This is a new way of creating.

If stress comes in, you're falling back into the old consciousness. This is a joyful way of creating new forms and new structures in this world. The old way is to create, while you're creating, you're stressed and angry and you're fighting others.

You will encounter obstacles to that which you want to create because the old structures, they don't want to, they will regard you as an enemy in some cases. And that's fine. You have no enemies.

Let them regard you as an enemy. But to you, you don't attack. Another important thing.

You don't attack the old structures and say how dreadfully wrong they are. Focus on the new rather than, and especially don't attack the people who are still identified with the old structures and work within the old structures. They are just a little slower in

awakening.

So the important thing in the new way of creating external forms is if obstacle arise to, then the obstacle can be overcome, not by attacking it. Some obstacles are overcome by yielding. So let's say something is coming at you.

You want to go this way and create that. And he says, somebody says, no, you can't do that. And so sometimes you yield.

Here comes the obstacle and you go, you almost go wrong. Or you use a very similar to a martial arts. Maybe Kim knows more about that than I.

Something comes at you and the very energy of the attack can be turned around if you're not in a resistance mode against. That's vital. But yes, you will encounter obstacles.

And that's part of that can only help you with deepening your resolve and deepening your connectedness to the consciousness that wants to create through you. I saw the first, many years ago, you may not even remember, on the Oprah show, Oprah said once, I don't know how many years ago, they were talking about how the slaughterhouses, how animals are treated and how, and Oprah said, I'm never going to eat a hamburger again. And then she was taken to court by the Texas cattle ranchers because the moment she said, I'm never going to eat a hamburger again, the shares of all the cattle ranching businesses plummeted.

So she was, she was a huge court case against Oprah and her company. So much so that she had to move her entire show to Texas because she had to be there every day to be in court. And she did, she moved to Texas.

And then she started having, talking about how wonderful Texas is and how nice the people are in Texas. And they all showed the problem. People were not, she actually didn't attack anybody.

She just said how great it is to be here. And people loved her suddenly being there, not the cattle ranchers, but the others. It was a wonderful example of somebody who does not engage in fighting the other.

He just cooperates with that and sees the good in the situation. And in the end, the cattle ranchers lost. So she won the case and there wasn't a triumphant, I won the case against the, it was just fine.

It was the natural outcome. If you respond to a situation consciously without creating an enemy, although you might be seen as an enemy by them, but to you, they are not. And that was a wonderful thing to watch.

So there are other examples of that when handling these things consciously rather than in the old way. But so for you, see what life, as you know what I sometimes say, it's not a question of asking yourself, what do I want from life? Or what do I want in life?

Asking what does life want from me? Life means consciousness. Consciousness is the essence of all life.

What does life want me to do? And many of you know already, it might not be come up very clearly yet, but you have an inkling at least of what it is that life wants you to do. And if you don't have it, then just wait a little, become still.

It could take a while. Some of you may not have to do anything at all. That's fine too.

Not everybody is there to create some new structures. You may remember I use the expression frequency holder for certain people who are contemplative. There are some people who are by nature quiet and withdrawn.

And then they're never really interested in creating anything. They just want to emanate peace. In traditional societies, they would have lived in a monastery or in an ashram.

Well, in India, ashrams are still popular. So you can go to monasteries. These days are closing down because these are very, some may still be lovely places, but in many cases, this is part of the old structures through which in the past, spirituality expressed itself.

Some of the most spiritual people in the West, they were not part of the hierarchy of the church. They lived in monasteries and you didn't even know them. They were simple, humble monks.

Most people in the church hierarchy had huge egos and they were only interested in power. Well, to some extent, it might still apply nowadays. So new forms, whether some of you might create healing centers, some may create a place like this, a retreat center for people to come to, all kinds of things, or you use your own modality of work and create a new structure through which that can express itself in this world.

So wonderful opportunities and challenges lie ahead. And if you are a frequency holder, that's fine too. Get a job as a gardener and tend your plants or sell tickets at the toll booth of the bridge where the cars stop and say, thank you, have a good day.

You say that 2,000, 3,000 times a day and everybody who goes past gets that, oh, a moment of presence. So there's not one thing, not everybody is called upon to go out there and create something new. Many are, and others just, you cannot not affect others if there's a transformation of consciousness and an awakening in you, it will affect others, even if you never meet them, because underneath the surface of things, all humans are connected.

There is such a thing as I mentioned earlier, the one human consciousness being an aspect of the one universal consciousness. So one human being goes, going through an awakening, makes it easier for many others to go through an awakening. Even if that human being never does anything particularly interesting in his or her outer life, others go through an awakening and they will do significant and interesting and meaningful things in their outer life.

But even if you don't, it will affect the totality of human consciousness. You could withdraw to an ashram or live as a hermit, you would still affect the totality of human consciousness. Your challenge then of course would be to stay present in the absence of challenges, major challenges, stay absolutely present and don't...

A frequency holder is at a level above thinking, somebody who is predominantly still without being very active, predominantly still. For a frequency holder who is above thinking, the danger is that he or she may inadvertently after a while, inadvertently fall from being above thinking to feeling below thinking. And the danger of the active person who acts from this higher level of consciousness is that he or she may become so focused on the doing, beginning to think that the doing is more important than the being behind it and then loses touch with the being and therefore also gets lost in doing and falls below thinking and gets trapped what he wanted to avoid in the first place, gets back into the same trap of mind. So I have seen people who...

There have been people who wanted to create a healing center and they were not vigilant enough to observe their own states of consciousness because there's so many things to do and to consider and then you come together with others. We all have the same endeavor, but unfortunately, they're not vigilant enough so the ego creeps back very quickly and then instead of creating a healing center, they create an extremely dysfunctional organization where they all hate each other. There are also churches like that, church organization.

When they have their committee meetings, there's some extremely angry people in these committee meetings. They hate others. Even while they open the book and say, love your neighbor as yourself.

As you know very well, when you want to create something or something wants to be created through you, the important thing is not to believe that you need to attract something from into your life. It doesn't manifest from there. It manifests from within, from within out.

So the feeling that it's already a reality in you, Jesus already said that, when you pray for something, believe that you already have it. And of course, many books that you can read on manifestation, the good ones will also tell you that when you want to create something, you need to feel it's reality already as here and now it is already here. In a way it is already here.

And you don't, you feel, you do not postpone your feeling of accomplishment and fulfillment and the joy of this being that needs already to be there because in a way it is on the inner level, it's already fully there. That is the secret of powerful manifestation is to feel, how would you feel if you already had that right here now? Oh, that would feel, that's the basis for creation.

That would feel wonderful. Okay. So you are feeling wonderful right now.

Yes. Why are you feeling wonderful? Because I'm imagining that it's already here.

Okay. That's the beginning of manifestation that you feel it's already here. You're not looking to the thing that you want to create, expecting some kind of future fulfillment through it.

So you need to manifest out of the fullness of the present moment. If you lose touch with the fullness of the present moment, which means being in touch with being, in touch with the essence of who you are, that's where all fullness arises. The fullness of life as Jesus called it, the emptiness, the Buddha called it.

If you are in touch with that, you create from there, then there's no, the satisfaction is already here. It's not postponed to some future moment. And that's, then you become a powerful creator or the universe creates powerfully through you.

So the manifestation is also a joyful thing. And it could be that something else wants to manifest. You might have had a vision that wasn't quite correct and something even better comes about.

That can happen also. You wanted to create a little healing center with five people and suddenly you have something with 500 people. You're not, you don't want the child to do this or that.

You're just there with a child. That's a beautiful thing. And that's beyond any pattern.

That's not an inherited pattern. It's presence.

[Speaker 14] (3:08:13 - 3:08:59)

I have a question about children. I did a lot of spiritual work on myself before I had children. And now I realize that I've transferred all of my fear of death and need for security onto my children.

And I don't know what to do about it. I don't know what the best course of action is because I realize that it's part of taking care of them is to protect them. But on the other hand, it goes against being present and being in presence and definitely brings on anxiety and wanting to control situations and overprotection.

[Speaker 1] (3:09:00 - 3:09:05)

Do you overprotect? Or how does it manifest in actual daily life?

[Speaker 14] (3:09:07 - 3:09:50)

Well, my children are unusual in that they both have special health problems. So they involved both my husband and I a great deal in caring for their health at a time when it was really important. But now we give them the same amount of attention even though for the most part they're okay.

So it's kind of like we got into that pattern of putting all of our energy into them. And it's continuing, but I'm not sure where to let go and where to hold on.

[Speaker 1] (3:09:51 - 3:23:39)

Yes. Thank you. Certain behaviors, once they are in place, have a certain momentum and they kind of take you over almost.

Especially then if it happens between two people or an even larger group, behavior pattern can become an energy stream that takes you over. You can have it, for example, when there are riots or whatever, sometimes they go on for days because the people who participate in the riots have nothing to do with you, of course. Just a similar, same phenomenon on a larger scale, the phenomenon of people being in the grip of a certain behavior pattern which is an energy stream.

And so they are not doing it, they are in the grip of it. Nobody is doing it. So that can even happen here a certain kind of behavior becomes initiated and then refuses to go away.

Similar phenomenon would be when you are in a certain state, you don't want to get out of that state. Children, for example, many children, a very simple example, and even adults, even when they are tired, they don't want to go to bed because somehow there is always something else. Because the state of being awake wants to continue despite the tiredness.

But once you are in bed and asleep, you don't want to get out of bed in the morning because then that momentum wants to continue. Or the child doesn't want to go into the bath or the shower because it doesn't want to change its state from dryness to wetness. Once you are in the bath, you don't want to get out because it's so nice.

So there are certain energies that want to sustain themselves and behavior patterns can be like that. So the essential thing then for you is to have spaces of awareness during the day from where you can be aware of whatever behavior you are manifesting at that moment so that you are not totally controlled by the old pattern. And this is why it's so

essential to have your daily life, your day, totally interspersed with what I call spaces.

This is just another way of saying step out of your life situation, which is in time, past and future, mind, and step into the present moment. So a little space opens up inside. That's the space of awareness.

From the awareness you can see the energy behind an old battle of behavior and this pattern either makes you think a certain thought or it immediately goes into action. It makes you do something. And so you can sometimes then feel the arising behavior before it manifests as an action.

You can feel the impulse to go there and do this protective thing to the child when it's quite unnecessary. It's no longer needed. So you can feel the impulse arising and recognizing it as an old impulse but only from the space of awareness and then you don't need to act on it.

You can say, oh, there's the old impulse. The impulse is there, arises, and then subsides. Or if thought comes in, some compulsive thought about your child, that also from that space of awareness, that inner space of aware presence, the stillness, another word for it, from the stillness you observe the thought that wants to push itself, is pushing itself into your mind.

You have to think this now and say, OK, there it is. And you allow it. You don't fight it because whatever you fight you make stronger.

So you are not in the grip of it anymore. So more aware spaces. Vital with all children to bring spatial consciousness, as I sometimes call it, or space consciousness, nothing to do with science fiction, to bring space consciousness into the relationship with your child.

For example, it's essential not to always relate to your child from the point of view of doing. Do this, don't do that. Now we need to do that.

Now let's do that. Don't do that, don't go there. Go there.

But to relate to your child, that has its place, of course, but if that's all there is, then it's a very one-dimensional relationship because what is missing is being. What is missing is to bring in the spaciousness into the relationship where you can just be with the child and look at the child and listen to the child and be there as the aware presence for the child. And so you don't want the child to do this or that, you're just there with the child and observing, watching, listening, being, giving attention.

That's a beautiful thing and that's beyond any pattern, that's not an inherited pattern, it's presence. Presence is not an old pattern, it's eternally new, it's timeless. So most parents don't know that yet, they cannot bring the timeless dimension into the relationship with their child and so the relationship becomes full of conflict eventually.

You have the best of intentions and yet then the child grows and then suddenly the child is reactive and you don't know why and there's conflict. The reason is that the most vital dimension is missing. You've done all you could but doing wasn't enough.

Doing is necessary but it's not enough. Being was neglected, so being means to bring the aware spaces into the relationship where doing doesn't matter so much when doing can still happen within it but that's vital. And of course not only into the relationship with your child but also bring it into every relationship.

No relationship can thrive if there is no spaciousness in it. And the spaciousness is there when you look at the other person and there's no thought in your head while you look because you're simply there as an aware presence. Then there's a true relationship beyond the forms, the psychological form and the physical form.

If you can look at another person and just be there as the aware presence with no thought, just an alert presence. That's what I call, that is space. If you can't do it with another human being start by doing it with a flower but I know you can.

If you can't do it with another human being do it with a dog. It might be a little bit easier to be the aware space with a dog because the dog is already free of thought. So the dog does not stimulate thought in you as a human being would do the other person is probably thinking so that transmits itself, it's contagious every state transmits itself so you might be dragged into thinking also.

So to have that no thought in any relationship is vital. It's vital for your children so that old patterns cease to operate and the new can come in and then from that state of consciousness you can respond to the need of the child but it's no longer responding from a pattern that is no longer useful. From the aware space you also know what is right for any given moment whether you need to allow the child to explore for example or whether you need to say come away from there because there's a 50 meter drop you might fall.

So there's always a balance between allowing the child to find out for him or herself and to protect the child and say no, come here. It's a very subtle balance but it's much easier from awareness to know where the balance is and to do the right thing from there. So your entire life then it's not just that so the question has wider implications it's not just to do with your children but the spaciousness needs to be there inside yourself wherever you go if you go into nature without spaciousness you're hardly there because you're thinking while you're surrounded by beauty and aliveness you're thinking.

Now, you're either thinking about you and yourself and your problems and you're only aware of the forest or the seaside or the mountains or the clouds or the wind and the breeze and the beautiful noises of nature on the periphery of your awareness because you're thinking about your failed investments or a little bit better you might be thinking

about what you're looking at oh, I wonder what that's called what's that? I can't remember what that's called I'll have to look it up you're not fully present either you're maybe a little bit more present than the person who's totally away but not much more because you're still trapped in concepts in your mind can you be there simply as spacious awareness like a little child but deeper, more intense be there can you be anywhere as spacious awareness rather than a person that's a new state of consciousness that's arising can I be here as spacious awareness with anybody of course, as I said probably a little easier with a dog or a cat because you can meet the dog or the cat in the state of no thought the dog has no thought because it hasn't arrived at thought yet it's intelligent but it has no conceptual thinking the dog hasn't arrived at conceptual thinking it's below conceptual thinking and you have gone beyond conceptual thinking into the spaciousness and there you meet in no mind that's why it's so beautiful to relate to an animal and why so many people feel drawn to animals these days because it's the only time they can be free of their conceptual mind when they look at the dog or the cat nothing to think about and you know the dog or cat is not thinking about you they're looking at you no thought it doesn't mean that you have regressed it means for you, you've gone beyond thinking stepped above thinking and then you can meet the entire dimension that is below thinking in a wonderful state of oneness the oneness that you sense with all nature that's around you if you're in conceptual thinking you're separated you meet everything because when you're not thinking about the tree and the bird and the breeze and the insect there is no me and them there's a single phenomenon the forms arising in consciousness and so you're like God that says and God saw what he, she, it had made and recognized it as good the consciousness out of which the whole universe came you represent that when you're in the state of no thought you represent the ground of being of all being and you walk around nature and you say if you had a thought it would say oh, I did a good thing there and you see that even in the tension between opposites even that there's a deeper good beyond that yes, occasionally one thing eats up another but there is a greater harmony that envelops the whole you cannot sense that harmony when you're trapped in conceptual thinking so next time you can tell me how it's going with your children it's a spiritual practice like everything else

[Speaker 15] (3:23:40 - 3:24:08)

it becomes a spiritual practice hi

[Speaker 13] (3:24:10 - 3:25:01)

I often feel overwhelmed by anger so I and that anger makes me throw my spiritual practice really out of the window so it's like a big impotence and pessimism so it's not going to work anyway so just the hell with it and that's one thing and the other thing is I also feel very often that something is wrong so I need to take some action to correct something that probably is just imaginary, so it's unreal so there is no action needed

most probably but I have to do something about it

[Speaker 1] (3:25:01 - 3:25:02)

yes

[Speaker 13] (3:25:02 - 3:25:05)

and I get carried away by that

[Speaker 1] (3:25:05 - 3:25:05)

yes

[Speaker 13] (3:25:09 - 3:25:17)

for example right now I feel my heart beat very strongly yes and I guess there's no reason for that but

[Speaker 1] (3:25:18 - 3:26:25)

well you're doing public speaking right now so maybe that's why yes and that's fine you acknowledge that the heart is beating and you let that be and the feeling that something is wrong that's not a personal problem of yours it's a universal human condition to carry that feeling inside that something is wrong and then the mind looks for what can I do about this or where is the thing that's wrong and then it misinterprets situations so anger when anger comes of course the energy field of it immediately flows into your mind and the thoughts that you then think are reflections of the anger the anger makes you think certain thoughts and as you put it it says all that spiritual stuff obviously doesn't work these are thoughts that come out of the anger, the energy field

[Speaker 13] (3:26:25 - 3:26:36)

or whatever I do it's going to be always the same no point of it because it's not going to work the kind of thoughts that it generates

[Speaker 1] (3:26:36 - 3:30:45)

yes but next time it happens see if you are able to in addition to thinking those thoughts at the same time you can be aware that these are thoughts that have arisen out of the energy field of anger in other words see if you can have an awareness it's not easy with anger because it comes so suddenly whether you can have an awareness not only that there's the energy of anger flowing through you but also perhaps that the energy of anger which may be old anger that has lived in you for a long time pain body I call it which can easily then rise into your mind and control your thoughts are you able to stay aware while it happens and recognize anger as an expression of the pain body and if you

are thinking angry thoughts to realize that these are the thoughts of anger anger is thinking these thoughts they are not true so they are simply thoughts that reflect the energy field of anger so the experiment then is whether you can stay aware as the observer or the witness of those thoughts and of the energy field of anger you may not I'm just suggesting it as an experiment whether or not you are able to stay present depends on how much presence there is already in you how much presence power there is already in you perhaps after having spent some time here with us there may be more presence power in you because this energy field is helpful for drawing that out of you once you are there as the witness then changes begin to happen you don't even have to do anything you know what I mean by witness simply to witness to be aware of the energy so that you don't become completely identified with it so the witnessing consciousness is in the same way that you now witness perhaps a certain nervousness your heart is beating there may be a certain nervousness as you stand there and you witness there is the nervousness and there is the heart beating and the witness allows everything to be as it is but there is a deeper dimension in you from where you can say my heart is beating I feel nervous energy inside me these are still verbalizations but beyond the verbalization there is the ability to simply see it so to speak then that will change all the old patterns the more awareness comes in the more the old patterns will change so you don't have to change yourself because that's complicated many people try to do that I have to change myself the most powerful the real change comes with becoming aware of whatever is happening inside you so that the anger is no longer you the anger is anger and you are the awareness you know it, you see it you feel it, there it is and that's the decisive shift from being the anger to having the anger in your energy field and observing it it's a wonderful shift so use anger as your spiritual practice, if you fail of course anger will immediately say you see you failed again, you can't do it that's the anger speaking

[Speaker 13] (3:30:45 - 3:30:46)

there is something wrong with you

[Speaker 1] (3:30:46 - 3:33:25)

particularly that there is something wrong with me now I don't know if you may be surprised to know that there are millions billions of people on the planet who have that same thought pattern, there is something wrong with me it's part of the human ego but so you bring in the awareness and that will change everything that's the only true key if you fail, next time the anger arises what happens you will become aware immediately after the anger has subsided oh there it was and I wasn't present and then the the moment will come when you are there if you can catch the anger the first moment it comes or if you might even see that it could be the result of a thought that creates the anger and if you can be there in the first moment before it becomes the fully blown anger, then you can stay there and it might not even become fully blown anger if you

catch it the first moment, you can feel the first stirrings of anger, you may only have 3 seconds it may come very quickly anger is like an explosive energy you may only have 2, 3, 4, 5 seconds to stay there with your awareness and feel it, oh it's coming, there it is that's the pain body, the angry pain body coming and if you catch it in the early stage don't suppress it by catch it I mean feel it be there as a witness then you can stay even as it grows the witness grows with it it may not even grow we'll have to see whether it still grows into full blown anger or not, that doesn't matter and so you be thankful for your anger because the anger can become a very important spiritual practice for you because through it awareness can grow so it's sometimes strange for people to see you can be thankful for things that you think are the most difficult obstacles in your life but they become they can become your greatest opportunity for spiritual awakening use it as part of your practice

[Speaker 13] (3:33:26 - 3:33:31)

yeah, I think the most difficult thing to deal with is impotence, when you feel it's

[Speaker 1] (3:33:31 - 3:33:33)

not going to work, yes you feel powerlessness

[Speaker 13] (3:33:33 - 3:33:41)

yes, like a deep pessimism it's not going to work, it's not you're about to fail yes, and you have to

[Speaker 1] (3:33:41 - 3:36:52)

recognize that these are thought forms, they are thoughts that arise in your mind and when you're aware you don't need to believe in every thought that arises you don't no longer and that's an enormous freedom you recognize it as a thought that comes from anger not the truth it's a thought a thought form that comes from anger the pain body if a thought comes from anger, it's not the truth it's a distortion recognize it and you say oh, there's another thought form that says something negative there's nothing you can do you might as well give up whatever thoughts come recognize that, it's a thought form, do you see how important that is well, perhaps we will meet again in a year's time and it's always interesting to see how things have evolved as you practice now what happened to you as you bring awareness into the anger, see what happens to it a year later thank you we need to finish now thank you wonderful it's just wonderful to see consciousness evolving awakening in different human forms, in different ways and that we can be thankful for everything, especially the difficult parts of our life, because without that there would be no awakening it's that which creates, the challenges create the necessary energy for the flowering of consciousness so it's not only in the movies where things need to go wrong in every movie if nothing goes wrong, there's no movie

the character doesn't develop everybody remains the same in a bad movie that which goes wrong is resolved on some external level, but in a good movie as the character faces his or her problems he or she grows, changes develops abilities that he or she didn't have before and in very good movies there's some kind of spiritual realization but only because something went wrong

[Speaker 16] (3:37:19 - 3:38:34)

ok so I always have this desire to know which I know may not be very correct all the time like based on what you have been saying but still I always feel comfortable if I know what's going to happen, especially about important things in my life and whenever there's a situation, let's say at work or like an emotional relationship one side of my mind is like, this is not going to work out, blah blah and the other side is, yes, it's going to work out no, yes, no and all day long seriously I'm doing something and in my mind, they're going to lay you off no, they're not going to lay her off no, no it seriously comes to a point of losing my mind and sometimes, but sometimes I know it so strongly so I can calm myself down so I just wanted to ask you how can I know what's the right answer what's the voice of intuition, like how do I know the voice of intuition instead of this fighting

[Speaker 1] (3:38:35 - 3:44:21)

ok, ok, well I believe I believe many people recognize your question it's a pattern in the human mind and perhaps in you it's stronger than in some who knows but it's in many people's minds so it's of course the answer is in and this is your challenge is not trying to figure out which of these voices is the right one that's not it it's to discover within yourself that space that is not the voice that space of awareness so that can only, you can only practice that while it happens there's that voice and there's the other voice and who is aware of these voices you don't need to answer that question I'm just putting it out don't answer it because there's no answer there's only a direct realization of it within yourself there's no external answer because if you give an answer that's another voice so this is the question that you should not answer in words so I'm asking again who is it in you who or what there's something in you that is aware of these different conflicting voices there is an awareness otherwise you wouldn't know that there is a voice now the voice these are thought formations these are energy every thought is an energy field and each thought formation wants to draw your attention suck it up into itself come here and the other one says no, come here these are like little this may sound a little spooky but it's not spooky you can regard a thought almost as an entity not a physical entity but as an energetic entity and that lives there it has a lifespan and some thoughts persist for a long time and certain thought patterns are also entities that can shift, take on one form and then another form and another form so you have every thought is a little entity or energy field it wants to it wants your identification with it it wants to draw all your attention in because the more attention drawn in the more it grows it wants to grow like

everything it doesn't want to disappear so it's for you to know when this happens who am I?

you are are you this voice or that voice? no, you are aware of the voice all these voices and that is the place where you go so that from that place of aware presence the voices are no longer disturbing you you recognize them as only a voice this is not important whether you go this way or that way or whether something is going to work out or something is not going to work out you don't know that your responsibility is to be present which means to disidentify from the voices and my first recommendation is when these conflicting voices come trying to figure out whether something is going to work out or not work out you don't know and the voice doesn't know it's just pretending to know one voice pretends to know that it's not going to work out the other one pretends to know that it is going to work out they don't know laughter so once you know that they don't know laughter then you don't place so much importance on these voices they are just like people around you let's imagine that each voice is a person one person stands on your left and tells you something the other person stands on your right and tells you something but they are just ignorant they are just trying to come up with something so if these people were around you would say go away laughter I don't need to listen to this all I need is to embrace the only thing I ever have in my life which is this moment I need to honor and give my fullest attention to this moment and if I honor and give my fullest attention to this moment rather than to this voice that does that and the other voice that does that then I can be sure that things are going to work out now one way or another so if there is a new relationship that you go into of course it's going to work out either you'll stay together and you'll be happy for a while or you won't

[Speaker 17] (3:44:22 - 3:44:23)

laughter

[Speaker 1] (3:44:23 - 3:48:04)

but even if you don't you have learned something you have learned that certain patterns don't work or certain humans that come into your life may not everything is a lesson in that sense there is no failure everything works because everything is something you grow in consciousness and to figure out for example people ask what am I supposed to do in life I still don't know what is my real life mission what am I supposed to do so and sometimes they become paralyzed because there are so many possibilities and I just can't make up my mind which way am I going to go this way or that way and then you sit there for a long time I could go that way and then the mind brings up more thoughts but if I go that way then those things may happen no I better try that way but if you just become present then rather than looking for an answer through the movement of thought, there is never any real answer that you arrive at through the movement of thought, you have to become present first then at some point a thought may come that

has a different energy field to it a thought that you feel yes that is it's no longer a thought maybe, maybe not there is a certain realization that comes that may finally take the form of a thought when I was living in Europe in England one morning I woke up and I felt for some reason I have to leave didn't know why but the thought was so strong and it never went away there wasn't another thought that said no maybe I should stay that thought came out of presence so the question is what really matters here is realizing that you are not this voice or that voice you are something deeper you are the awareness or the presence and the awareness or the presence recognizes the voice as just a voice in the head doesn't believe it's absolutely right and sees it's relatively unimportant who am I is a vital question and ask yourself that and that will drive you deeper who am I you are the presence but you can only realize that for yourself one recommendation I have when these voices start up again consciously choose not to follow that voice or that voice but to place your attention into the inner energy field of your body that frees you from the otherwise crazy self talk in the head it's crazy that self talk it's nothing personal it's a human thing almost everybody has it but it's crazy especially when there is no aware presence underneath it or you don't know if there is but you haven't discovered it so when you get beginning of when confusion arises in your mind go realize there is no answer there place attention have you been able to do that placing attention into the inner energy field of the body

[Speaker 16] (3:48:04 - 3:48:23)

that's why sometimes I know for sure like you said but then especially recently this argument started I don't know why now so it's very and the thing is but I don't know I have to give this up but I have this desire to know also which is a bit annoying yes

[Speaker 1] (3:48:26 - 4:11:22)

very good thank you very honest many humans have that also yes it is annoying but you have to be on the one hand of course on one level you want to know it's understandable and there is a place for that but there is another dimension where you need to become comfortable with not knowing that's the being dimension then in the doing dimension yes sometimes you need to figure things out especially on the practical level of life on the practical level of life you can't figure out on that level what is my destiny who am I those things you cannot figure out on that level where you figure things out mentally there you have to go into a place of not knowing that's the being dimension don't move only in the dimension of trying to figure things out about your life about situations you are in about other people there is a place for figuring things out but a more important place is to embrace the state of not knowing which of course implies the state of not thinking where there is simply an aware presence and there is a deeper knowing there that has nothing to do with working anything out mentally that's the place of wisdom so you need to be able to operate on the human level which is the level of figuring things out mentally of course there are situations when you need that at work etc but you also

need to have access to the deeper dimension that's the most vital thing in a human life to have found that dimension within and that is not operate through figuring anything out mentally it's actually the opposite of that it's relinquishing thought and that's almost frightening to the human self that relies on thought that has built up an identity based on thought it's sometimes frightening and it doesn't want to let you go there because it believes if you're not constantly trying to work out what your life is all about and figure things out mentally it believes that your life is going to collapse even in the night you wake up in the middle of the night and have to worry about your problems and there's an underlying assumption if I don't worry about my problems I'm not taking responsibility for my life and things are going to collapse around me of course the opposite is true so you are creating a lot of unnecessary turmoil in your life and a lot of unnecessary unhappiness because 90% of human unhappiness arises not because of situations around them but because of what your mind is saying about situations in your life so the unhappiness is caused by certain stories in your mind not the situation that was already discovered 2000 years ago by certain philosophers in ancient Greece it's not and so a lot of unnecessary suffering arises there through the human mind the two dimensions of life you inhabit the human as I said before somewhere you are a human being I like that expression in English in a way the English language does not have a word that includes men and women you can use human as a noun but the English language in the past you would always read about man and you were supposed to mentally include women in that but it doesn't sound right the destiny of man well what about the destiny of woman in the past it was supposed to include women but we don't do that anymore so we have human being and I love that because that shows the two dimensions of who you are the human dimension which is the mental the working out, the physical form and the being dimension which is the formless the stillness the presence the two come together so your challenge is to take your attention away from the mind don't try to figure out not even try to figure out how you can get rid of the voices there is more voices suggesting how to get rid of the voices so just easy step but it needs a minimum of awareness when the voices start up again that you don't want that you have to have a minimum of awareness so that you are not immediately totally drawn into the thoughts, the voices and then you realize it's pointless I don't want it and obviously it is especially if it happens in the middle of the night what can I possibly what point could it possibly be in worrying about anything in the middle of the night so you don't want it, you don't need it it's actually even harmful so I'm getting out of there I'm out of here and you place attention start with the hands feel the energy in your hands and immediately you are taking attention away from thinking and there it is the hands feel alive do the arms feel alive too and you don't even need to comment on that you just feel it and then the rest of the body there is a field of aliveness that's actually so much more pleasant than thinking and that's where you go and then it becomes an anchor for not thinking and that is the whole body is participating in the arising of the state of awareness one could almost say every cell is becoming conscious it's participating in the process of becoming conscious you can feel the aliveness in every

cell of the body so you don't just become conscious with your head the presence the state of presence involves the entire body become conscious and it's beautiful and you are out of the head quickly, easily you just need to be aware that thoughts will try after a minute or two or three thoughts will try one thought will try and again, try to tell you this is very important and you should think about this so you need to be recognized that and say ok, I let you go you don't fight it you don't fight a thought go away, I don't want you that's another thought they are like clouds that drift past but you are the sky and this is the sky the inner space you are the sky and the clouds are fine let them pass you don't have to go with every cloud that goes there and the more you follow the cloud the bigger the cloud gets and then another one no, no, come here get out of your mind in other words, that's my answer this mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation now here we have another question, another person who is dissatisfied for another reason I'm on a path of awakening but my deep loneliness at not having a life partner is an obstacle to my spiritual development I get deeply depressed though I do my best to stay present in the now instead of dwelling on my longing what advice could you offer?

okay well I won't say internet dating there is a part in every person the form the form identity of who you are and the level of form tends either towards the male or the female it might not necessarily be the physical the physical male may tend more to the other so it doesn't necessarily depend on the physical form but you tend to tend either towards the male or the female and therefore you're not complete because you're only one half on the level of form which is the physical form or just underneath that the psychological or emotional form and so there is a natural longing for the other polarity or completeness in a human being and you can feel that as a ah sex is only a part of that but it goes beyond sexual longing, there's more to it than that, there's also an emotional longing for the other and you can, so they go all together and there's that pull that you can feel on the level of form and when that is not satisfied then that can lead to unhappiness particularly if you have not transcended at all your identification with form if you're still totally totally identified with you as this physical form and psychological form the transcendent dimension has not come into your life at all then you will become very dissatisfied and ah depending also to some extent what culture you live in, there are traditional cultures still on our planet where it's almost, you have to find a partner and if you're not, everybody would look down on you as being a total and miserable failure in some traditional cultures, if you're not married by a certain age or you cannot give birth to children, people look down on you and despise you and you're miserable for the rest of your life if you have not fulfilled your form identity and so, and also in some traditional cultures the sense of self is very strongly bound up with whether you're a man or a woman so more so than in the west, it still persists to some extent in the west but much less so than in some traditional cultures where if you're a man in certain cultures, you are this becomes 70% of who you feel you are, your self identity is the male, you are

the male and you look at every woman as a female, you can't relate to a woman as a human being, you are the male and she is the female and she of course is not your equal and the woman is totally identified with being the female form and behaves according to that kind of collective conditioning so depending on where it is I won't act it out but here in the west it's a little easier to step out of those collective expectations, it is more acceptable in the west to say my choice is not to get married and you can even say my choice is not to have children and people say okay so there's a bit more freedom there and yet the longing for the other on the form level is still there, emotional sexual the essence is to be able to transcend who you are on the level of form whether or not you find a partner that meets that longing or whether you go from one partner to another and another or you find one life partner with whom you are for the rest of your life that is secondary really because even if you have a partner if you have not gone deeper and encountered the transcendent dimension to who you are beyond the form identity of you as the male or the female or whatever the nationality or the particular status in society whatever makes up your form identity in addition to gender if you haven't gone beyond that then even the relationships yes you might have found your partner but you won't be satisfied in the relationship in the absence of the transcendent dimension, the spiritual dimension you may come to some kind of compromise living together somehow, managing to stay together but you'll be actually you have a longing to get out so the people who are who are outside the relationships have a longing to get in or marriage and those who are in have a longing to get out so the young girl or man late teens early twenties they want to get into the cage and those who are in the cage want to get out of the cage so it is quite possible to notice the sense of in the absence of a partner it is quite possible to notice a certain sense of lack on the level of form and yet have a lot of spaciousness around that sense of lack yes I can feel that there is a longing but the longing does not consume you, the longing has not taken possession of you and making you into an unhappy person a totally unfulfilled and bitter person perhaps no, the longing is there but the longing that arises from your particular form of you exists within a spaciousness because that is the transcendent dimension and who you are is not the unfulfilled longing who you are is the presence or the stillness around it that is the shift so the longing may persist but you can live with it however if you are no longer trapped in the longing it is also quite possible that a change will come into your life particularly if the intense neediness goes I need somebody and then everybody you meet can feel the neediness when you have given somebody a phone number, you have just met and then you are waiting for them to call and they they are less likely to call when the neediness is there they are more likely to call when a certain spaciousness is there I'd love you to call, I'd love this person to call me but he may or she may or may not and there is again a spaciousness around it so of course you can take action towards meeting somebody I don't know whether the questioner has taken any action and actually gone to places perhaps where one meets people not necessarily night clubs we might not meet the most conscious people in bars but there are other places one can go to where you meet people and even the internet, why not this is the way many people lead that way but

even there if you haven't gone beyond the absolute neediness of needing somebody then it's less likely to work out for you but if you have that sense of inner some inner spaciousness around the longing then the way in which you approach others changes without that absolute that pull so that's my suggestion then is see if you can on the outer level see how and where you could meet people and explore perhaps you will find somebody here or there to realize that the transcendence is the most vital thing does not exclude the possibility of taking action on an outer level of course that is always secondary but why not and maybe you find a good website where you meet conscious, is there such a thing conscious dating if there isn't maybe it's a business idea conscious dating of course the difficulty is a person who thinks of themselves as conscious may be deluded so find that place where the polarities actually don't are not there anymore the being, the I am-ness that's deeper than the form and go there as much as you can it may not totally free you of the longing but that's okay the longing will just become a thing that's no longer overwhelming and then if you take action and see what happens this mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation

[Speaker 7] (4:11:57 - 4:13:28)

holy wow hi my name is Alexis I wanted to ask you a question last year I went to your retreat at Omega so I guess I've been like hanging on to this question first of all your book, Power of Now saved my life so thank you I was planning on committing suicide until I read it I have a severe mental illness, type 1 bipolar disorder I've suffered from it since I was 15 and I've only just started getting treatment so I'm medicated now I guess and even though suffering from bipolar unmedicated was hellish there was a certain component of presence to it in its own way, just that intensity of emotion and feeling all the time I've just barely been struggling since being on medication with accessing that same abruptness of being and I know that I don't really have a choice because otherwise I'll be hallucinating and things I was wondering if you might offer any insight

[Speaker 1] (4:13:29 - 4:13:40)

when did you so the Power of Now helped you greatly when you read it and then you were free of medication for quite a while

[Speaker 7] (4:13:41 - 4:13:47)

I guess I was untreated for like 7 years

[Speaker 1] (4:13:48 - 4:13:51)

and then the point was reached where you did need it

[Speaker 7] (4:13:51 - 4:13:56)

no, no, then I when I did need it or didn't need it

[Speaker 1] (4:13:56 - 4:13:58)

yes, how long have you been on medication

[Speaker 7] (4:13:59 - 4:14:02)

only a few months actually, I guess coming up on a year

[Speaker 1] (4:14:02 - 4:14:06)

what was the reason for going on medication

[Speaker 7] (4:14:08 - 4:14:18)

I fell in love and I realized that I couldn't be sick and also be present for my partner

[Speaker 1] (4:14:26 - 4:14:30)

so bipolar is what your condition

[Speaker 7] (4:14:30 - 4:14:31)

yes, type 1 bipolar

[Speaker 1] (4:14:33 - 4:15:00)

I've only had some contact with perhaps milder cases, I don't know of bipolar disorder often can you explain just very briefly maybe in just a couple of sentences what exactly you experience when the condition arises

[Speaker 7] (4:15:01 - 4:15:30)

so sufferers of bipolar usually experience two different types of phases manic phase and a depressive phase people often confuse it with a multiple personality disorder but it's actually quite different you're the same person but just sometimes you can't move or get out of bed or do anything and sometimes you can't sleep for days on end and you are seeing things that aren't there and hallucinating and running around

[Speaker 1] (4:15:30 - 4:15:34)

you do strange things yes

[Speaker 7] (4:15:37 - 4:15:59)

when you're in one state you can't ever remember the other so when you are depressed it seems like you're going to feel that way forever but then it could be two days from

then you are back up and manic there are many kinds of bipolar disorder but I suffer from a rapid cycle type which means that I have like four to six times more cycles than the average

[Speaker 1] (4:15:59 - 4:16:35)

with the milder forms of bipolar it's sometimes possible for people to remain aware in both the cycles when they come so that you don't get taken over completely by the cycles and awareness remains so that you're not totally identified with the energy that arises I don't know how is the are you able to be present with the medication

[Speaker 7] (4:16:36 - 4:17:03)

yeah I think that it provides me it gives me a bit more space to reflect on when I am actually in a cycle but it's very dulling so being present doesn't have that sort of joy it takes much longer to look at something I mean I used to be able to just like sit next to trees and have conversations with them and it was wonderful I mean I'm getting used to it but it's more difficult

[Speaker 2] (4:17:03 - 4:17:04)

yes

[Speaker 1] (4:17:06 - 4:17:08)

well do you have a meditation practice

[Speaker 7] (4:17:09 - 4:17:10)

I try

[Speaker 1] (4:17:11 - 4:18:36)

yeah I think it would be good for you to have a practice of formal meditation every day that could eventually replace the medication but you have to be very careful of course and get some professional help hopefully a physician who has some awareness of the other, the deeper dimension who can help you to gradually get off medication and I believe that a structured meditation which is not for everybody I don't necessarily recommend structured meditation for everybody it's a wonderful thing for those who feel compelled who feel they want to do it but I think for you it is a necessity and that could provide the support in consciousness that you need to eventually become free of medication what type of meditation you may have to try out one or two meditation methods I don't know if you already have done that perhaps transcendental meditation might be good for you

[Speaker 7] (4:18:38 - 4:18:39)

ok

[Speaker 1] (4:18:40 - 4:18:54)

so how do you feel right now? a lot better are you at any particular cycle of now or are you in a neutral space now?

[Speaker 7] (4:18:55 - 4:18:59)

no I am actually in one of my longest lasting neutral phases ever

[Speaker 17] (4:18:59 - 4:19:01)

oh well

[Speaker 1] (4:19:09 - 4:20:48)

of course in the neutral phase then the real you shines through as it does right now and that's wonderful so I believe being here also has helped because here but just by having been here presence power has grown and that's really what you need because if presence power in you so to speak is strong enough it can be the place in which you can be anchored when these two movements come you need a deep anchor within yourself because these two the two movements have an enormous pull as you know and without the anchor there is no hope they pull you every time this way or that way but the presence should become strong enough in you and maybe very soon for you to not need the medication anymore but you don't do it always do it with guidance don't just go off and you may be surprised how deep your presence already is so I do hope we'll have another retreat in a years time or so and you will come back and let us know how you're doing

[Speaker 7] (4:20:48 - 4:20:51)

that would be amazing thank you so much

[Speaker 1] (4:21:05 - 4:21:23)

this mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation

[Speaker 15] (4:21:57 - 4:22:00)

I feel like I don't have a life

[Speaker 4] (4:22:00 - 4:23:01)

that belongs to me I feel caught in this web and every time I think about getting a part time job or something like that I still have student loans to pay for I've got a partner,

she's got two kids and it seems like I can't lower my income so I tried presence I've got the CD that you made, Resist Nothing every time 12 noon, 12 30 Sunday comes this huge pain body comes over me and says you better get some rest because tomorrow you're going to be working all day long and you don't have the energy for it and that's just how it feels, even if I try to put presence to it, it feels like a monster and everything else that happens in my life, it seems it's much easier to put presence to but this is like hugely overwhelming

[Speaker 3] (4:23:02 - 4:23:08)

when you say it's easy to put presence to some things what are those some things that you can put presence to?

[Speaker 4] (4:23:09 - 4:23:47)

Just little things that happen like some of the teachings that I've learned like looking at other people and myself as works in progress, there are certain things that people are going to do in life that may be upsetting but you understand that whatever their level of consciousness is at that time then that's how they're acting so not to take things quite as personally I look at my past and look at mistakes I've made and say if I wouldn't do the same thing again then I've grown so I can have more compassion on myself and I can have more compassion on things I don't understand right now

[Speaker 3] (4:23:48 - 4:23:51)

and what exactly feels overwhelming for you?

[Speaker 4] (4:23:51 - 4:25:00)

because my body's tired and when I have to work for all day long stressful kinds of situations and things, even if it was a job that wasn't quite as stressful it seems like my body's exhausted and I can't get rest okay, and what are your thoughts that go along with it? I shouldn't be that's one of the thoughts this life doesn't feel like my life it shouldn't be like this I should figure out a way so that I can live in a way that's better for me I feel like even things that have to do with the political climate that I don't like very much I wish I lived in a country that was more progressive where do you live? in the United States laughter laughter applause applause applause where in the United States?

[Speaker 3] (4:25:00 - 4:28:29)

I live in a progressive city but but it's maybe progressing too fast for you, huh? you know, I know the feeling things can feel overwhelming and that's and it starts to feel overwhelming when those kind of thoughts come in of that resistance to what is actually happening and then how do we take care of ourselves it's actually a good sign when you come to that point of feeling overwhelming the this came to me actually at a time where

I was actually feeling really overwhelmed and I feel like as if I was going to just fall apart and that nursery rhyme Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall Humpty Dumpty had a great fall all the king's horses and all the king's men couldn't put Humpty together again and when that verse came into my head I realized oh my god I've been searching outside of myself all my life to try to fix me inside now I've come to this spiritual teaching and am I actually going to now live that spiritual teaching so in other words who's going to put Humpty Dumpty together again but you not you as the egoic sense of self not you as you know yourself as through the thinking mind but that stillness, that awareness that consciousness will put you back together again and will give you the tools that you need and not only the tools but the right action will follow where you say you have say for example you've got the two kids coming up to you and then you go not now you know it's like not now and there's a not now of meaning it or do you have a not now where you just don't quite know where your boundaries are and you kind of think you have to take care of everybody else first when really it's like the you're on a plane and you know the plane's going down and the little things drop down what are they called again the oxygen mask drop down and the advice is you put your own mask on first before you help your children and often times and I know yesterday when there was that questioner who came up who said she just didn't know who she was anymore after having her two kids and taking care of her two kids and I understand that I have a child I didn't have two but I have one and it's like this precious little soul and you just feel this big responsibility and it was all transferring everything over and then not really taking care of myself first and when you don't take care of yourself first then you do end up coming to that point of breaking down of feeling that overwhelm so when you feel that overwhelm what are some of the tools that can help you get back on track do you have yeah okay

[Speaker 4] (4:28:30 - 4:28:48)

coming here is one of them I'm trying I'm going to physical therapy to get back being able to run again that used to be an outlet for me running and age group triathlons and things like that but once I stopped doing that then I really don't have much of an outlet now except for

[Speaker 3] (4:28:48 - 4:28:49)

do you do any meditation

[Speaker 4] (4:28:50 - 4:28:54)

I don't do much sitting meditation I try to do more mindfulness

[Speaker 3] (4:28:55 - 4:29:02)

what is what does that look like when you say you try to do more mindfulness so when you're doing you are being

[Speaker 4] (4:29:02 - 4:29:17)

mindful when I'm doing things I try to pay attention more like the example the washing the hands just try to be more present smelling so you know feeling the warm water try to be more mindful walking things like that

[Speaker 3] (4:29:18 - 4:29:23)

and then when you say your body just feels so tired do you then rest

[Speaker 4] (4:29:24 - 4:29:51)

yeah a lot of times I do and that's causes strain with the family because I a lot of times I don't go downstairs I stay up in the room where it's quiet and sometimes the kids can be noisy and that just adds to my stress level so I go upstairs I shut the blinds sometimes shut the door and read or I'll watch a show I'll watch the Eckhart TV things like that

[Speaker 3] (4:29:51 - 4:30:10)

okay so forgive me here but I'm failing to see when you say that you're overwhelmed and you will take a rest you will lie down you will relax so in that period of time are you truly relaxing or are you

[Speaker 4] (4:30:10 - 4:30:26)

thinking probably both I mean there are times when my mind is going on different things but I'm an introvert too so I like the quiet yeah

[Speaker 3] (4:30:27 - 4:31:31)

so do I so when you relax it needs to be a full relaxation that will recharge you that will feed you that stillness that in that relaxed awareness and being still will recharge you is the healer will bring healing to you so become aware of the kinds of thoughts that you have but don't you can be aware of them but don't believe them stop believing in those thoughts when you say that you like the quiet and you kind of go upstairs and then it's causing stress in your relationship because the children or your partner isn't wanting you to do this so is there then an argument about it

[Speaker 4] (4:31:32 - 4:32:33)

there's not much of an argument about it just little comments or something that she says sometimes because and what are those comments oh you're going upstairs again there you go again oh it's dark in here open the blinds oh it's too hot in here it's like she doesn't mind me having time alone because she knows I'm introvert but she thinks it's excessive and I would tend to agree that I spend more time than I probably would if I didn't feel so exhausted and right now I do have physical stress that's causing problems

with my body like my endocrine system and stuff is off and I didn't really realize that but it's distress coming from too much stress in my life and my day which I didn't even know was happening, I thought I was doing good

[Speaker 3] (4:32:33 - 4:33:14)

just stop for a second because this is what I'm seeing and this is what I'm hearing you're saying that you're stressed, you're saying that your body is tired but yet at the same time if you can see yourself and see that your mind is actually racing a mile a minute it's going and going so can you right now, because all it takes is the present moment when you're starting to feel stressed and overwhelmed, can you in this instant quiet your mind and just be still

[Speaker 4] (4:33:16 - 4:33:17)

I can sometimes

[Speaker 3] (4:33:17 - 4:35:16)

can you do it right now this is what I meant, I'd like you to do it right now, standing there finding that inner stillness finding your breath feeling that inner body and if thoughts arise, you notice them but you choose not to follow them bring your attention your focus right down into your breath into this room where you hear sounds you're aware of the sounds you're aware of the breath you're aware of sensations in the body you're aware of thoughts step out of that awareness of form and step into the awareness of awareness itself who or what is aware it's not a thing you can sense it you can feel it and breathe and from this place what are you afraid of

[Speaker 4] (4:35:22 - 4:35:23)

maybe being alone

[Speaker 3] (4:35:23 - 4:35:25)

being alone

[Speaker 4] (4:35:26 - 4:35:28)

it's the first thing that came to my mind

[Speaker 3] (4:35:28 - 4:36:21)

right, and yet you say that you like to spend a lot of time alone so do you see the conflict that's inside you you have on one hand you're saying to yourself I want to be alone but in the other hand you are afraid to be alone that causes stress a lot of stress, it's a pull you're being pulled in two directions so I invite you to either because I'm not quite sure

whether it's that you're afraid to be alone or that you're actually afraid of people

[Speaker 4] (4:36:24 - 4:36:26)

probably non-acceptance

[Speaker 3] (4:36:27 - 4:36:28)

non-acceptance of people

[Speaker 4] (4:36:28 - 4:36:30)

people not accepting me

[Speaker 3] (4:36:30 - 4:36:36)

people not accepting you so if we turn that around you don't really accept yourself

[Speaker 4] (4:36:36 - 4:36:38)

I accept myself

[Speaker 3] (4:36:38 - 4:36:39)

do you?

[Speaker 4] (4:36:39 - 4:36:40)

yeah, I love myself

[Speaker 3] (4:36:40 - 4:36:45)

ah, ok but you just don't like other people

[Speaker 4] (4:36:45 - 4:36:50)

well I don't like I don't like it when other people are doing things that irritate me

[Speaker 3] (4:36:52 - 4:36:55)

well a lot of people are going to be can irritate

[Speaker 4] (4:36:55 - 4:36:57)

yeah, that's, I mean

[Speaker 3] (4:36:57 - 4:37:02)

so the judgment is that you're kind of disturbing me

[Speaker 4] (4:37:04 - 4:37:16)

yeah, if just the example of the noise and stuff in the house I don't like, I like to go away from that I don't dislike them, but I dislike the

[Speaker 3] (4:37:16 - 4:37:21)

so are you a spontaneous person? would you say?

[Speaker 4] (4:37:22 - 4:37:48)

sometimes yeah but not much when it comes to planning you know, I'd rather it just depends what I feel like at any given time I don't really like to make plans and then that day I don't really feel like it so I like to wait until it's time to do something and then say let's go do it

[Speaker 3] (4:37:51 - 4:38:33)

so there's a resistance to life because children are often times noisy and often times spontaneous and they just live in the moment and you're a meditator who when the kids come in the door you may not say this outwardly but inside it's like go away, stop it can't you see I'm meditating? now I could be wrong but my guess is is that you really don't accept yourself

[Speaker 4] (4:38:37 - 4:39:19)

I don't know maybe that's true but I feel like I do like I don't know when I'm around here I feel fine it's just when I'm I guess the highly sensitive person book by Aline something I forgot her name but a lot of that is the way that I am I'm more quiet I like quiet environments and things like that and when I'm there I'm fine it's just when I'm around like type A kind of people who are like really aggressive and loud and things it causes a certain degree of discomfort like with me

[Speaker 3] (4:39:21 - 4:39:25)

was there somebody aggressive in your family?

[Speaker 4] (4:39:27 - 4:39:50)

well not in a mean way aggressive but yeah my well I know this is being recorded but but there are people who are more pushy I guess you could say and they won't stop talking I find that when I'm

[Speaker 3] (4:39:50 - 4:39:57)

so you're not able to sort of put up your boundaries and just sort of say well I guess it's enough for me and somehow excuse yourself

[Speaker 4] (4:39:57 - 4:39:58)

I do that

[Speaker 3] (4:39:58 - 4:39:59)

you do that

[Speaker 4] (4:39:59 - 4:40:01)

yeah but it's just

[Speaker 3] (4:40:01 - 4:40:04)

I'm failing to see the problem then if you do all those things

[Speaker 4] (4:40:06 - 4:40:33)

well it's for an example like my partner's she has like groups like friends and stuff that go and I often I'm there but the conversation I like conversation involving like feelings and talking about things like that I don't like small talk very much so I like the way that I am but it presents a problem when it comes to people who aren't that way

[Speaker 3] (4:40:34 - 4:40:49)

what's the problem though? I don't understand what the problem is the only problem would be if you think there is a problem if you think that the other person is I don't know thinking that you're not enjoyable or something

[Speaker 4] (4:40:49 - 4:40:55)

it feels like they're not interested in what I'm saying if I'm talking about these kinds of things

[Speaker 3] (4:40:55 - 4:40:58)

you really don't accept yourself then

[Speaker 4] (4:40:58 - 4:41:01)

I love myself I just don't like being around certain

[Speaker 3] (4:41:01 - 4:41:08)

but you don't accept the fact that you're just not a small talk person

[Speaker 4] (4:41:08 - 4:41:27)

yeah I just don't put myself in those situations where I'm not comfortable and the other

people maybe are not interested in what I'm saying either like I know myself enough to know that it's uncomfortable so I don't put myself

[Speaker 3] (4:41:27 - 4:43:19)

when I'm hearing you speak this is what I see instead of this focus right down into the situation okay and that fear of being alone it's like going outside of yourself and seeing oh well they won't like me because I'm you know not somebody who does small talk they won't like me because I want to spend time alone so there's it's like I see you bouncing around inside yourself bouncing here, bouncing there and not really getting down to the just the crux of it, the point if you are really truly exhausted and overwhelmed and tired and your body is tired then just let it go and rest be still rest your body but what I'm hearing you, you say it but then you're not really doing anything really for yourself I mean you will go and rest but then your mind is going but can you just fully be overwhelmed fall apart like humpty dumpty let yourself completely fall apart, what will happen, do you think something will happen if you fall apart are you afraid of falling apart

[Speaker 4] (4:43:19 - 4:43:22)

no at this point I really want to fall apart

[Speaker 3] (4:43:22 - 4:51:29)

great, because that's the best place to be is to fall apart and then from there so for me it was like that humpty dumpty sort of first came in, I let myself just completely go and then I realized I'm the only one and not me as the ego but I'm the only one that can now build myself, put myself back together again, and how will I put myself back together again and let that question remain and sit in you, because it's not going to come through most of the time it doesn't come through instantly and it'll come through maybe as a thought form but it will gradually it's like gradually putting yourself back together again now maybe the mind might come in and say but I want to get put back together again right now instantly, and that can sometimes take years maybe months, or maybe weeks you can't really put a time frame on the evolving the evolution the unfolding of your true nature into your true self so that you can live in this world be completely okay if you truly are a person who really wants to be alone, it would be okay if you really are a person that says I don't want the small talk but you can be in small talk and you can just be silent you can be there as this witnessing presence as this alive being and then maybe when you sit there, instead of having these thoughts of which are the egoic sense of self thoughts, the pain body thoughts of oh they won't like me and oh I'm sitting here and nobody's paying attention to me and oh they're talking really just frivolous things you're just enjoying yourself there's this wonderful little I don't know I think you call it I'm not sure if you call it a joke but there was this famous English writer at a cocktail party and you know everybody's making their small talk and he's just sitting there and

somebody comes up to him and says are you enjoying yourself here? and he says it's the only thing that I'm enjoying here so it's like getting to that part where you just allow that awareness to come through, that consciousness to come through without it doesn't matter what other people are doing, who cares what other people are doing, in fact it's none of our business what other people are doing just be there as this witnessing consciousness and as you're there as a witnessing consciousness you will either be there and sit there and enjoy yourself you may not enjoy what's going on but you're enjoying yourself because maybe you have you know a partner who likes to do this so you kind of compromise and you kind of attend these things, but you're just there doesn't matter doesn't matter if somebody talks to you, but you'll find the more that you have less of those kind of thoughts and less of the demand on yourself and on other people of an expectation of how things should be expecting that it should not be this way, people should be more deeper, talk about more deeper things or I should be able to be alone I shouldn't have come here well if you truly want that in the awareness in that presence you will either find yourself moving and saying hun I'm going home you stay and enjoy yourself or you'll just surrender and just go okay I'm here but you know what, I feel the aliveness within I just feel really good I'm having a good time wow and it's not about the other it's about what is going on inside you, are you filled with these different emotions filled with these different thoughts rather than being filled with the Holy Ghost the Spirit the Holy Spirit, your Spirit that is relaxation that is a way to get over the overwhelm you're just being yourself not that head self you start identifying and seeing what those kind of thoughts are and just really going wow you don't have to pay attention to those you don't have to believe in your thoughts they're just thoughts they're just judgments, labels, concepts whatever you want to call them they're just thoughts presence consciousness is not a thought even though we use the word consciousness, we use the word stillness, we use the word Buddha nature, Christ consciousness whatever you want to call it and there's this saying, a Taoist saying the Tao is not the Tao if you can name it and that's your true self that's the self that has that peace and that joy that is beyond all understanding beyond all activity no matter what is happening in your world so let yourself collapse and fall to pieces and then create yourself, you're recreating yourself but not you as the entity the old entity it's you as consciousness so always the practice of returning back to that consciousness returning to that stillness okay, what's going to happen here how am I going to build myself up here and don't think about it you post the question and it will be answered but not on your time on the consciousness time which is really no time it's just this moment what do I need to do for this moment how am I going to build myself up in this moment feel, oh gosh, I'm thirsty simple sip of water maybe that's what you're needing mmm ah, wonderful oh, my body's really tired I think I'll go and have a nap ah, lay down just feel the body, maybe even sleep maybe not, you're just feeling the body the kids come in ah, hey oh, hi sweetheart so I'll give you a hug, but you know what I need to rest right now I'll be down in maybe 10-15 minutes and just fully rest so that when you're resting you're fully resting when you're with your children, you're fully with your children but knowing the limits because there are

limitations and maybe your limitation's a little shorter than some people in being able to be with people that's not a problem it's actually okay so maybe you take shorter moments with them and then take a break and just be with yourself and rejuvenate fully by truly being present let go of those thoughts that something should be different than what it is does that make sense?

[Speaker 4] (4:51:30 - 4:51:43)

yes, it makes sense and just a quick question when 12 noon comes or 12.30 comes on Sunday I feel this overwhelm the same thing, go into presence and say, okay, I'm going to feel whatever this is

[Speaker 3] (4:51:43 - 4:52:00)

yeah, because that thought, when you say you're even starting to create it right now and that is, you're thinking you're going into the future and that future hasn't even happened yet you don't even know what Sunday's going to be like you may not even feel overwhelmed on Sunday, but you're already predicting that you will

[Speaker 4] (4:52:00 - 4:52:03)

I want to ask, well, I have somebody who can help me

[Speaker 3] (4:52:05 - 4:57:42)

so stop that mind stop that anticipation stop going into the future and be in the present moment when the present moment is here if you're overwhelmed take care of it present moment's here maybe you're feeling wonderful great maybe you want to be with people hey, kids, let's go out be present because only in the present moment right action follows so, Sunday isn't here drop Sunday completely and when it comes who knows who knows but what we if we keep on thinking that we will create that situation again and again and again it's like I mentioned it might have been actually in the morning group maybe it was yesterday where or maybe it was even here, I don't remember where you can have this profound meditation and I've done this many times myself where I'm sitting, doing a meditation and I'm like, oh my god, this is so profound I had this great meditation and then comes, you know, the next day and you do your ritual of your meditation and you're wanting that same profound meditation we're holding on to yesterday's meditation instead of being in the present moment, in the aliveness of now where maybe you'll have a more profound meditation maybe not but there's no attachment to the forms of this moment all forms come and go but the more that we hang on the more that we contract the more that we have expectations that our life should be going a certain way and the more that we begin to feel overwhelmed because life is not matching our thought about how it should be so now I'm seeing a little bit more focus and clarity in knowing what it is that's going to that you're going to have to do and

that is coming into the present moment and stillness instead of being here or there and looking at that, thinking about that worrying about this going into the future over here right here right now I think it was I forget the woman's name who wrote the Course in Miracles what was your name again?

Right, so I believe she had a dream where she dreamed that there was this book and she could see into the future or see back into the past and she was able she had a choice, she could go into the future or go into the back past she looked at it and then she said no, I just want this moment right now and then the Course in Miracles came through her channeled the Course in Miracles all you need is right now cut through time just this moment how am I feeling this moment? what am I sensing this moment?

am I lost in thoughts? am I lost in emotions? and if you are even aware that you are you're not completely lost if you were completely lost you wouldn't even be aware, you would just be in your emotions in your mind, thinking and thinking and following your thoughts everywhere and going everywhere with it but you cut through that and then you have that choice and usually it's a very short window of opportunity when you choose choose to become be present or choose to be again, lost in thought or emotions or in the pain body but we have that choice and as awareness grows that choice is so clear to us and you might maybe sometimes choose to go into your pain body choose the thoughts, choose the emotion but eventually you'll come back to this falling apart place, this place of overwhelm, and then when it gets too great you realize, okay I gotta come back to the present moment, because this is the saving grace, is the present moment this is where you can be rejuvenated and filled with that spirit within you it's right here and right now the only moment that exists as reality is right now so be with that, work with that I know that you're going to succeed

[Speaker 1] (4:58:12 - 5:00:43)

you can have an agreement with whoever you live with and a mutual agreement if you see me falling asleep spiritually speaking, in other words becoming unconscious please let me know I will be thankful at least I'm telling you that now I won't now the person who has gone unconscious, when you first address the unconsciousness, it depends how far your partner has already gone down the rabbit hole so if he or she hasn't gone down too far he or she will still hear you when you ask, have you perhaps become unconscious are you still awake, but if he or she and then says, oh thank you well thank you, but if he or she has gone further down the rabbit hole then when you say those words they won't hear you anymore because only the unconsciousness the unconscious entity which may be associated with the pain body, the unconscious entity will be listening to you the emotional field the mental emotional pattern will have taken over that human being completely like like some horror movie completely taken over by whatever you want to call it don't want to put any strange images in your mind, you can find them on the internet so it's been taken over by this strange entity and then of course your partner

won't hear you because he or she will be completely asleep and it's possible then that the entity will talk back at you and won't be happy but then it's your your next task then is not to react to the entity which is an energy field that has taken over that human being because if you react you give it more energy now that's a non-reaction however does not mean that you close the shutters around you, metaphorically speaking

[Speaker 11] (5:00:46 - 5:00:54)

laughter laughter laughter and

[Speaker 1] (5:00:54 - 5:00:59)

then you say nothing can touch me anymore, I'm safe behind these shutters

[Speaker 17] (5:01:00 - 5:01:00)

laughter

[Speaker 1] (5:01:03 - 5:01:08)

and you can talk to the entity and say whatever you say, I don't care

[Speaker 17] (5:01:08 - 5:01:10)

laughter laughter

[Speaker 1] (5:01:12 - 5:03:07)

that's not it that's not because you separate yourself also from the possibility of staying in contact with who is truly there that human being so don't use the shutters what does work is first of all to accept that this is what has just happened that this human being right now is in that particular state of deep unconsciousness, this is what is so you might as well accept it because even if you don't it won't make any difference so say yes to the present moment this is the dictum I often repeat say yes to the present moment no matter what form it takes and it may take the form of an unconscious human being right there in front of you so you and you recognize what has happened you don't confuse this entity that temporarily has taken over your beautiful partner laughter you don't confuse that with who your beautiful partner, beautiful outside or inside or both certainly beautiful inside if you get to their real being you don't confuse who that real being is so you recognize what has happened and that makes it easier for you not to be in a state of reactivity to that unconscious the unconsciousness and the entity and thereby you don't strengthen it

[Speaker 15] (5:04:18 - 5:04:19)

Hi Eckhart

[Speaker 12] (5:04:19 - 5:04:40)

my question is when I try to maintain presence in my everyday life I'm aware that my subconscious need for superiority sabotages me pretty regularly and it happens very often so I wonder what suggestions you have

[Speaker 1] (5:04:43 - 5:04:49)

it would be nice for us to have one or two examples of how that

[Speaker 2] (5:04:49 - 5:04:51)

looks laughter

[Speaker 12] (5:04:51 - 5:05:37)

I was afraid you would ask that well typically when like this morning someone approached me and they were anxious and worried and off balance and I thought it's sort of an automatic thing sort of why don't you get your act together rather than just having a positive exchange and then I notice of course when I'm anxious or off balance I want everybody to be kind and understanding so it's I judge that as not a good thing I would like to be more automatically kind laughter laughter laughter

[Speaker 1] (5:05:39 - 5:05:41)

one more example perhaps

[Speaker 12] (5:05:41 - 5:06:24)

one more ok when my question was chosen and I was invited to be here I was really excited about that and it was tempting to think and it was kind of my first thought that oh isn't this wonderful I have this great question but laughter laughter you know I quickly realized that in reality that's it might be a pertinent question but it's not about me and it's not it doesn't mean that I'm great laughter it seems like a constant fight for me yeah

[Speaker 1] (5:06:25 - 5:10:26)

well of course it's very normal that kind of mind activity it's just as awareness arises it seems to be more of a problem than it would be for a normally unconscious person now the good thing is that the awareness is there of it if you were totally unconscious that is identified with those thought patterns you wouldn't even know it because the essence of identification is you don't know it you are it you are the thought so you would then instead of feeling superior and realizing that you feel superior and then not wanting to feel superior you would just feel superior laughter and that would be really unconscious and that would be quite normal now as because awareness arises it's a good thing you're aware of certain mind patterns subtle things where you feel superior or special it's

another word for it that specialness because specialness doesn't superior always implies better than specialness could also be I'm much worse off than you that's why I'm so special my problems are much bigger than yours don't tell me about your problems let me tell you about mine or as my dad used to say when people said I have a headache or whatever you have a headache? I've had a headache for weeks laughter that's not so much superiority but well in a way it is, it's specialness I'm more special than you because I have more headaches than you I must be more interesting or whatever the reasoning behind it is it's irrational of course so awareness is there which is a decisive factor it has come in, the awareness is aware of that mind pattern then however the awareness is obscured again by an additional mind pattern that says I shouldn't be having these thoughts which are more thoughts so we have three things here in operation there's the original thought pattern, harmless as it may be but there's a recognition of the thought pattern which comes from the fact that there's awareness through awareness the thought pattern is recognized but then the mind comes in again it uses the awareness the recognition that arose through awareness to construct an additional level of problems which says I shouldn't be having those thoughts, I'm not a good person anymore if I have those thoughts I'm not kind if I have those thoughts and what is that?

Thoughts so it can happen that as awareness arises which is a wonderful thing you're not totally identified with the mind pattern anymore and then the mind is so cunning that out of that recognition it creates new mind patterns and the new mind patterns say I'm not a kind person if I think that I feel bad about thinking that, I shouldn't by now I should be rid of that whatever it says so that's where you have to be careful to become aware that the mind has come in again after the awareness that is not necessary but you didn't know that, that was unconscious so the mind has little it's very cunning, you recognize the mind there and then the mind comes back in again and uses your recognition to manufacture more thought out of that

[Speaker 17] (5:10:27 - 5:10:32)

laughter laughter right

[Speaker 1] (5:10:34 - 5:10:42)

and this is why it's very good to ask that question it helps everybody so you are special

[Speaker 17] (5:10:43 - 5:10:45)

laughter thank you

[Speaker 1] (5:10:47 - 5:12:07)

but of course everybody has similar problems so we are all special laughter that's where you once you're aware of that you can then recognize that as unnecessary you don't

need that it's superfluous mind activity that does nothing except strengthen your mind so and then you can simply allow the recognition to be there without the additional mental judgment of there's something wrong with you and that in itself gradually dissolves the power of the mind pattern, all you need is the awareness of what your mind is doing and gradually what your mind is doing becomes less dense, less powerful and the awareness grows so there's a shrinking of the mind pattern and a growing of the awareness the only way the mind can stop that pattern is by, as I said by coming in after the awareness and creating more thought around that so just be happy with being aware it's a mind pattern it's nothing to do with who you are you're not an unkind person you're not whatever the mind says, it's just this, that mind pattern, isn't that interesting that is, and that is in itself sufficient

[Speaker 12] (5:12:08 - 5:12:10)

great, thank you so much

[Speaker 15] (5:12:29 - 5:12:34)

if you surrender to it come to a different relationship with it

[Speaker 1] (5:12:34 - 5:12:40)

that can be the agent that awakens you into consciousness

[Speaker 5] (5:12:45 - 5:15:36)

so my question has to do with what you were just talking about about how ego death can be painful so I'll give a little background just to give context for my question so since I was little, I had spontaneous satori's that I didn't understand and ultimately it led to shame because it wasn't normal and it led to confusion about what seemed important and I have my understandings about where it came from but at any rate so having experiences of formlessness and all of that is very familiar and understanding you know, certain understanding of identification and non-identification and I don't have fear of dying physically that I'm aware of however I have a spontaneous like how the satori's came on I suppose people would say it could be Kundalini energy spontaneously usually when I'm fully asleep I will wake up and I can have this absolute unstoppable realization that I am not going to exist I'm not afraid of dying in that moment it's that existential awareness of I'm not going to be here anymore yeah so it's not about fear of death but it is about ego death I imagine and I've tried to work with it in many different ways I don't know if it's just simply being maybe more than average narcissist and don't want to die I don't know if it's that or if it's just at any rate, I've talked with many spiritual teachers and gotten very different kinds of responses but mostly I want to understand how to be able to face it because it feels intolerable and it comes on unwittingly, will come up and my body starts to run, literally I wake up out of sleep and I'll run and sometimes I'll

scream the scream is the only thing that gets me out of that realization I don't want that realization yeah and so growing up with both of these I would call it my agony and my ecstasy would have both so anything you can offer I'd appreciate

[Speaker 1] (5:15:38 - 5:15:54)

and as a child you had similar experiences so wanting to run is just an impulse that you want to run when this comes on you don't actually stay in bed or you get up

[Speaker 5] (5:15:54 - 5:16:05)

and run I wake up and I'm already running and screaming is the most effective way to try to get it out of my consciousness

[Speaker 1] (5:16:05 - 5:16:33)

and so the experience itself that makes you run it exists as an emotion and a thought or mostly a thought that suddenly triggers that or is it what is the thought the element of thinking you just mentioned a thought I'm not going to be here that's a thought and that is always there when this happens

[Speaker 5] (5:16:33 - 5:16:55)

yeah that's the it's like a realization sometimes when I'm almost falling asleep and I see it's coming I can direct my attention elsewhere but usually when I'm pretty sleepy it takes over and I can't stop it yeah and then it's just it's just like an epiphany so it's a thought

[Speaker 1] (5:16:56 - 5:17:03)

so it's almost as if you were experiencing little mini-deaths frequently yeah

[Speaker 5] (5:17:04 - 5:17:08)

and it's not like I'm afraid of dying right then it's nothing to do with that

[Speaker 1] (5:17:08 - 5:17:12)

but what about the panic that you feel isn't that fear

[Speaker 5] (5:17:13 - 5:17:14)

yeah it feels like terror

[Speaker 1] (5:17:14 - 5:17:16)

well that's extreme fear

[Speaker 5] (5:17:16 - 5:17:17)

yeah extreme fear

[Speaker 1] (5:17:17 - 5:17:26)

so there is fear maybe at other times you don't feel the fear but in those moments you feel it very strongly yeah

[Speaker 17] (5:17:26 - 5:17:26)

right

[Speaker 1] (5:17:32 - 5:17:38)

so it's particularly in the morning or at night time it happens when you wake up

[Speaker 5] (5:17:38 - 5:17:51)

it's night yeah I mean if I wanted to I could consciously and I have done this will it on like I can remember it I can get myself into that space just like I can get myself into satori it's the same

[Speaker 1] (5:17:51 - 5:24:09)

well I was actually going to suggest that as a practice if you can consciously bring it about because then you have a bit more power because it doesn't you're not if you can but before you do that there has to be a lot of conscious awareness for example generating a lot of conscious presence through inner body awareness for example do that for 15 minutes or so and then attempt to consciously bring it on so that you can surrender to what it is that you feel and then once you surrender to the feeling then it's no longer fearful and then it could bring about it's a relatively I don't have many people who have this particular experience in the way you describe it but it's very interesting so it's a if you can bring it as a practice do consciousness practice and then just experiment with it and see if you can bring it about consciously and because then there's more awareness in you so that you may not need to run away from it anymore and if you go into it suddenly it will lose it's frightful nature and then that is a kind of death it's like facing a monster some people have terrible nightmares where they face monsters and they cannot quite the monsters are always coming from behind and you have to run away but you can't run anymore because you can only move very slowly, you're trying to run but you can't and it's always when you face the monster it becomes transformed it's no longer a monstrous presence because facing it means consciousness is there it's only when you run away from it it remains a monster and can even get bigger so you have to consciously face it that is your monster but that monster will become transformed into something completely different when you face it consciously but in order to face it

consciously you need the power of consciousness there needs to be preparation for that so that there is enough consciousness in you to face it and then you may find that it's actually a powerful spiritual experience what before what is preventing you was the fear the fear of death comes up very strongly perhaps you don't notice it the rest of your life as you said, in the rest of your life you don't have a fear of death but in those moments you have an intense fear of death because death is very close it's right there and of course it's easy to say for anybody I have no fear of death they're not facing death in that moment so it's very easy to make a statement but you face it regularly, it's there anybody else who says I don't fear death well, maybe you're right but you won't know it until you're actually looking, death is right there and then you'll know and another thing is when you experience a great loss of whatever kind, that's a kind of death too so then you'll know whether that perception is correct or not, whether you fear death this is potentially a powerful spiritual experience but I would suggest that you, through the fear the panic that arises, which is the personal self fearing its demise through that you kind of stop it every time because you have to run away from it you cannot fully go into it, but the possibility is there if there's enough presence in you enough consciousness, you can allow yourself to experience that fully without the need anymore to run away from it and then the monster becomes transformed into an enormously helpful figure so to speak, it becomes an opening, it is often the case, there's a general it's a general rule some people have one major huge obstacle in their lives, which can be many different things, it could be a very serious physical thing, disability it could be very serious, something in their emotional field, it could be a very serious external thing that dreadful family karma that they are born into, some crime that happens in their childhood around them some people have one huge dreadful thing in their lives and it is often the case that the worst thing in your life that thing that would normally be regarded as unacceptable that no human could accept, if you surrender to it, come to a different relationship with it that can be the agent that awakens you into consciousness that transforms you, that becomes the opening, your cross becomes the opening to you as a Christian almost medieval Christian term the cross so I've seen people who've had one major thing that was the most dreadful burden in their lives and that eventually became the opening and they woke up through that, and so this can be the case with you, I believe it can and I trust that next time we meet you will stand there and tell us about it and you will be perhaps awakened through it, have been awakened if not what is total awakening anyway, but awakened, so that is my advice to you

[Speaker 2] (5:24:09 - 5:24:11)

and that's all I can say

[Speaker 15] (5:24:11 - 5:24:12)

thank you

[Speaker 2] (5:24:13 - 5:24:14)

applause

[Speaker 6] (5:24:38 - 5:25:01)

this person writes in I'm often fearful about being ill, being poor, growing old, death, and other worries how do I overcome these fears in other words how do I live my life without these kinds of fears, or is that possible even

[Speaker 2] (5:25:03 - 5:25:05)

yes, that's the

[Speaker 15] (5:25:06 - 5:25:09)

question that many people have

[Speaker 2] (5:25:09 - 5:25:54)

I still remember well it's now becoming distant past for me I still remember having those fears, waking up in the middle of the night sometimes almost in a state of panic although I was in a warm bed and there was nothing wrong at that moment and yet there was a sense of panic

[Speaker 15] (5:25:55 - 5:26:02)

oh my god, what's going to happen so the fear

[Speaker 2] (5:26:04 - 5:26:24)

if you look at pay attention to how the fear the anxiety arises angst is sometimes the word they use in English it's a German word

[Speaker 1] (5:26:25 - 5:26:28)

angst is used for existential

[Speaker 2] (5:26:29 - 5:27:13)

anguish, the anguish of just being alive, which is so problematic so if you see how it arises then you will notice that it's created not by any true problem in your life but by thought it's created by the unobserved mind so there is a lack of presence

[Speaker 1] (5:27:13 - 5:27:39)

which means that certain thoughts, repetitive thoughts take you over many of those thoughts refer to possible future events nothing that's happening here and now but

something

[Speaker 2] (5:27:39 - 5:28:07)

in the future and as I've often you might have heard me say that ultimately the future although we need it and it makes sense for practical purposes but in your direct experience of life

[Speaker 1] (5:28:07 - 5:28:19)

well that's an important criterion for what is real it's your direct experience of life in your direct experience of life

[Speaker 2] (5:28:19 - 5:28:34)

the future does not exist because when the future arrives it's the present moment you cannot

[Speaker 1] (5:28:34 - 5:28:39)

experience the future you can only experience the present moment

[Speaker 2] (5:28:39 - 5:28:55)

for some people that's news and then you see that ultimately the future exists as thought the future is

[Speaker 1] (5:28:55 - 5:29:19)

essentially a thought in your mind so the fear of future and the fear of things going wrong in the future I might become poor I might become ill I might become old I might become destitute whatever it may be

[Speaker 15] (5:29:20 - 5:29:26)

those are all thoughts that

[Speaker 2] (5:29:26 - 5:30:15)

have such hypnotic power over you that you cannot tell the difference between a thought and actual reality actual life and then you miss and the body does not know the difference so when you think of fearful thought imagining a certain scenario the body reacts with emotion that is exactly the same

[Speaker 1] (5:30:15 - 5:30:33)

as if you were in a real situation the body cannot tell the difference whether your mind is imagining something or whether it's actually happening the body doesn't know the

difference so fear arises

[Speaker 2] (5:30:34 - 5:30:48)

when a thought comes up repetitive thought persistent thought and you don't recognize it as a thought

[Speaker 1] (5:30:48 - 5:31:13)

because it occupies your entire mind there is no room for presence or awareness in other words there is no observing consciousness and then the emotion is there and the emotion gives even more power to the originating thought so then you get

[Speaker 2] (5:31:14 - 5:31:30)

thought forms that are fueled by emotion, emotional thinking, a vicious cycle, thought creates emotion, the emotion

[Speaker 1] (5:31:30 - 5:31:43)

gives more energy to the thought thought gives more energy to the emotion and so it grows so so the problem is not the future

[Speaker 2] (5:31:43 - 5:31:57)

the problem is in the present moment is are you able to be aware of your thoughts especially

[Speaker 1] (5:31:58 - 5:32:09)

thoughts that create suffering thoughts that make you unhappy thoughts that have nothing to do with what's happening around you here and now

[Speaker 2] (5:32:11 - 5:32:18)

and can you recognize first of all that those thoughts are

[Speaker 1] (5:32:18 - 5:34:18)

not referring to anything that's happening here and now, in other words that is real and can you also recognize that they are that they create unhappiness in you they create suffering in this case fear or anxiety which is not pleasant I had an encounter not long after I experienced the awakening I was in a waiting room somewhere and this this huge guy came in compared to him this puny little guy sitting there and he planted himself in front of me and obviously enjoying his power I can't remember what he wanted he wanted something and I could sense the that sense of presence intensifying and I just looked and he said a few things and suddenly he became extremely disconcerted

because there was no attempt on my part to put up any kind of defense or compete in any way and

[Speaker 17] (5:34:19 - 5:34:20)

he got

[Speaker 1] (5:34:20 - 6:06:10)

deflated like a balloon and didn't know what to say or do anymore that's an interesting phenomenon so the important thing for you is in any situation be in touch with that inherent power of presence because ultimately that is the power of now ultimately the now is the presence and the presence is you and ultimately you are in its deepest sense, you are the now because the now is the presence and this is why I speak of the power of now, the power of now is also the power of you and not the not the personal you but the you that is that remains and never was not connected and always is connected and always is an intrinsic part of universal power itself, universal consciousness itself the one the one consciousness that underlies all phenomena, the one consciousness of which all phenomena are only a temporary expression so there's enormous power there, how that manifests in this world is a secondary thing perhaps it only manifests as an emanation that comes through you or it flows into something that you you do or create and it's a great thing to feel that power which is not comparative because you know that everybody else is also a temporary expression of that inherent power although most people don't know it it's the famous guy that I spoke of in the perhaps the power of now he's sitting on, the beggar is sitting on his old box for many years asking for little coins and then somebody says what's inside that box?

I've never looked and it's filled with gold and I gave that analogy or parable at the beginning of the power of now so that is discovering that power in you and for most people they're looking for little substitutes to give them a sense of who they are and of course this is the reason why it is not unusual for humans to awaken spiritually to awaken to who they are in their essence when either one big thing or many things that they had derived their identity from good looks physical strength possessions abilities to do this or that recognition status in society those things and suddenly they lose these things or they lose one big thing that was the main that gave them their sense of identity the one main thing that gave them their sense of identity and that's gone and that's of course terrible suffering and then it can force a human to that deeper place because out here unless you quickly the ego might make an attempt to quickly rebuild some mind made identity by creating another narrative that's possible too not every human who loses who experiences great loss necessarily goes to that deeper place but the potential is there so it could be a sports person who is great great master of some sports and then he or she has an accident can never participate in it in that activity again and that gave him or her a sense of identity that at first leads to terrible suffering

and then potentially there is a deepening there and the essence, then you are forced into your essence there's a medieval image of Fortuna Fortuna is a goddess of good luck or fortune it goes back to Roman times that shows the fickleness of things the transient nature of all the things of this world which are the things that people identify with it gives them their sense of identity their self esteem and it has a Latin inscription on it it's an image of the goddess and translated from Latin it says this is supposed to be a king speaking or former king, which king stands for any ego and it says as these words in Latin the first word is I shall reign the next word says I reign to reign, to have a to reign a kingdom I shall reign I reign I have reigned I have lost the kingdom the normal sequence of events old age is a great opportunity for that unfortunately missed in many, many cases tragically missed the opportunity as old age comes, approaches and then you enter old age proximity of death loss of physical abilities of social status, retired who am I when I no longer have that title my work all these things are great opportunities for going deeper and what we are attempting to do now is getting as many books and other material out to old people's homes everywhere and also hospices and hospitals and so on, because those are great places where spiritual transformation could happen so the important thing then is sense your presence the presence of you which is not the person something deeper that is consciousness being aware of itself and then you do no longer need a narrative to tell you who you are free of that conceptual sense of self and this telling yourself of a story in your mind about your life that also goes out of the window my life this is what it has come to all those illusions that I had all those wonderful ideas I had when I was twenty oh now you may well still be at the peak of your success, worldly success and that's fine, why not enjoy it it's not who you are so you better go into the presence because it doesn't last with it also comes a wonderful ability to appreciate other human beings what they can do, what they know how they look without feeling diminished by appreciating the external things connected to another human being the ego can't do that because if the ego appreciates something, it might pretend because it wants something from you but if the ego appreciates something it feels diminished if you meet somebody who obviously looks so much better than you the ego feels diminished by that, so sometimes it tries to say something critical about that person in order to restore the injured sense of self it's absurd but that's how it works but when you come from presence you can look at a beautiful form of a human being and appreciate that and feel it's so beautiful or the achievements of another human being to appreciate their achievements great, what wonderful things that this person can do, it's so wonderful I would never be able to do that and yet the fact that you would never be able to do that because perhaps you're not strong enough or you're not inclined in that particular direction does not diminish anything of you so the appreciation of others then comes in and it's a lovely thing I even appreciate when I occasionally see people getting into their Ferrari and of course usually their ego is walking with them and so the car usually it's red color just to make sure that everybody notices and actually I love that thing too it's a beautiful thing that somebody built and this ego is enjoying himself, that's okay that's okay and you may find that sometimes very creative people, there are some who are

who have no ego about their creations they do not derive their identity from what they create, others have fairly big egos that happens too I believe the greatest creators in this world don't have an ego about that maybe they have it somewhere else but not around that and that sometimes means that they continue to be creative so sometimes you see this modesty which is lack of ego in people who have created something really great composers poets even some scientists like Einstein never developed an ego around what he came up with the incredible realization about space and time but he never developed this ego I created that there was a relatively little conceptual self and he found it absurd that he had become one of the most famous people on the planet even in his lifetime he just couldn't, it was so weird and he talked about the gap between what people think of me and who I am is just incredible and by the way that's the last thing that's also the place where you can manifest out of the power of presence if that presence if you are linked into that presence see what the universe wants to, because that presence is the presence of consciousness does it want to create something through you, perhaps it does but in that presence everything is already present in an undifferentiated state so whatever it is that you create externally is like the diluted form of something that in its essence, its concentrated non-form is already there in you so whatever you can possibly create is already present on some level on a deeper level there have been composers who created the most incredible pieces of music and many of them said they listened as if it came out of that place of depth already fully created and they just wrote it down so there's been an increasing awareness of people who look different from the main stream culture and so for a long long time they felt disadvantaged and people sometimes made fun of them and gradually empathy grew in humans and so all the people who did not belong for a long time because there was this exclusivity in the main stream culture many of them can now have come to a place of greater acceptance of who they are on the level of form and that's a wonderful thing gay people, people racial minorities and so on, they come to an acceptance and appreciation of their form identity and that's a wonderful thing so that was a good movement more consciousness has come in but the ego is there and although that's a good thing if you exclusively identify with whatever form it is of the form that you are temporarily if there's exclusive identification there's always ego that comes in so acceptance of who you are on the level of form is wonderful complete identification with who you are on the level of form is the ego so you need to see the difference between accepting and becoming comfortable and appreciating who or what you are on the level of form but if you are completely identified it means you are unaware of your essence identity if you are unaware of your essence identity you don't never even have glimpses of your essence identity then you are still completely trapped and you're not just comfortable accepting of your form identity no, you then have to create boundaries and the ego does that then it makes others into enemies of yours the ego likes to do that so you always have to be very vigilant something that is a good thing can be used by the ego for its own purposes and then the good thing is no longer a good thing nothing that is good now if you have more of what is good that's even better and then you add more to what is good that's even better one glass of water is good two

glasses of water a day is better three glasses of water a day is even better, four glasses of water a day is even better than that but at some point you reach a point where it's not better anymore, it's worse true change cannot happen if humans if you attempt to bring about true change in society without addressing the fundamental question of who am I and who are you at a deeper level without that realization in human beings there cannot be true change only permutations of ego the fundamental questions who am I so you can identify as male female something in between that's all fine white black, yellow whatever that's fine is that who you essentially are no essentially I am not a man or I'm not a woman on the level of presence there's no gender on the level of presence there's no race on the level of presence there's no age on the level of presence I'm not young and I'm not old as presence I don't have a history as presence I'm not a victim lovely the ego loves being a victim so be careful of that people that see themselves the moment you complain about another personal situation the ego is there the victim me and it feels bigger and then you have the danger is you have entire groups it is true that there have been many groups that were suppressed or victimized but the danger is if you continue if you're a member of a particular group if you continue to derive your sense of identity from being a victim you're still trapped in ego you're not liberated and a victim is ultimately powerless but the ego believes that's power so the at first you practice in non-problematic situations you practice being the presence not having all these moments when you don't add thought so you walk around looking at the lights an object your hand the flowers a glass of water and it's an amazing thing when you're trapped in thinking the entire sense perceived world that continuously surrounds you is just a peripheral phenomenon because most of your attention is trapped in thought so you're unaware of the miraculous nature of the sense perceived universe around you and the moment you give it your complete attention without, and you can only do that without adding thought to your perception every little thing is alive and miraculous and beautiful perhaps this is what they try, I don't know in so called conceptual art when you go into an art gallery and somebody and there you have an exhibit it tells you who the artist is and all you see is on there's a on the floor or on a table is an everyday object a can of beans and then it tells you the name of the artist laughter I believe that's called conceptual art and you're lucky if it's a can of beans, it could be something worse laughter many art galleries have these exhibits and of course some people go in and say hmm, interesting laughter I wonder what he's trying to say laughter there's a message here, I can't quite get it and some people are so knowledgeable about art, they can write a long piece about this can of beans laughter and why it's there, and what the artist's intention is, by putting it there laughter and you would have to ask the artist what the intention was, if it is an artist but let's just see on the screen if it means anything if it's anything significant, then it would be drawing the viewer's attention to something ordinary so that the viewer becomes aware of the extra ordinariness of an ordinary object if it works like that then I can accept it, it might have a purpose but then I would not be able to write very much about it, except what I've just said laughter so it would really, it would take your attention away from the movement of thought, into thoughtless perception so that would be conceptual

art then I mentioned a couple of times this phenomenon that arose on YouTube of people it's now thousands and thousands of people are doing it of people who take an ordinary object and handle it and touch it and make noises with it the most boring YouTube videos you can possibly imagine laughter so they might go and have something like this now the amazing thing is some of them get hundreds of thousands of views, so there is a longing they're not called spiritual but the good ones have a spiritual dimension to them, there's a longing in the collective for that kind of thoughtless perception, because it does by looking at those videos you either fall asleep and many people do they use it in order to go to sleep or you enter that state of presence and you suddenly become aware that a simple object has an aliveness and a beauty that you didn't know before, so when somebody goes and might drink and people watch that and some of these are 30 minutes long laughter I watched some of them myself laughter but I watched them for anthropological reasons laughter laughter laughter well not really, I watched them because I'm looking for is there in the background something spiritual and people don't even know it, the people who are watching it, there's a longing in humans to be free of the incessant noise of their minds and those videos they're called ASMR for some reason Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response some people claim that it produces tingles in their bodies but many others just watch because they stop thinking while they watch most people who watch them probably fall below thought laughter and a few, especially for the good videos, probably rise up into presence and you become aware that an ordinary thing can be extraordinary it has an extraordinary presence laughter so if you haven't heard of it, look it up on YouTube ASMR, because it's become so popular, there are many bad ones but somehow there's a self-selecting process at work and if you look at the number of views, the better ones have like a hundred thousand views or more with the exception of some produced by young ladies who reveal aspects of their body while they're doing it so that could be misleading, they're not necessarily good laughter laughter but something that has arisen spontaneously and there is a longing in humans to be free of the noise of the voice in their head and of course most humans believe the only way they can be free is by falling below thought I want to go to sleep, but I can't sleep laughter

[Speaker 2] (6:06:22 - 6:06:23)

so the

[Speaker 1] (6:06:23 - 6:25:18)

whether it's conceptual art or those videos, there is truth there and that is the world of ordinary things is also extraordinary the multiplicity of this universe that surrounds us the multiplicity of life forms, of things, of beings is quite miraculous and if we are continuously so absorbed in the thought processes that we are only peripherally aware of the aliveness of the world around us, then we are missing something really vital and that's again, it's to do with being too absorbed in one's mind mind made sense of self in

that and occasionally they say, oh look it's a lovely flower oh that's a nice sunset, three seconds but I have other problems to think about more important things on my mind I have a lot on my mind don't have time for sunsets don't have time for beauty what are you talking about beauty I've got problems so look practice it outside or indoors there are two ways of looking around one is choosing an object and briefly just wherever your gaze falls upon whatever it might be for a moment you look and then there's something else you look at but as you look there's a two-fold awareness one is the awareness of what you are looking at and you see it fully the other is the awareness of the awareness without which you wouldn't be able to look and that is your essential beingness so the two-fold nature of this act of perception so if I'm looking at you as a person I'm looking I'm aware of what I'm seeing I'm also aware I'm aware of how you look I'm also aware of myself as the awareness and because I'm aware of myself as the awareness I'm aware of more in yourself, in you than the external appearance I'm also aware of you as the conscious presence that's the essence of who you are and I can also do that when I look at a flower there's more one could say that everything that you perceive is a surface phenomenon it's the surface of reality and underneath your perceptions there is a vastness like the ocean and whatever you're seeing is the surface of the ocean so underneath that, there's a vastness of energy formations ultimately the one consciousness expressing itself in these all very short-lived forms and the deeper you go the stiller it becomes this is probably what Plato talked about, the ancient Greek philosopher that there are ideas in the unseen realm there's the world of what is translated as ideas, but that's not a good translation he said before things exist as a physical thing they already exist on an unseen level in the world of consciousness and then the consciousness manifests as something or someone the universe manifests briefly as you and as you become conscious, in you it is the universe that is becoming conscious you think you are a person and of course in conventional terms you are a person but ultimately you're not a person, it's absurd what does it even mean?

I mean, the word means a mask person comes from Latin persona means mask I mean, you're not a mask you're not a person what are you? who are you? you're not separate from the universe so you are an expression of the universe you haven't fallen into this universe from somewhere, you've come out of this universe and then you go back into it and then you come out again as something else you die you're born oh, what's this all about?

and then you and then you oh, that wasn't a very nice life oh oh, this one is better but it doesn't last so the one consciousness appearing as multiplicity of beings so you are the awareness of the universe, you are the consciousness of the universe, how could you not be? if being or god is the creative source of all energy and thoughts and thoughts from the ego are negative form of energy don't these negative thoughts originate from being? in other words did god create evil?

so let's just look at it again if being or god is the creative source of all energy there's

only one source right and that is the creative source of all energy thoughts from the ego are negative form of energy but energy of course don't these negative thoughts originate from being? and so did god create evil? that question of course has been similar that kind of question has been asked and talked about by many philosophers and it has remained the kind of stumbling block in christian religion so let's see what the intuitive answer is in this sense perceived universe if you want to use anything here to compare god to the most appropriate thing in this sense perceived universe would be the sun because the sun is the source of seemingly inexhaustible energy and the giver of life the very heat in your body is sun comes from the sun indirectly the sun of course is not eternal but compared to the human life span could be considered as virtually eternal so much faster and it gives freely of itself millions millions and millions of years of just pouring out energy now let's say the sun is in a process of becoming conscious of itself because my intuition is that the universe or rather that which underlies the universe or the one behind the many is in the process of becoming conscious of itself in time the dimension of time although the one also exists in the timeless dimension where there is no past and future so God, to use that word for a while in the timeless God is already complete and perfect but it seems that in the realm of time God is becoming conscious through all these life forms now if that were the sun then in the process of becoming conscious let us say that light particles if there is such a thing well there is they are called photons well they are not really particles but nobody knows what they are waves or particles or both in the process of becoming conscious the sun which continuously emits zillions of photons light particles let's say the individual photon of course is part of the process of becoming conscious of the sun and in that process the individual photon of course would undergo a change of consciousness arising more consciousness and temporarily the individual photon as it becomes together with the sun, it is part of the sun it makes up, conscious it and as consciousness arises it misperceives itself as a separate entity and no longer because it is becoming conscious it no longer realizes its oneness with the sun that it is a continuum, it never really loses connection with the sun and so temporarily as part of the process of becoming conscious it believes itself to be separate it's a temporary thing and while it believes itself to be separate it creates all kinds of illusions that reflect the basic illusion of separateness and that's basically where we are at humanity is at because humanity is the human being is the photon the sun particle so to speak not the intelligence within the consciousness within is the consciousness of God, there is only one consciousness and that consciousness in the process of the whole becoming conscious misperceives itself temporarily and that creates the illusion of separateness in the individual human and that creates the illusion of identification with form which is the illusion of separateness that's seeing oneself as a separate entity and the stronger that illusion is the more that gets reflected in its actions outside which then become deluded and that's called evil ultimately in evil nothing is destroyed the essence of all life form is eternal but on its own level it's not pleasant from the point of view of the larger whole it's only a brief dream episode that takes place as the one is becoming conscious so that is the answer to did God create or does God

create evil so the teachings that say that evil ultimately is not real of course that is correct but on its it's a question of look of levels if you look at it on one level it has a certain reality and the fact that it ultimately is not real does not mean that on this temporary level it appears very real and must but it must be recognized as deluded so evil, I have defined it before somewhere can be defined as complete identification with form that is the illusion and the more an entity is identified with form the more seemingly evil the entity creates and the more suffering is created and what's the answer? the answer of course is why we are here we are here you me, us here is the arising and the ending of the answer and the answer is not just the answer it's also the end of the illusion of separateness and the end of so called evil

[Speaker 10] (6:25:45 - 6:26:20)

hello so my question has to do with the ego and so much of what is discussed and what you discuss is about the ego and often times it feels like it's characterized as the enemy or someone that we are fighting against or some type of connotation like that and yet it seems like the intelligence of the universe probably didn't make a mistake with the ego so just trying to reconcile those ideas

[Speaker 1] (6:26:23 - 6:26:23)

yes

[Speaker 10] (6:26:23 - 6:26:24)

it's

[Speaker 1] (6:26:24 - 6:34:25)

it's although from a certain perspective the ego may look quite insane from a higher perspective it is no more than part of the evolutionary process of the species it's a stage in the evolution and as we are approaching the next stage in the evolution we are beginning to see that the ego has completely outlived it's usefulness but it had it's usefulness and it's we are only now beginning to see that it is insane because we are approaching the next stage in human evolution before nobody could see that the ego was insane although except very rare great masters the Buddha already said it's an illusion Jesus said deny thyself which means recognize the unreality of the ego but not many people understood what they said they were kind of precursors of the next step they were pointing to it before it actually became a true awakening on the planet so from our present perspective because we are at the end of one evolutionary stage the ego looks totally absurd once you see what it is and how much havoc it has created but from a higher perspective it's part of the evolution of humanity without there could be no enlightenment or awakening without it ultimately so it's fine, in your own life you can see it, how you had to go through the ignorance in your own life, I mean not ignorance in the

sense of lack of education but spiritual ignorance not knowing who you essentially are and making so many mistakes on the basis of the illusory ego identity and you can see it now and you had to go through it there was once most likely humanity once had not an ego yet and that perhaps is captured in the myth which you find in many different cultures that didn't even have contact with each other, the myth of the golden age when humans lived in harmony with each other and in harmony with nature and life was easy and that myth points to probably to the fact that a long long time ago humans lived in at one moment in a sense of oneness with nature and the surroundings and the ego hadn't developed yet and that perhaps became later survived, the memory of it survived as the myth of the golden age which of course is expressed in the Old Testament as paradise as just one aspect of the myth of the golden age when life was easy and then something happened the fall, whatever you want to call it, it happened and then the ugliness came in and that of course was the beginning of human ability to think which at first was a miraculous thing, thinking suddenly happened, some anthropologists are telling us that and I believe they are right, when thinking first began to happen in humans, humans were very surprised and they thought that some god was talking to them in their head and so because thought suddenly came, of course part of that was the development of language and so language started to happen in people's heads who's talking?

and then often, and they acted on it often, when a thought came and then they did it kill this man laughter the enemy, the other tribe the enemy they're not human that's what the voice is telling me so the voice in the head, language internalized that, so it was a miraculous, because but it also made many things possible that would not have been possible without it knowledge arising, you can transmit knowledge and how civilization as we know it wouldn't happen without that all kinds of transmission of knowledge, architecture and then philosophy starts and whatever all these things, conceptual knowledge arising, a miraculous thing, a strange thing and then over the millennia the voice became so all pervasive that it took over people's sense of identity whereas for a long time probably after the arising of thinking humans still had a sense of rootedness in being the natural sense of rootedness in the depths of their being and gradually over the millennia they got drawn more and more into the thinking heads mode and then the whole sense of identity was no longer rooted in the depths of their being but in the voice in the head and that's how the but it made many things possible and now the next step in the evolution is a return to the pre-egoic state with the added dimension of consciously knowing your connectedness with the one whereas before they were connected with the one without even knowing it, it was a natural state of connectedness but as we return to the go beyond ego we now knowingly we return to the one consciously and that's the next stage, so it's not a regressive step, in some sense we go back to the golden age, one could almost say but knowing and that's expressed of course in the ancient parable of what in the bible is called the prodigal son the son leaves his father's home, gives to the father, give me your inheritance and the son goes abroad to a distant country, squanders all his wealth and becomes destitute and then

the message comes from the father the father sends a messenger come back home come back to me and then the son begins to remember who he is and then he comes back to the father's home and as the parable says is loved more deeply than before there's a deeper there's an added first you lose it you never really lose it completely otherwise you wouldn't even exist but you lose it and then you return when you return to it there's a depth to it of knowing and that's where we are destined to go and so once we realize that we're actually grateful to the ego because it has been

[Speaker 2] (6:34:25 - 6:34:27)

it was part of the journey

[Speaker 15] (6:34:28 - 6:34:49)

yeah thank you very much these devices it breaks the relation with other people you're at dinner with

[Speaker 1] (6:34:52 - 6:34:56)

don't allow these things to take over your life, that's vitally important

[Speaker 8] (6:34:56 - 6:35:51)

I work with technology and I actually it was quite interesting to hear you talk about technology a few times in the past couple of days and the way that you mentioned that smartphones are actually an extension of our minds and the way that the internet is actually it's a space for our unconscious mind to actually be reactive so one of the things I do for work is to raise a bit of the ethical questions around that and the things that we usually call digital nudges which is when we try to influence other people through technology so I would really love to hear a bit of your opinion and maybe your advice if there is a way for us to use technology as a tool and as a channel to actually increase humanity consciousness and presence

[Speaker 1] (6:35:51 - 6:38:30)

yes so in itself of course it's neutral the technology is neutral it's not either bad or good it depends how it's used it is at the moment it is to a large extent a reflection of the unconscious mind so if you want to learn about human unconsciousness, if you want to learn about the human ego just go there and read what people post look at the reactivity of people on social media and so on the comments they leave you can learn a lot about unconsciousness and identification with mental positions so the first thing of course is what be careful with what you put out there, what kind of thing you post, if you post things online is it reactive give yourself a moment when you read something before you type in an answer or a comment give yourself a moment and go within and avoid making people wrong you can talk about issues but don't make people wrong amplify your ego

by making others wrong even though their position, political or otherwise, you may regard as completely misguided or erroneous there is still a human being behind that so you can put forward arguments against somebody's perspective or viewpoint without making another human being wrong so how what you put out is very important is your communication conscious or not or is it reactive and then it can be used for other purposes I'm there too sometimes, there are certain places where I appear could go to YouTube or whatever and then suddenly there's a spiritual teacher talking so do you professionally work with what exactly do you do in your work that involves the media or

[Speaker 8] (6:38:30 - 6:38:43)

pretty much involves the creation the ideas around the digital products and services so creating the product that people actually use and designing the interfaces that people actually use on phones and other

[Speaker 1] (6:38:43 - 6:50:47)

there are some meditation sites on all these things so there's a great potential for raising consciousness there, somebody recommended to me several apps for meditation which I now have on my phone I haven't tried them yet, I've been there for a while but I have four or five that are there, I want to try them out, so that's the very thing that otherwise would clutter your mind can actually also be used to bring about space or spaciousness in your mind so it doesn't necessarily mean that when you have your phone or the 99% of cases when people look their mind is being cluttered but maybe they're on a meditation app, maybe they're looking at a beautiful spacious picture or listening to some sound take a conscious breath have a little reminder every two hours take a conscious breath and bring spaciousness oh yes, spaciousness so the very same thing that otherwise clutters your mind can now unclutter your mind, it's possible so I believe that it's also going to grow now and it has to because otherwise that technology could potentially drive humans completely insane and remove their ability to focus on anything for more than a few seconds people create young people who are totally uncentered, have no spaciousness within, don't even communicate with humans anymore because they prefer to communicate digitally so these things are important but what you put out is important so always take into consideration whether this brings people to presence or whether it clutters somebody's mind and perhaps you can combine of course what you do needs to be also commercially viable so but I believe you can combine the two, it's not necessarily a question of either it's commercially viable and it clutters people's minds or it's presence and we're going to go out of business, it doesn't have to be like that, it's up to you to be creative use the more still you are, the more creative insights you will have and you might get some amazing ideas of what is possible, I can't tell you what is possible I don't know enough about it, I know very little about it but you're in a wonderful position so allow yourself to go deep enough within because then it is then the creative ideas seem to come and if you find a thing that not only brings people to

presence but also helps your company to grow then that then becomes a conscious business which is wonderful it's challenging of course it's challenging so don't let all your attention be absorbed by that kind of activity you still need to connect with nature take it as much as possible away from there, connect with nature and then bring it back another thing just in connection with this not perhaps directly related to your question but related to this is tends to happen is that these devices people are never they're still in bed and they're still doing stuff on it and that takes you over there at dinner and they're doing stuff on it it breaks the relation with other people you're at dinner with I see people in restaurants the couple sitting having dinner together and both are on their phones now that probably means they've known each other for a while if it happens on the first date the first date will probably be the last one but if it happens after they've known each other for two years then it's almost a normal thing that they're not present with each other or then they exchange a few words and then she looks at the phone again and then he stares into space and then she's still on her phone I've actually observed it she's still on her phone and he's staring into space and then finally he gets out his phone too because he doesn't want to be staring into space and then I wonder are they texting each other right two good things that I learned that in some huge companies I believe it might be VW in Germany well they've had enough problems but now they they tell their employees after 6pm they're not allowed to use the company phones anymore not to deal with emails or anything they need to get off and that's a very wise thing because the more people's attention gets absorbed by this the more confused and non-creative they become the more cluttered their minds become the more ineffective they are even at their work not to mention as human beings their quality of life decreases enormously so don't give yourself spaces don't allow these things to take over your life, that's vitally important so it's wonderful that some big companies like that have this policy now no emails or anything after 6pm well that's wonderful I talked a couple of years ago to Ariana Huffington who has a famous news website and has also written some books and she describes in her latest book how her life deteriorated more and more although she was making a lot of money and finally she collapsed and hit her head on her desk and she was a complete breakdown and now she has for example in her private life and that's a good thing she has this policy of no digital device in my bedroom so in her bedroom she still has books sometimes she reads in bed but it has to be a book not a kindle not the ipad, not the iphone no digital device in my bedroom and that's a good thing at least you have that space for yourself so everybody needs to be really conscious of the addictive nature of these devices how I sometimes say I even said that before these things were invented the greatest addiction for human beings is compulsive thinking they can't stop thinking really that is what is the meaning of being an addict whatever it may be if you are an addict it means you have no power to stop whether you are addicted to a drug or to alcohol and many people who are addicts say no I am not an addict I could stop but they can't so the nature of being an addict is you no longer have the power to stop doing this and this applies for many humans first of all all humans are addicts and that was already before these devices

came all humans are addicts addicted to their thinking to their compulsive and unconscious superfluous, excessive often destructive thinking they can't stop and they don't want to stop because they are so identified with it with the entire identities in their thoughts so they have to go on they don't even know it so the greatest addiction for humanity is not heroin or whatever it's the human mind that's actually you are addicted to thinking and now these devices are an amplification externalization of the human mind and so that makes it even more difficult to deal with because then you not only have your mind you also have the collective mind that comes at you through your iPhone and your Samsung which hopefully doesn't explode in your face well if it did explode that would make you present and it might suddenly break the addiction so give yourself space in your bedroom this is a good policy and don't be on it at all times the younger you are the more difficult this is for you for old people like myself it's still relatively relatively easy but if you are 18 or 20 or 25 then you've grown up with these things the older than the rest they didn't grow up with these things they're not quite, perhaps not quite as addicted and identified with it another way to tell whether they've grown up with these things is how they type into their phones I always admire young people because they type they go like that at enormous speed with their thumbs how they do it with their thumbs I don't know and they can even talk to you while they're doing it and then I get a text message and somebody expects an answer who might not know that I'm not that fast and with the text message you can actually see that somebody is replying, you know that he's replying and so they wait and say why isn't he, he's doing something they don't know that I go like that it takes time and that's a good thing because it's easy to be present when you're not good at this you can be much more present where is the bee? so it's a challenge I hope you come up with something wonderful that promotes presence in this world

[Speaker 2] (6:50:48 - 6:50:52)

and helps your business thank you

[Speaker 1] (6:50:58 - 7:32:54)

so then this ability to ask a true question comes from becoming familiar with and familiar with and comfortable with not knowing the state of not knowing which ultimately is the state of not thinking because when you're not thinking you don't know anything conceptually you don't know anything and yet when you're not thinking a different dimension of consciousness arises that is has no conceptual knowledge in it but there is an intelligence there there is a vast intelligence there that is non-conceptual in order to have a balanced life we need to be able to dwell in both of these dimensions the dimension of conceptual knowledge we can't do without it and the conception of the deeper I call it the deeper knowing that is non-conceptual so it's not ignorance I often recommend that you should try this out in everyday life and see how do you know something how do you experience something new you can go into nature you can go

into a forest you can experience the forest through your conceptual knowledge depending on how much you know about trees and plants and birds and vegetation and so on and you can as you go you enter a forest, you've never been there and you immediately you can say well this is that and that's a tree of the approximate age how it grows, the nature of the soil, you know a lot or you could go and ask somebody to explain the forest to you so you have a guide so the guide takes you into the forest and explains and you learn a lot about the trees and after an hour you come out again and you have absorbed an enormous amount of knowledge about the forest that is one way of knowing the forest conceptually and there's nothing wrong with it but there's another way of knowing you go into the forest and you don't have a guide and you don't know much about trees or anything you go into the forest and simply experience the forest directly without the intermediary of conceptualization which means you look at the trees you look at the plants you take in all the sense perceptions of the forest, the totality of sense perceptions not only do you look at individual life forms you're also aware of the totality of the forest that is an energy field that surrounds you and all these things, you take that in with little or no conceptual thinking so you're beginning to know this forest in a totally different way that is non-conceptual and that moves you also you experience the forest no longer do you experience a clear separation between you and that amazing life form which is the forest around you there is a sense of merging with there's a sense of oneness with it which cannot be there when you approach it through conceptual knowledge the concept is a little little sticking labels on things and then mistaking the label for what it is it's that, oh now I know what it is this is the name of the tree, now I know what it is no you don't, you've just put a label on that mysterious and miraculous and profound thing and then you believe every label that's what it is you don't know what it is, you just have a name for it, but we need that kind of knowledge too but the thing is if all you have or most of your life is conducted through conceptual knowledge and this is what is encouraged in our civilization when that is all you know then a vital dimension is missing from your life a very vital dimension, in fact one could almost say you inhabit very much a surface reality I think there's a Ken Whittle, the philosopher, I think calls it flat land you inhabit this flat land so there's no depth to anything, there's just conceptualization, so you inhabit ultimately a universe that is dead, deadened you are dead to it because you can no longer experience it in its depths, and also of course when you are confined to knowledge, conceptual knowledge only for example, in regard to nature you cannot possibly sense the I reluctantly use the word the sacredness of nature in fact, from a point of view of conceptualization sacredness is a meaningless term, when you say the sacredness of the forest, they say can you please define what exactly do you mean?

you want more concepts so you can't understand what this pointer sacredness, what it points to, you don't know it until you get a glimpse of it and then you say no explanation will suffice for you to know what sacredness is, in the same way that as Mathieu Ricard said the other day here the famous example from the east you can talk about honey for

a long time, you can write a PhD about honey I'm sure people have done that and you've never tasted it so you know an enormous amount about honey but you have never tasted honey, so do you know honey?

no, you know about honey, but you don't know honey because there are two different different modalities of knowing the world, so we need to be in both without being especially we need to be careful not to be absorbed continuously by conceptual knowledge which is not only about things, even about other human beings how do you know a person? what do you know about a person? in some languages, this is interesting there's sometimes wisdom embodied in language in Spanish or French you have actually two words for to know there are different ways of knowing one is a more abstract knowing which in Spanish would be saber yo se, I know this is a fact I know who he is yo se quien es I know who he is but if you know him, you use a different verb conozco le conozco I know you I know who you are, uses one verb I know you uses a different verb so there's in French the same savoir, connaître this is very interesting so there's sometimes a certain amount of wisdom embodied in language so the knowing savoir, connaître that would be the more direct non-conceptual knowing so our task is to again this is related also to doing and being we need to be able to move in both and have access to both modalities of knowing our danger is losing ourselves in the conceptual mind so that we inhabit ultimately we inhabit a universe that is basically lifeless and dead because these are lifeless concepts so this means we need to develop the ability to periodically let go of the conceptual mind without losing consciousness so it's not you're not going to sleep you're not falling off the chair because you've had six whiskeys I don't know how many you need to fall off the chair but you let go of the conceptual mind and just be present with what is and then you can know anything you can know whatever it is through sense perception you're very much become very much more aware of sense perception and you take it certainly things suddenly become more vitally or vibrantly alive when you look at something without interference of the conceptual mind and at the same time you're not only acutely aware of sense perception so that things are more alive suddenly around you but you're also aware of the underlying presence of consciousness itself which is you you're aware of yourself not the person but you're aware of yourself as the presence and so you become the space for whatever arises there and so that's a totally different way of knowing something can you speak about how to be in this world with this constant push for connectivity how did we get to the most profound things from a relatively simple question oh yes we talked about doing and being without feeling that being present is another thing to do how to be in this world without this constant push for connectivity well the first thing is you turn off your push notifications that's already a big step forward and you need to be disciplined in the use of your device your phone whatever tablet, phone so that it doesn't take you over because it's simply an extension of the mind and if it wasn't enough before we invented these devices humans had already been taken over by their minds even 2,000 years ago not as much as now but even 2,000 years ago Jesus said why are you always thinking

about tomorrow why are you always worried about the next thing look at the flower, look how it lives in total alignment with the present moment and it's being sustained by the one consciousness that's my translation so already then humans had been taken over by mind but even more so since then mind has proliferated and then the clever human mind came up with these devices said let's extend ourselves into the realm of things and then we can create this which is an extension of the human mind so when you might have noticed when you are with yourself you have the voice in the head unless you begin to awaken in which case you're able to experience spaces of alert still presence, it's beautiful but otherwise you have this think, commenting talking, arguing and then this becomes a burden for many people of course it is a burden because a lot of the stuff it says is actually not pleasant and it's so you experience it as a burden and since you derive your sense of identity from it it becomes yourself this talking voice you think that's you it becomes the self and you walk around with this burden of the self and in order to unburden yourself one thing you can do you think you can do is you can watch the television or you can go on there are countless things that you can watch on the little screen the entire world's knowledge at your fingertips and the moment you watch the screen, whether it's television or whatever screen you might have noticed that your own your so called own thought processes come to a stop so to some extent you are free of the self, this is why people sometimes find watching television relaxing say okay I just need to relax now, just turn it on by this they mean while they watch the television screen, they are not burdened by their self induced thought processes what they do however they replace their own thoughts with the collective thoughts, so they just you are in a state you are not in a state of thoughtless awareness when you watch television or you watch something on the screen you absorb the thoughts from there into your mind and you link into so for people often in a state of semi or hypnosis when they watch it kind of paralyzes you it can also happen with the screen with television already started of course I don't know when, whenever, 60 years ago whenever television started and you go and so your mind is just absorbing whatever is playing it's the TV mind which is receiving stuff from wherever it comes from is going into your mind and you become a no longer thinking your own thoughts occasionally your mind is saying oh this guy is so stupid and then you are watching again and then another thought why am I watching this rubbish half an hour later this is so awful but you can't you can't turn it off here is the remote let's just try one more channel there might be something else oh no that's stupid try one more this is how an addict behaves and the device is even more addictive because you carry them with you and you have to admit, you may have to admit that there is an addiction in you not everybody here but quite a few it would be almost normal to feel this draw towards it and you use it even when you don't need to use it that's the amazing thing when you are standing at the elevator waiting another person is standing next to you and he or she is pulling out the phone and then you pull out and it's yours, you don't know why or anywhere you are waiting you are ordering a tea or coffee somewhere and you are standing in line and if you look around there is almost nobody and probably nobody who is not looking at this little thing this is scary zombie like now if

somebody from the past the so called past time traveler from the past came here not the distant past let's just say even 20 years ago and he arrived and would see in the streets in restaurants, in cafes, everywhere public transport people walk around with these things staring at these things what's that? something has happened to humanity they have all become zombies something terrible must have happened what was that? there are these are wonderful devices incredible possibilities of having access to all kinds of knowledge but there is always the downside there is a huge huge downside to it they are addictive they stimulate the mind the thing you want to become free from you want to become free of mind and this will prevent you from becoming free of mind so you need to be disciplined enough to not automatically look at it whenever there is a moment and you are waiting for something or whatever it is there is no need to check these things I don't even know what they are but I just know that Facebook is the biggest thing and then there is Instagram and Snapchat and countless names and some people have all of them on their phones and you need to know the latest thing crazy but if you detect the addiction in yourself then you have to first of all admit that you are addicted don't deny it you know Alcoholics Anonymous the first thing when you go there you have to say I am an alcoholic now some people say well that is not a good thing because your identity is not being an alcoholic of course not so it could be misunderstood but your nature is not being an alcoholic your present condition is that but to recognize the problem the difficulty, the challenge is just to state it yes I am addicted to this phone and I choose not to be addicted and then you can be the only one in many places who is not looking in waiting rooms waiting in line whatever it is waiting on the phone for somebody to talk to you and in the meantime but you use this beautiful thing of just being, just being present and you look around and you step out of thinking and all the others are still in their hypnotic state Meditation to another live meditation we call it meditation but that is not really what it is meditation is another concept that creates a compartment in your mind or your life different from other things but we are not really here to do a meditation as such but to realize the essential you or to put it more accurately and directly to realize the essential I because one could say and don't take this too literally because whatever language one uses is always somewhat wrong so they are only approximations they are only helpful hints used temporarily whatever words we use here are helpful pointers not the absolute truth can't be expressed in words so all pointers of course have certain limitations knowing that I can use one or two pointers so we could say then that there is two of you here or at any time there is the I that is circumstantial relative fleeting and it's not a unified body it includes all kinds of sub-I's and patterns its form the form of who you are the psychological form physical form conditioned by circumstances reacting to circumstances having fears and desires and then there is the deeper I which one could say is the dreamer of all the circumstances and the events and the experiences that make up a person's so-called life so I'm comparing then circumstantial existence to a kind of dream which is what it is because it dissolves fairly quickly not only your life but every event and circumstance in your life it changes continuously and that's why we can compare it to a kind of dream which also is not substantial it's also fleeting and subject

to change and subject to impermanence just as this world that looks deceptively solid but is also subject to constant change it's not really solid and physicists agree if you look deeply into matter you see there is ultimately nothing there is no solid matter only energy fluctuations but the energy fluctuations appear to us it's an illusion they appear to us as solid so there's a solidity to the world that is not absolutely real it's part of the illusion and then people always get shocked when they realize how fleeting it all is and whenever you think your life has a secure basis very quickly you realize oh it wasn't that secure because something happens and you realize that that sense of security that one seeks in circumstances is also an illusion so the deeper eye is that which illuminates the circumstances creates them in a way like a dream creates a dream the question is whether that deeper eye which is the light behind it all without which there would be no world that deeper eye the question is whether the deeper eye is totally lost in the dream or whether it knows itself as the deeper eye even while the dream continues lucid living similar to lucid dreaming which some people are interested in which is staying conscious while you're dreaming and knowing that you're dreaming but here we're talking about that may or may not happen but here we're talking about lucid living which is to know yourself as the light behind it all the presence behind it all and to sense that presence that has no form as the life that you are or the consciousness that you are is no longer the separate you that's behind it all now the important thing is to know that not conceptually but in the background and over the years I've used many different pointers to point to it every pointer of course limits it it's not that but it can be temporarily helpful I've said the stillness and the background the space the inner space or the spaciousness or the light light, Jesus also used that term to point to it you are the light of the world there's the world and there's the light in which it appears you are the light of the world is the light God?

if we even want to use that term well if we use that term I would say the light is the emanation of God in the same way that the sunlight emanates from the sun and is not really separate from the sun God is the absolute unmanifested timeless we can't say anything about it and from the absolute unmanifested something shines into this world and creates this world I've used other pointers also yes, stillness inner space spaciousness presence or in negative terms the cessation of thinking the end of compulsive thinking and that's why we're here to realize that possibility what's left of you when you stop thinking and of course I'm inviting you to stop thinking you can't make it happen but you can allow yourself to just be present there's the essential I not much you can say about it but you are whenever you enter that dimension so to speak power flows into you you could call it spiritual power it may not immediately become transformed into something in this world it could become creative action could become an emanation of love towards your fellow human beings it could become other things as it flows into this world but it doesn't immediately necessarily have to do that you're plugged into the source of all power and it's not the power that the ego would call power which is noisy it's not that there's a silent power that's far more powerful than that so it's

not the power of the monster which is what the ego thinks of as power or power over others control very different it's silent power which from the point of view of the ego looks like weakness weakness the Tao Te Ching sometimes compares that power to water it seems very soft but it can erode the hardest rock and does and that of course is the power of now what that really means don't expect immediate results I'm saying be content with opening yourself to this influx of silent power and though the circumstantial you with its situation life situation of course is still there continues the ups and downs of circumstantial existence one day everything is going great the next day things collapse and then it's fine again new things arise and while all that happens you feel yourself you sense yourself as the presence behind it all and then you can sit there discussing this or that with people even putting forward your opinion and still sense the powerful spaciousness in the background even while you say no I think that's how it is, not like that that is what I think you don't lose yourself in the circumstantial I you stay rooted in the essential I you are essentially that of course now they are not absolutely separate the circumstantial I is the the waves on the surface of being the ripples and waves and of course there's no division between the waves on the surface of the ocean and the ocean it just sometimes looks as if every wave had a separate existence and of course you could say oh this wave, that's called John and there's wave Mary, it comes and there it comes, there it comes oh it's gone that's all terrible

[Speaker 2] (7:33:28 - 7:33:38)

is there any is there a dimension that is deeper than this self, this person

[Speaker 1] (7:33:38 - 7:34:09)

that you are here for a little while everybody has a history and you are a person you are a conditioned entity is there anything beyond this conditioned entity, the self the Buddha calls it the self and he, another other than the fact of suffering another important part of his teaching is the

[Speaker 2] (7:34:09 - 7:34:17)

ultimate unreality of that self the ultimate unreality of that self

[Speaker 1] (7:34:18 - 7:34:58)

which was also Jesus teaching but it's usually overlooked by churches and theologians because Jesus said literally, here's another little quote that I'm sure he actually said literally he said deny thyself oh I thought the Buddha said that, it was actually Jesus deny thyself means what does it mean what is the point in denying yourself if your self is actually real if it has a substantial ultimate reality then to deny

[Speaker 2] (7:34:58 - 7:35:08)

something that is real wouldn't make sense but deny thyself he said that because he agrees with the Buddha

[Speaker 1] (7:35:08 - 7:36:19)

that that identity that people carry around with is ultimately an illusion there is something deeper that is beyond that so when Jesus says deny thyself what is really meaning is recognize the unreality of yourself that's what is deny yourself, recognize it ultimately this is not who or what you are yes it has a certain function here it is a part of who you are on the level of form physical form, psychological form, this is why I call it your form identity, everybody has one you have a body that's a physical form and you have a mental form which is you as this person that you can think about and talk about and it has its emotions that go with that, conditioned by the past, whatever happened to you

[Speaker 2] (7:36:19 - 7:36:38)

in the past conditions you to become this particular person is there anything beyond that conditioned entity and here we come to the realization that

[Speaker 15] (7:36:38 - 7:36:48)

there is it is possible to go deeper where you

[Speaker 2] (7:36:48 - 7:37:03)

your sense of who you are goes beyond this personal sense of self, the personal sense of self is still there but it is no longer all consuming

[Speaker 1] (7:37:04 - 7:37:29)

and that's a very important difference, if you discover something and we are here to many of you already can sense what it is that I'm talking about but we go in more deeply there is a dimension in you that transcends the who or what you are as a person, as a self

[Speaker 2] (7:37:29 - 7:38:07)

there is a deeper we could say higher but I prefer deeper doesn't matter what word you use higher could kind of take you out of yourself and you I'm looking for myself up there, my higher self, but it's better to go within and encounter the deeper dimension of yourself so how do we access that, how do we discover that and that's the awakening

[Speaker 1] (7:38:07 - 7:41:38)

that is the awakening what is it that you awaken from not sleep that's the ordinary

awakening every morning you awaken and you open your eyes and you realize there is a significant shift from the dream state to the so called awakened state in the morning you suddenly go, oh here I am again but before you were there was a sleep state you were dreaming or perhaps you were in a state of dreamless sleep and then you come out of that and you're suddenly awake and that traditional, spiritual traditions use this to point to another awakening that is similar but much higher than awakening from sleep, the ordinary awakening from sleep that happens to you every morning there is another awakening and that is the awakening out of the ordinary level of consciousness which we could call unconsciousness spiritually speaking, which is complete identification with the mental, emotional conditioning complete identification with every thought that arises, every emotion that arises, it has you in its grip oh my god there is nobody who is there who is able to say oh what a thought the witnessing faculty is not there there is no awareness, no presence you are totally in the grip of the conditioned stream of thinking and emotion and you're like people say people say I think as if they had a choice but most humans there is not sufficient awareness or zero awareness which is presence zero awareness, so they are not able to step out of their thinking and become aware of their thinking they are they are in it like a raging river that drags you along and they are made unhappy in many cases they are made very unhappy by this thing that drags them along, they think that's me oh god, can't stand anymore can't take it anymore what's going to happen to me tomorrow oh I must think about this can't go to sleep think how am I going to solve this problem of me me and my problems many humans consider their identity for many humans is mostly their problems and they take it to a psychiatrist or a psychotherapist trying to get rid of their problems but on the other hand not wanting to get rid because that's all they know of their identity so every psychotherapist knows you reach a stage when the humans resist they don't want to let go because that's all they know that's their identity, their problems well at least I have my familiar problems I'm not going to step into the unknown at least I know who I am I may be unhappy

[Speaker 2] (7:41:38 - 7:41:53)

but at least I know who I am it's delusion so in ancient Indian, from India in ancient Indian spiritual teachings you have

[Speaker 1] (7:41:53 - 7:42:54)

they differentiate between different states of consciousness and they have they differentiate dreamless sleep this goes back hundreds of years yes dreamless sleep the dream state that's the second state of consciousness the third state is normal wakefulness but even normal wakefulness has different levels to it but let's put that aside normal wakefulness and what they call the fourth state of consciousness which in Sanskrit called Turiya, the fourth that is the awakened state, that is the state where you no longer identify with the stream of, you're not continuously drawn into the stream of

thinking and it does not absorb your consciousness continuously there is an ability to be aware

[Speaker 2] (7:42:54 - 7:43:07)

of your emotions and to be aware of your thoughts there's also an ability to step out of the stream of thinking that grows

[Speaker 1] (7:43:07 - 7:43:24)

when that arises you will find that in your life that is the beginning of your awakening, for some people the beginning of their awakening is they suddenly are aware that all the thoughts that go ahead is ultimately not who they are, they're just thoughts

[Speaker 2] (7:43:25 - 7:43:34)

and then who they are is beyond is behind that but it's not easily defined, you can't

[Speaker 1] (7:43:34 - 7:43:38)

really define it at all but I'll try just use as pointers

[Speaker 2] (7:43:40 - 7:43:58)

so you are able to take your consciousness out of the stream of thinking at least to some extent and you're able to be aware

[Speaker 1] (7:43:58 - 7:44:04)

of what your mind is doing you're able to be aware of what your emotions are doing without being

[Speaker 15] (7:44:04 - 7:44:44)

totally identified you're able to step back the moment of stillness is always a good start to anything

[Speaker 1] (7:44:44 - 8:06:53)

that you do any activity so it's important to become comfortable with stillness there are many humans in this world who are made extremely uncomfortable by stillness they can't stand it so we are here at a higher education establishment which means you've already been through lower education and have arrived at higher education and higher education of course in most fields it requires you to sharpen and to constantly use the conceptual mind and that's fine because the conceptual mind is a wonderful tool conceptual mind means the ability to think and to apply thought and so that's a wonderful thing it's been an incredible evolutionary development this evolution of the

ability to think but as in anything in this world there's always a downside downside and we can clearly see the downside of the conceptual mind because millions of humans, and not just in higher education millions of humans are not so much using their mind as being at the mercy of their mind so humans say things like I think and that sounds reasonable they don't say things like I beat my heart because the beating of the heart is something that happens to you you're not actually doing it but people think that when they think, they do it but in most cases that's not true, it happens the same way that your heart beats thought happens to you thought suddenly appears in your mind and there it is where did that come from? and so the current state of human consciousness is one in which with the exception of those humans who are already going through a spiritual awakening, an awakening of consciousness and I will come I will talk about what that actually means tonight in case you have some doubts about what I'm talking about when I say awakening of consciousness with the exception of those humans who are already going through the process of a shift in consciousness the millions of others who are still totally identified with the conceptual mind totally identified with thought this continuous stream of thinking that incessantly arises and that they mistake for who they are and that's why people say I think of course especially with certain types of thought like so-called worry you can see very clearly that it happens to you so the mind goes and you cannot stop it you wake up at three in the morning and you start thinking fearful thoughts bad possible bad outcomes and it goes on and on and you're trapped thought arises in you so the beginning of spiritual awakening is to see a thought arise, to see a thought and not be completely identified with it to recognize thought as thought the awakening of consciousness then when we talk about awakening people might say well, I'm awake already we're using awakening in a different sense here as you probably know like when we talk about the Buddha the word Buddha was not anybody's name it was a title later given to this person and the meaning of the root meaning of the word Buddha in Sanskrit is Budd which means awake so the Buddha is somebody who is awake and in other spiritual traditions the term of being awake is an important one so what does that actually mean to be awake when we think we are awake are we not awake here and now in ancient spiritual in Indian spiritual philosophy there's a term a Sanskrit term called Turiya T-U-R- Y-A Turiya Turiya by the way we are at an institute of higher learning so I'm just mentioning some Sanskrit terms Turiya means the force the force they divided human consciousness into four stages one is dreamless sleep which of course you enter every night one is the dream state that's the second state of consciousness then there is the normal state of wakefulness that's the third state of consciousness and then there is the fourth Turiya which is the state of wow this is a state that is beyond the conceptual mind it is a state of being disidentified from the stream of thinking and in modern terminology we may call this awareness or presence and this state is arising already in many of you and that's why you are here so what you experience here tonight may be perhaps a deepening of that state of awareness that's arising if you are not aware, if you are not present in your daily life then you are identified completely with the conceptual mind and your entire sense of identity is a conceptual one, in other words you derive

your sense of who you are and this is very important, your sense of who you are is very important because that determines how you relate to this world, it determines how you react to things, how you interact with people your sense of identity is very important so in the absence of awareness or presence your sense of identity your sense of who you are is derived from the conceptual mind which means you inhabit a conceptual reality which basically is a narrative in your head that tells you who you are and it is derived from your past it's a way in which your mind has been conditioned by your past and these are stories that you tell yourself and basically what you, when you think or talk about your life and you say my life that is the conceptual mind that is the narrative in your head that is derived from the past and it has emotions that go with it and that's fine, there's no doubt that there is a certain reality to that dimension in you you remember your past you remember things that have happened to you, your failures your successes things that people did to you what you did to others you identify with things you incorporate things into that conceptual sense of self you incorporate possessions you incorporate what other people think of you, you take that on board, you incorporate those concepts into your sense of self this is in spiritual terms the egoic sense of self, so the ego, spiritually speaking, the ego is a sense of self that arises when the mind is completely unobserved the unobserved mind brings about the ego, in fact the unobserved mind is the ego, these are mental structures which are energy formations because every thought is an energy formation, energy formations in your head that say that's me, that's me in my life, and there are certain characteristics to this egoic state one characteristic is that it exists in a state of frequent dissatisfaction discontent and there's an underlying an undercurrent of something vital is missing in my life I have not arrived yet there are some people or many people who feel they haven't started to live yet, they're waiting for that moment when it's really going to take off sometimes they have certain expressions that say one day I'm going to make it we don't know what they're going to make but I'm going to get there, the big breakthrough or whatever it is, whatever that may be varies from person to person, it could be to achieve financial success or recognition or better the two together fame, it could be meeting the ideal partner that is going to complete me and my story because right now there's not enough of me I need somebody to complete me and then you start looking for, and sometimes you find, it seems that you found that person that the egoic sense of self was so longing for and now there he or she is and you're ecstatically happy and for a little while the ego feels, ah I've arrived, the same way that would happen if you if you're offered a great job or you've just won the lottery or you get some kind of recognition in this world, not that there's anything wrong with recognition but it's a wonderful thing to achieve things is wonderful to endeavor to achieve things is wonderful, but to look to these things and hope to find a more complete sense of self through it to hope to find that complete sense of fulfillment and a lasting sense of fulfillment that doesn't seem to work because I haven't met anybody for whom that has worked, except for brief periods that these periods are brief, you may, even though many of you are young you may already have experienced that the initial stage of meeting the ideal person does not last very long and

at some point you realize that you met the wrong person and it was all a big mistake and at the latest when you start living with somebody you realize that the person that you first met and that you that was so wonderful when you were having dinners together or going for a walk on the beach or wherever that person was looking at you like this and then you start living together and suddenly that person no longer looks at you like this so there's something the ego longs for something to add to, the ego is always in a sense of insufficiency and remember the ego is a concept, ultimately a narrative in your mind a conceptual reality that can never fulfill you, no matter how much you add to it, which does not mean you should not strive to do things in this world but do not expect this world to make you happy, because happiness does not ultimately derive from this world this world is not designed to make you happy it is designed to challenge you and if you believe that this world is designed to make you happy, then you're going to get very angry, because as the years pass in your life, you realize why isn't my life working why is this reality seems to be always throwing obstacles in my path the moment I say oh, it's okay now, this problem has been solved, another one pops up from behind you and so you have these areas of your life the main areas being your physical health your financial situation, your living situation your professional situation, your relationship situation and one of these areas usually develops problems you solve a problem in your financial area and then pops up a relationship problem you solve the relationship problem suddenly you have a health problem it's interesting that you're constantly being challenged and you might have noticed one of the greatest sources of challenges are human beings because humans are incredibly challenging and although humans look to other humans for some ultimate fulfillment through other humans, more often what they find through other humans is that other humans turn out to be a source of suffering and that is because you're stuck in the egoic mind and you have the egoic mind has certain expectations of the world, which includes whatever you experience in this world has certain expectations that the world cannot meet but if you believe that the world should then that is a delusional reality that you will be continuously unhappy the world continues to challenge you but you believe the world is here to make you happy that's a terrible dilemma so it means your entire all your expectations are delusory but you don't know it and that creates an enormous amount of suffering because then every challenge that you encounter in this world and they come one after another every challenge that you encounter in this world you then, because of that underlying expectation that something is wrong when you're being challenged every challenge is then turned into unhappiness there's a big difference between a challenge and unhappiness so when you have delusory expectations of the world, then the world will make you unhappy and not happy but you continue to believe that something has gone fundamentally wrong in your life because life does not leave you alone, you want some peace, you want some ah, you want a sense of I've arrived, this is it and occasionally it comes but it never lasts for very long so that's the dilemma the underlying state of ignorance, not knowing that the function of this world is to challenge you because only by challenging you does it provide the necessary incentive to awaken you and it is that you notice after a while that as you

gradually begin to awaken out of the unconsciousness which is the complete identification with the conceptual egoic mind you begin to realize that oh a lot of the unhappiness that you experience, and unhappiness is a generic term that could be many many things even a state of irritation is already unhappiness sadness is unhappiness anger is unhappiness, any state that doesn't feel good is unhappiness any state of unhappiness you begin to realize that a greater part of it is not derived from the situations in your life, and when you realize that, that's the beginning of an awakening let's say 90% of the unhappiness that you encounter is actually produced by your mind and that's an amazing realization there remain 10% unhappiness you might be very somebody, a loved one dies close to you, of course you experience, you weep that is of course normal but if you observe the various forms of unhappiness in your life from the very the mildest forms of unhappiness to the more extreme forms of unhappiness let's say just two brief examples a mild very small little bit of unhappiness arises many times when things happen in daily life and you can't immediately get what you want you're on the phone trying to get talk to your bank but of course there's no human being there and even that is a minor form of unhappiness but it is you get very irritated and you think well this is caused by this dreadful bank that has no longer human beings that you can speak to or you're lining up airports are a great place to observe small forms of unhappiness because often so many things go wrong and you're lining up and this line up is not moving and of course these people are just so inefficient I'm never going to fly with them again and you feel more and more and in any of these situations if you observe okay unhappiness is arising is it really coming from the situation or is it coming from the way in which I speak to myself about the situation does it derive from the mental commentary about the situation or is it the situation and in most cases you actually find and I suggest you start with little small forms of unhappiness you will find that the unhappiness is derived from the narrative is derived from your self talk in the head

[Speaker 2] (8:07:22 - 8:07:25)

now not each one of

[Speaker 1] (8:07:25 - 8:10:44)

you not everyone of you is able to yet step into no thought without some kind of help meditation is designed to help you with that but as you probably know the main thing I recommend is to have some attention in the inner energy field of your body and that keeps thought at bay in a gentle non-violent way not willpower it involves no willpower so it involves just a decision that right now you would prefer to be alert and still and not be thinking and that decision could you could arrive at because you've realized that let's say for the past hour you've been engaged in futile useless thinking that all it did was make you unhappy and suddenly the awareness is there again that had been temporarily lost and you say what's all this futile thinking about it's just making me

unhappy it has no point whatsoever and then a decision comes to not to think because you realize there is another dimension in you that is deeper than thinking so you say okay I'd rather be there than up there in the mind and how can I get there because the mind will have its momentum so unless you're already your presence power so to speak is already quite developed you may find it very hard to stop the momentum once it started to stop the momentum of thinking has this enormous pull a gravitational pull behind it and for some if presence power is not yet that developed you can say I need to stop thinking but I can't because it goes on and on and I can't stop it it's like a river you can't get out of this raging river it drags you along just try especially when you're stuck in a train of negative thinking or fearful thinking or angry thinking you don't even want to get out because you're so identified with the stream of thinking that your sense of self is in it and you don't want to lose that sense of self it's a fictitious sense of self but it's a sense of self and so you don't want to stop your train of angry thinking you want more angry thinking and if possible you're looking for more feedback from others to reinforce your angry thinking I need another argument and after you've walked back out of the room one hour argument you walk back into the room because you haven't had enough you need to talk to that person again oh one more thing I want to tell you

[Speaker 17] (8:10:44 - 8:10:44)

so

[Speaker 1] (8:10:50 - 8:34:38)

and even when that person is no longer there you're still thinking and then you need to pick up the phone and tell your friend about it and then you repeat the whole argument you just had and how right you are and how wrong the other person was and then when you hang up the phone it still goes on in your head so you can enormous and at that moment to tell somebody you need to stop thinking would be futile the person doesn't even want to stop thinking because that person is the thinking total identification with thought so there needs to be a realization some awareness needs to be there it's totally pointless to talk to anybody about stopping thinking without having at least some access to awareness maybe not in the moment of enormously empowered thinking and empowered not in a good way but the awareness needs to bear what's going on inside me right now and then at some point you might be able to realize what's happening to you it's happening to you you didn't actually do it, it just happened to you because you're being possessed by your mind and then at some point you realize that there is a choice, you can actually perhaps not when you're in the middle of it, at some point a very strong mind stream subsides, you might get tired of it and then it goes and then finally you go oops and then do I choose to carry on?

Does it make me feel happy? No it doesn't I thought it did because I felt so good to be angry about that but it doesn't make you feel the body doesn't really feel, if you asked

your body it would tell you this feels horrible but of course if you're not in touch with your body you don't even know that and then at some moment the choice comes in and so at other moments the choice may come much more quickly because it's just the usual stream of futile in the middle of the night you wake up, the usual stream of futile thinking and then awareness comes in, there's a choice and then a decision comes and that decision is it's just no willpower it's just a decision I'd rather be still than not be thinking and once you know that then you can take your attention into the inner energy field of the body that's your choice instead of giving more attention to your thinking you just take your attention into the inner energy field of the body and suddenly you feel the aliveness that pervades the entire body and so you have taken consciousness away from the mind and put it in here and you can't think that much anymore you can't feel the body and be engaged in a lot of thinking and if you really fully experience the aliveness in the inner body the mind stops and so that is a becomes an anchor for awareness an anchor for presence even if you just even if you cannot feel the entire body it would be enough to just go into your hands with your attention just take consciousness into your hands and feel the aliveness in your hands that alone can take attention away from useless thinking and can you continue to feel because that is part of experiencing the present moment which actually feels quite good it feels good to be alive that's an amazing realization so inner body or even just a part of the body, the totality of the body is best if you can it's not that difficult, you start with one part, hands and can I feel my feet also, yeah I can feel hands and feet can I feel my legs, a little bit less and then the totality of oh okay I got it you might also notice that you are breathing then which is the other way it can be combined with body awareness but breathing is the other way of taking attention away from the mind the most ancient meditation method is breath awareness because breath awareness takes attention away from thinking but keeps you alert and breath happens all the time and breath is virtually formless so it's easier to get in touch with a formless consciousness by placing attention on the formless breath other meditation objects are clearly defined in form you can have an object that you focus on you can have a mental object that you focus on you can have a mantra that you focus on those can work too, but they are more clearly defined in form the breath is a kind of where is the breath, you can't say here it is, it's semi formless or formless, so to place attention on that which can also automatically bring you in touch with the body the in-breath it's so beautiful to have attention on your breath and the out-breath and immediately your mind becomes still so you can either be thinking or can have your attention on your breathing but you can't have both the moment you think you're not aware of your breath anymore and that also really applies to the inner body, to have full attention in the inner body, you can't be thinking, so those two things which are really closely linked breath awareness you can make it into a meditation so you can sit in meditation and then you can observe the in-going and out-going breath you can also observe the gaps between the in-going and out-going breath, you breathe out a brief gap of nothingness and then you start breathing in again a brief gap of neither in nor out and the cycle continues I read somewhere that the Buddha said if you're aware of your

breath for one hour, I don't know if they even had hours at the time but if you're aware of your breath for one hour you'll be completely enlightened but if you lose it, you have to start from the beginning again just one thought coming in, okay, start all over okay, I can see one or two of you saying, I'm going to do that this mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive, to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation and I trust you're not waiting for me to start the meditation because then you would have missed that it started already and you would think about meditation in terms of doing something but you don't actually do a meditation as long as you're doing a meditation you're not really meditating or the meditation is not fulfilling its purpose meditation, true meditation is not a technique or a mantra it's about becoming aware of the being dimension that's already the essence of who you are and you don't have to do anything to become aware of the being dimension in fact all you have to do is to stop doing and that's not a doing now to stop doing does not necessarily mean stop external activities but it means not to be focused exclusively on doing so that your entire attention is continuously absorbed by the doing dimension which of course all goes back to thinking thinking is doing and then it becomes some external activity which is fine because that is one level of who you are you have to do things in this world and you have to think and it's good doing and thinking is good but if that's all there is in your life then you're missing the deeper dimension and then doing and thinking is continuous absorption in that dimension of form becomes frustrating leads to anxiety or depression burnout a sense of meaninglessness after a while and all those who are not in touch with the deeper dimension the dimension of being which is the essence of who you are which I sometimes call the essence dimension or your essence identity being able to sense and this is why we are here now being able to sense your essence identity in addition to having a form identity which is always connected with some kind of doing and thinking that is liberating so what you're liberated from is an exclusive identification with who you are on the level of form the body the mind and whatever the mind identifies with in the realm of form mental images that arise that the mind identifies with and says that's me that's my body me my possessions my status in society my work, my function my social function my social and economic position, my class social class or background my knowledge that I have accumulated or any other image mental image which may not necessarily be positive, it could be negative me, the victim me, the one who was never given a chance all these are mental images that you derive your sense of self from and usually it's a certain bundle of images which in every image is also a little story and this bundle of images becomes the self, the me or what you refer to when you say I and yes that is one could say who you are on the level of form but even on that level it's certain stories that you believe in that tell you something about who you are in relation to others and your past and your history your successes, failures, achievements these are perspectives on what happened to you or what you did or failed to do what other people did to you one could have other perspectives you could have the perspective I'm a successful wealthy professional and your ex-wife might have a different story about you call you an obnoxious jerk or you can have a negative story

about yourself on this dimension of form one could easily have a story I could tell you a story why I am a very unfortunate human being you may not believe it but I could and it would be very convincing and I could tell you a story why I'm one of the greatest there would be stories and every one of you you could have a story about you that proves that you are justified in being miserable or you could have another story that says you are actually very good but they are all just stories so there will be some stories in your mind but is that who you are and the stories of course refer to other people your reflection in the lives of others and so they don't exist in isolation and they are reinforced by others and so on who am I?

so the question is are you what your mind tells you about yourself on the level of form that's one way of looking at who you are but there is a deeper dimension we've just been talking about form identity and what most humans don't know yet because it's not taught at school whereas it should be one of the most important things it's not one of the most the most important thing taught at school there is in you a deeper dimension there is an essence identity that you can sense even while you play whatever your role is or your function is in the world of form and even while you do things and deal with things and speak to people and even think it is possible to sense in the background of your life your essence identity and what is that?

it's this being aware that there is a presence in you which is not the right way of describing it let's put it differently being aware that you are a presence being aware of the presence that you are I am another way of pointing to it being aware quite simply right now that you are aware that you are I am and that has no content it's just a knowing a sensing of a presence and that is who or what you are the one thing that you cannot doubt is that there is a conscious presence here I am that before there is any content to it that is the light of consciousness and then things appear in the light of consciousness or illuminated by the light of consciousness or the light of consciousness becomes those things thoughts sense perceptions but there would be no sense perceptions without the light of consciousness there would be no thoughts without the light of consciousness in other words there would be no world without you because you are the light of consciousness in which the world appears and that's form

[Speaker 15] (8:34:38 - 8:34:40)

the world of form

[Speaker 1] (8:35:10 - 8:41:31)

I sometimes speak of bringing the transcendent dimension into your life without which your life no matter what you achieve is very limited the transcendent dimension is not an achievement it's more like a discovery because it's already here so it's not something you need to get which would imply future but the discovery of something that's already here it's not something but we have to use words and this is about the most important

thing no matter who you are or what your function is in this world this is about the most important thing there is so we are here right now so that you can deepen your access to it or for some of you discover for yourself what it is discover it directly so here today see if you can experience yourself as presence rather than as a person when you experience yourself as presence we could also say the presence within you the presence that you are that is the transcendence of the person and the transcendence of the person and the discovery of yourself as presence is here and now when you become so alert so awake to discover that alertness that wakefulness in you that there's no thinking there are spaces in between thinking of simple alert presence and the opening up of those spaces or that one space is the transcendence of the person because as that space opens up you suddenly realize there's a depth to you that you didn't know before but you have to have enough courage to go there because you have to give up everything that you thought you knew all the thoughts that you identified with so you step into the unknown in which one could almost say you become as nothing and I like that English word, you don't have that in other languages the English word nothing consists of no thing thing meaning form, something that has a particular form and you realize the presence of that which has no form and as you experience yourself as presence in which there's no thought just an alert consciousness you don't know who you are anymore

[Speaker 11] (8:41:33 - 8:41:34)

and that

[Speaker 1] (8:41:34 - 8:48:24)

may require some courage to go there some people go there without any spiritual teaching because they just cannot stand who they are anymore the person and the life that that person creates for them can't take anymore of that suffering the unhappiness the conflict the agony the negativity that they generate I can't take anymore that's a good point to reach too at that moment you have a choice you can commit suicide or preferably step into the unknown and discover that presence that's deeper than the person and then live in and through predominantly in and through that presence so when you look at something the presence is looking not the person how do you know whether the presence is looking at something or the person when you don't interpret mentally what you're looking at that's presence but you're very alert or you listen to something but you don't interpret it, there's just the listening and the presence without which there could be no listening listening and then in little situations in your life you discover that it's much more pleasant to be there as the presence rather than as the person you do perhaps simple routine activities as the presence an alert space space without calling things that happen good or bad anymore because when you call things good or bad it's the person the conceptual self the mind made self that includes other people you don't call other people good or bad anymore places situations whenever you fall into good and bad you are again a person you lose transcendence, transcendence is

lost covered up no longer realized it's never really lost but it seems to be completely lost and then you're trying to get rid of what you called bad but that doesn't really work so as long as you call certain people bad you will continue to meet even if you run away or eliminate those people you'll meet more bad people and what you focus on mentally grows and situations also so if you can encounter people situations, places as a simple presence without taking a position towards them allow everything to be in this moment as it is now that's the ego doesn't like that the ego is the mind made self that lives on judgment if you relinquish judgment the ego disappears of course it doesn't want to disappear but you realize that life becomes a much more pleasant experience without that person continuously judging everything and everybody the unconditioned dimension of consciousness the unconditioned dimension to who you are you the unconditioned you the unconditioned I which has nothing to do with your past or your physical

[Speaker 2] (8:48:25 - 8:48:26)

body

[Speaker 1] (8:48:26 - 8:51:58)

or your person or personality and the unconditioned dimension is not something that you achieve because it's already here it's something you just something to discover here and now achievement if you think in terms of achievement and associated achievement with spiritual awakening enlightenment realization or achieving the unconditioned consciousness if you use the word achievement or if that's the underlying assumption that it is an achievement there's an implication that it's in the past because you need to achieve it sorry there's an implication that it's in the future because you need to achieve it there's something to achieve you're pushing it away out of the present and so you miss it again because you're trying to achieve it and continuously as long as you're trying to achieve that spiritual realization or whatever you want to call it then it's always one step away from you or a hundred steps or a hundred miles or a million miles it doesn't matter whether it's one step or a million miles it's not here that's the underlying assumption and so you cannot discover it because you think it's something to achieve the thought that there's something to achieve in the future prevents you from discovering what's in the present on other levels of your life achievement is fine it's good to achieve certain things to learn something new to bring something into manifestation to create something even to have goals but when it's about finding out the deepest reality of who you are the very foundation for your life your existence then the idea of

[Speaker 2] (8:51:58 - 8:52:00)

achievement is a hindrance

[Speaker 1] (8:52:26 - 8:52:30)

so the unconditioned dimension of consciousness

[Speaker 2] (8:52:32 - 8:52:43)

is to be discovered it is

[Speaker 1] (8:52:48 - 8:53:15)

one could almost say hiding or concealed covered up behind and in between your thoughts behind and even within all

[Speaker 2] (8:53:15 - 8:53:16)

sense perceptions

[Speaker 1] (8:53:28 - 8:53:39)

and so to discover it you need to find that space

[Speaker 2] (8:53:39 - 8:53:43)

in your consciousness in consciousness

[Speaker 1] (8:53:43 - 8:56:02)

where you are not thinking so to stop thinking may not be the best way of pointing towards it although I might have used that expression a few times to stop thinking again implies that there's some active doing involved it might also make you believe that thinking needs to be forcefully pushed out of your consciousness which is not how it works it's to discover that that space of not thinking is already there between when one thought subsides before the next thought comes there's a space of pure awareness without mind activity you can do it here because this is a live meditation whenever I'm not speaking which is part of the time here be aware that I'm not speaking so we have the gaps between one sentence and another sentence, between one word and another word the moment you become aware of the gap, like now you're not thinking

[Speaker 2] (8:56:09 - 8:56:28)

it's very subtle and very simple, and yet

[Speaker 1] (8:56:28 - 8:56:53)

that's the most important thing in your life to become familiar with that dimension conscious without thought, spacious still but alert not the stillness of moving towards sleep

[Speaker 2] (8:56:54 - 8:56:56)

but alert stillness

[Speaker 1] (8:57:16 - 8:57:24)

so in daily life, become aware of that space, that inner

[Speaker 2] (8:57:24 - 8:57:30)

space of alert stillness as much as you can

[Speaker 1] (8:57:35 - 8:58:33)

initially you may need a crutch so to speak, something that helps you for example alert sense perception especially looking at something like the sky which is spacious without imposing any thought on it but being aware of the one who is looking whatever you look, it might be the sky it could be other things too you look at something at the same time you're aware that you are looking, not when I say you it's not the historical you not the person

[Speaker 2] (8:58:33 - 8:58:36)

but you as the consciousness

[Speaker 1] (8:58:36 - 9:00:24)

so there is a self-awareness behind the sense perception not the personality self the essence self which is formless and because it's formless the Buddha used the expression no self because he associated self with form anything that is has a separate sense of identity that's what Jesus pointed to if nobody understood it at the time or 2000 years afterwards deny thyself there are other translations that would be more suitable look away from the self that what you usually consider yourself look deeper, recognize the ultimate unreality

[Speaker 2] (9:00:25 - 9:00:30)

of the conditioned self

[Speaker 1] (9:00:34 - 9:00:42)

so becoming familiar with awareness of presence, pure awareness pure presence in daily life

[Speaker 2] (9:00:44 - 9:00:46)

of course here especially

[Speaker 1] (9:00:46 - 9:01:06)

becoming familiar with

[Speaker 2] (9:01:07 - 9:01:09)

just being present

[Speaker 1] (9:01:17 - 9:01:28)

as you know we can use your breath awareness to take you also out of thinking become present feel the inner body

[Speaker 2] (9:01:29 - 9:01:31)

also can be

[Speaker 1] (9:01:31 - 9:02:29)

a crutch or a portal into it and then a time comes, maybe now don't wait for it when you can just go step out of thinking without needing anything to help you step out of thinking you can just go okay I'm not thinking now and then you look around wherever you may be whether you are in surroundings that are pleasant, conducive to meditation you could do it there or whether you are in surroundings that are challenging

[Speaker 2] (9:02:29 - 9:02:33)

and you suddenly

[Speaker 1] (9:02:33 - 9:04:04)

discover that the main challenge is not your surroundings or your situation but your thoughts about it and even at that moment you can step out of thinking which implies that you accept that moment completely because the moment you step out of thinking there is nobody there to argue with what is because arguing with what is is thinking, the moment you step out of thinking it implies there is complete alignment with the is-ness of this moment, you are not arguing with it anymore which is totally futile of course which causes suffering unhappiness and suddenly the situation may still be challenging on a practical level but it's no longer challenging on a psychological level in other words it doesn't make you unhappy anymore you are not unhappy not because you pushed unhappiness away suppressed it no it dissolved because it was created and sustained

[Speaker 2] (9:04:04 - 9:04:05)

by thinking

[Speaker 1] (9:04:13 - 9:05:34)

so it's wonderful to discover in challenging situations that you can step out of thinking

there too and some people need a challenge to be able to be motivated to take that step out of thinking they can't stand this unhappiness anymore and suddenly realize it's basically my thinking that's making me unhappy and not what's happening and they step out of thinking and for people who go through extreme suffering that's the erosion of the ego that can happen in that way because the ego is identification with thinking when you are not thinking there is no ego and if your life situation is so unpleasant that you can't stand the suffering anymore then the unpleasantness the challenging life situation forces you if you are ready for it forces you out of thinking whether through serious illness

[Speaker 2] (9:05:35 - 9:05:41)

serious loss and so on

[Speaker 1] (9:05:48 - 9:06:00)

but I suggest to you here that you don't wait for life to force you out of thinking but voluntarily step out of thinking it's an evolutionary

[Speaker 2] (9:06:03 - 9:06:15)

leap that step it's you jump out of thinking either because

[Speaker 1] (9:06:15 - 9:06:29)

you can't stand the suffering anymore or if you are advanced enough voluntarily and this is why we are here

[Speaker 2] (9:06:30 - 9:06:31)

what's happening here

[Speaker 1] (9:06:47 - 9:08:08)

and even while you think after a while you can notice that there is not a complete loss of awareness in the background even while you are thinking so at times it's wonderful to have these spaces of no thought and it's vital whether it's 5 seconds or 20 seconds or half a minute doesn't matter that's the evolution of consciousness that's the awakening and gradually you no longer rely on thinking or your sense of identity who you are sense of self which is always a fragile sense of identity

[Speaker 2] (9:08:12 - 9:08:18)

vulnerable always lacking in this or that

[Speaker 1] (9:08:20 - 9:13:33)

never satisfied for long and then sense of self shifts to presence you are essentially the presence awareness no form no past, no future so let's settle into the present moment access the stillness that's already within you even though you might not have realized it even with people who have the most turbulent and chaotic minds there is stillness underneath it and to find that it is vital to find that stillness within because otherwise you are at the mercy of your mind and you are lost in that continuous noise so here it's helpful for you to, as you I'm sure you know already to become aware of the silent spaces between the words rather than just pay attention to the words in fact be more interested so to speak in the silent spaces than the words the silent space on the external level is when I stop speaking so the sound is no longer produced and there is an absence of sound and that's what we call silence maybe not complete silence here because there are some background noises or perhaps you can hear birds and other other noise but when I don't speak there is the absence of noise except for the birds and when you are aware that there is an absence of noise there is a silence which is an external thing simultaneously something happens inside you and that's why it is so wonderful to be aware of external silence you may know this already but whether you've heard this before or not it doesn't matter, the important thing is to

[Speaker 2] (9:13:33 - 9:13:37)

realize it now so

[Speaker 1] (9:13:45 - 9:23:27)

when you pay attention to silence what is it you pay attention to? nothing in particular there is no content to silence when I speak the words, the sounds are the content when I stop speaking there is no content and if you are new to this you might even ask what is it that I pay attention to when I pay attention to silence and the answer is nothing really well, then the question arises how can I pay attention to nothing well you pay attention to that space of no content and then something happens inside you simultaneously you might notice that when you pay attention to just the fact that there is a silence, you can do it when you are alone in a room you can do it in the middle of the night you can do it out in nature, you can do it in a church preferably when it is empty or a temple anywhere where there is some silence you become aware of it don't overlook the silence and don't always look for the noise so what happens inside you when you become aware of that absence of noise thinking subsides and you become still inside the moment you become aware of silence and pay attention to silence you become still inside the ceaseless stream of thinking subsides and what's left is only that alert space you may not be able to sustain it for very long by yourself, it doesn't matter as long as it's there, if it's only for a few seconds, it's good enough to start with and here perhaps you are able to sustain it perhaps during the entire duration of our meditation in other words let go of thinking without falling asleep and just be here present as a presence conscious presence now the words i speak are so simple that you can't really think about them

because there's nothing to figure out so to understand what i'm saying you don't need to add some more thought to it so the best way of being here with me is to embrace the state of thoughtless awareness no need to think and you haven't disappeared the essence of who you are is not only still here the essence of who you are has emerged more fully now than you are still and that essence of who you are is not content based it is inner space formless consciousness what the Buddha called emptiness but every term that you use to talk about it is limiting it's emptiness but there's far more to it than emptiness it's consciousness that makes thinking possible that makes sense perception possible that makes feeling possible that makes it possible for you to be here as a person without consciousness there's no person but usually you're not aware of consciousness you're only aware of what arises in consciousness in other words you're aware of the content but not of the space without which the content could not be so right now as you become still inside you can realize that that stillness is your consciousness before anything arises in it and when I say your consciousness it's not absolutely true but that's okay at first you sense it as your consciousness but ultimately it's not your consciousness

[Speaker 17] (9:23:33 - 9:23:34)

it's just

[Speaker 1] (9:23:34 - 9:27:56)

consciousness the one consciousness and it's not produced by your physical brain although there is clearly a correlation between your physical brain and consciousness but I would suggest to you that the physical brain is more like a channel for consciousness than the producer or the generator of consciousness in the same way that the radio does not generate the music and the words that you hear coming out of the radio and yet the radio is necessary for this music, the words, the sounds to be produced but the radio does not produce them it gives them form channels them in the same way your physical brain is a kind of receiver for consciousness and gives that formless consciousness a particular form so that through that particular form the formless consciousness can appear in this dimension as you and as the world so often when people at night look up at the stars they get a feeling of insignificance and you might think compared to that vastness i am nothing or you might think compared to that vastness i am a microbe on the surface of this planet short-lived fleeting existence on a cosmic scale the human life is just like a spark it goes just gone, and it's gone and many other sparks but they all very short-lived one spark after another

[Speaker 2] (9:27:56 - 9:27:58)

so

[Speaker 1] (9:28:00 - 9:36:17)

but that feeling that sense of insignificance that's not all there is, and that's not the entire truth of it in fact it's not the truth of it at all you may be insignificant as regards physical size or the duration of your life but you are highly significant in the universe because through you consciousness enters this dimension and so through you the universe becomes conscious of itself be yourself in the oracle of Delphi in ancient Greece of course had the inscription know yourself but knowing yourself is the same as being yourself exactly the same at that level there's nothing to know you are present but there's no further knowing about presence, there's nothing you can know about presence, you can only be present so to know yourself at a deeper level means to be present and know yourself as presence, there's another level to knowing yourself, there are two levels one is knowing your own ego recognizing your ego when it happens, observe it then you know yourself on that level at a deeper level, knowing yourself is being yourself is the universe telling me that I should stop speaking so to know yourself on the more superficial level is self observation and in self observation the ego dissolves and then knowing yourself at a deeper level is being the presence that's all and so both go together because if you're not the presence then there is not enough presence in you to observe the ego in you so they go together, you need the presence because only the presence needs to be there so that you can recognize your own ego in recognizing the ego it dissolves all the patterns become harmless you're no longer possessed by them let's say you look good and you like to rest nicely there's nothing wrong with that but do you derive your entire or large part of your sense of who you are from that which is you're in the grip of ego or are you simply enjoying looking good do it while you can it won't last why not enjoy if you look nice enjoy it and you can superficially even enjoy being seen by others oh okay you can still, there can be a superficial enjoyment in that as long as you're rooted at a deeper level you can still enjoy certain things on the level of form without being completely trapped in them so that they don't no longer constitute the foundation for your sense of self then you know, well okay I look nice now and I'll make the most of it because I know what's going to happen to the physical form what time will do to it also a possession if you have something that you enjoy why not enjoy it but do you derive your sense of who you are from what you have that's a huge trap so you can enjoy an object that is in your possession without the egoic attachment to it, there's a difference between egoic attachment and enjoyment of something and sometimes you may not know whether you have egoic attachment or simple enjoyment until you lose it if then there's a sense of oh it's gone the car that I loved driving in somebody must have taken it and now you will know whether there was an egoic attachment or just enjoyment if there was egoic attachment you suffer there's a lot of upset and anger and wailing or somebody scratched it, somebody when you get back to your car you just said it washed, shiny and you get back to it you scratch and here's the opportunity of finding out what kind of relationship you had with your car because before you might have told yourself I like this car, I love it but there's no ego in it whatsoever and also when there's not an egoic attachment to things you're not going to accumulate unnecessarily possessions that you don't need, that in the egoic state just have a

function of satisfying the permanent sense of lack that is the ego, so then you have to go on shopping expeditions every other weekend and then you come home with these shiny bags and for a moment the ego feels elated and here's a new pair of shoes but the satisfaction doesn't last very long and then the sense of lack comes back

[Speaker 17] (9:36:19 - 9:36:20)

I need some

[Speaker 1] (9:36:20 - 9:39:28)

more and in some people it even develops into an addiction to shopping amazing and that's a clear sign if one or two of you still occasionally experience that, it's a clear sign that oh that's the ego and that there's always something lacking in this part of the egoic identity is a continuous sense of not enough on whatever level and some people try to meet it on the shopping level so the difference between appreciating something nice nothing wrong with that because that's part of our surface reality where there are objects and some objects can be very lovely to hold and you never the sense of this belongs to me is less and less and there can be an appreciation without the sense of this is my thing so whatever you have you look after it for a while as the famous watch advert tells you, it's a very expensive watch and they say you never actually own this watch you only look after it for the next generation that's a that's an ad with a slight spiritual change to it but unfortunately you have to pay at least $20,000 to buy that watch so I my confession is that on the whole I don't get attracted too much to buying things, I never know what to buy or to even clothes, it's hard to buy anything it just doesn't work you might have noticed laughter and that's why when I look into a shop window I sometimes can look at something nice but I never feel the compulsion to actually buy it but as far as objects are concerned one I like mechanical watches so that's my personal thing, watches that tick they go, you wind them up or they are automatic when you move your hand and they go tick tick tick and people have made them, they sat down and meticulously put them together, the watchmaker in the old fashioned way giving it a lot of attention

[Speaker 2] (9:39:29 - 9:39:31)

it's just there, it's just there

[Speaker 1] (9:39:32 - 9:40:28)

and if an object is made with somebody giving it a lot of attention, it doesn't have to be a watch, it can be a little artifact that somebody has spent time making and giving it attention, then once it's finished, it has that sense of quality to it, it's like the consciousness of the maker has become part of the object and really perhaps this is what we mean by real quality that somebody has also, you can do the same with making

a meal then also, if you make a meal that has been made by somebody who has given complete attention to the making of it it adds an additional energy field to the meal that you can sense it's done with care and attention

[Speaker 10] (9:40:53 - 9:41:13)

Hi I feel as I become more aware, my pain body becomes more it becomes overactive at times when it does hit me and I'm wondering if there's a way, do we ever dissolve entirely the pain body? Can we ever dissolve it?

[Speaker 1] (9:41:15 - 9:42:36)

Yes, I've quite a few times people have asked that question and it's an important valid question but a more important point is before I answer that question to what extent you still identify with it or get taken over by it because that is where the pain body continuously renews itself to what extent does this old emotion that gets triggered from time to time, to what extent does it truly possess you and rises up into your mind and totally determines while it is active what you think and what you do and how you react to people and situations to what extent does it take you over totally or is there already a gap of awareness where you are able to know that the pain body has become activated and it is not totally using your mind and not totally controlling what you do or say so how does that look in your life?

[Speaker 10] (9:42:36 - 9:43:17)

When I interact with people I feel like I'm more aware of it and able to calm it but I think it's when I'm by myself that it's most penetrating especially after a night or a beautiful day and I go to sleep feeling very at peace and I wake up and it's just there associated with certain kind of mind activity? Not really, just waking up in the morning, lately I wake up and it's boom right there, it's very penetrating I don't know why I would go to sleep one way where do you feel it? In my head very strong force, pressure

[Speaker 1] (9:43:17 - 9:43:23)

yes but not particular kind of thoughts maybe

[Speaker 10] (9:43:23 - 9:43:44)

I guess on some level when I really evaluate it probably just a cycle of lack of success in a certain area of my career or life so it repeats, am I going to start the same day and continue the day as I and not get anywhere with it yes a powerful way to

[Speaker 1] (9:43:46 - 9:47:54)

approach it and ultimately dissolve it is to accept in whatever form the pain body arises accept that's how it is at this moment accept the reality of this moment, in this case it's

the inner reality of this moment, it would also apply to the outer reality of this moment and be with it as the aware space for it, so you step back, the way of putting it is you take a step backwards from it into yourself and so here is the feeling and so you go back within so to speak, not literally of course, you step back and you become the awareness that's around it that's always there but it can be you can lose consciousness of that when a strong phenomenon arises either external or internal, a storm can absorb all your attention but be the space for it, always, and that is the most powerful way to dissolve what's there, rather than even wanting to get rid of it wanting to get rid of it very often strengthens it and produces a problem a new level of problems because then by wanting not to have it and get rid of it you not only have the problem of having that, you have the problem of not being able to achieve to get rid of it and so you can get angry about that or upset about that but you are most powerful when you are able to bring acceptance to whatever arises at this moment and that is a gesture that requires a certain alertness, it is not a passive state, it is in one sense it is passive because it says this is what is and that this gesture seems to be a passive gesture, it seems to be a gesture of allowing passivity but that's not all because without the active principle at the same time which is an uncompromising yes to what is which is not that, it's the sort of presence, this is what is and this is what I accept because this is what is that's the other polarity, the two come together in complete acceptance it's a passive principle of allowing and the active principle of cutting through all the nonsense of the human mind with a sort of presence one could say it's a masculine and feminine male and female combined so you have often you see images of Kwan Yin or Mary, like this is the archetypal female spaciousness, space beautiful, and then of course we could also say this is the female and then this is the male and the two have to come together and that is true acceptance, so it's an uncompromising yes which is the sort of presence and it's the seemingly passive embracing what is practice use that as your spiritual practice then any phenomenon that arises whether external or internal in this case it's internal phenomenon can become fuel for the fire of presence anything that arises so rather than pushing it away use it as fuel

[Speaker 10] (9:47:54 - 9:48:13)

for presence why is it I'm getting that but literally at night feeling that and being okay with whatever I wake up with but then it's just you have to let go of the why

[Speaker 1] (9:48:14 - 9:48:42)

because then you start pursuing it the mind of course does that I analyze it way too much because if you pursue the why that leads you to more whys, it leads you to that why and then you would have to go back to past lifetimes and even that's not enough because maybe it all started the bottom of the sea when before life came out of the sea where you got eaten a million times by other fishes

[Speaker 15] (9:48:45 - 9:48:46)

thank you

[Speaker 13] (9:49:04 - 9:49:26)

one aspect of the insanity of this world is we assume infinite growth on a finite planet we are coming up against the limitations of that assumption how do you suggest we accept the suffering that that will entail thank you

[Speaker 1] (9:49:38 - 9:49:53)

okay that was not the answer that was just sound the structures that are in place

[Speaker 15] (9:49:53 - 9:50:00)

the economic structures now are a reflection of a certain status

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[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 6:32)

Of consciousness, collective state of consciousness in humans, which is largely the egoic state. The ego needs always more because the ego lives in a state of constant insufficiency, a constant sense of neediness and lack. It does not feel it has arrived, it needs more.

So that's the unconscious urge. So if that's in the individual human, and if that mind structure is in millions of individuals, humans, then these individual humans create these external structures, organizations, and so on that reflect the original mind setting. So the companies that sit, the economy needs to grow and grow and it cannot, nothing can grow indefinitely.

It's just not everything grows and then it shrinks or dissolves, and then something new arises. That is a constant cycle. And yes, of course, when something that is ego created dissolves, it leads to suffering.

That's inevitable. And it is this very suffering. I don't know if that's a politically correct statement, but I'd say it anyway, because perhaps the political statement is nobody should have to suffer.

It's a travesty that humans suffer. Nobody should die. Death is a travesty.

I'm against it. Of course, I'm against suffering. Yes, humans shouldn't suffer.

It's just, that's not the reality of it. Humans create out of the unconsciousness. They bring about their own suffering, both on a personal level.

And if you amplify that on a collective level. Now, if on a personal level, you, out of the egoic unconsciousness, you embark on certain causes of action that reflect the egoic unconsciousness, you will encounter self-created suffering. You make others suffer around you and they will make you suffer.

You encounter the unconsciousness and the suffering that's generated by unconsciousness as a person. And the same applies to the collective. When the collective no longer works, because it's the very foundation was delusional, then it creates suffering in humans.

But as in the individual, the suffering, or it is created through unconsciousness, the redeeming feature behind suffering is that it's the very suffering that was created by unconsciousness that has the effect potentially of awakening you and transporting you beyond ego. And when that happens on a larger scale, it still applies. So there will be suffering.

Humans will have to suffer. But ultimately, whether it's a million people who are suffering because a huge company has collapsed, it's always comes, there's always, every one out of these million individuals is one individual. There's your suffering.

This one individual is suffering. And in the suffering of this one individual, there is a potential of awakening. But it is very helpful if as many people as possible come into contact with these teachings that show the possibility that is concealed behind suffering.

And that suffering in a certain stage is inevitable as long as there's unconsciousness. And then the suffering itself has the potential of awakening you. Again, coming back to what we talked about earlier, the cross, the image of suffering, the cross is the image of suffering.

The cross is also symbol for the divine. So it's the self-created suffering, both personal level and collective level, that is actually part of the evolutionary progress, the evolution of human consciousness. And one thing that is also good to remember is that we tend to regard every human being as a completely autonomous entity.

That's list, here's the human and here's the rest of the world. Of course, the ego sees itself like that also. Here's me, the most interesting thing in the universe, and there's the rest of the universe.

That's how the ego perceives me against the universe. That's the ego's perception. Of course, it's a misperception.

And every human being is a temporary expression of the one evolving consciousness, a ray of light, so to speak, from the one source. And so every human being is an expression of that. There is the eternal consciousness that is the eternal in you is gradually awakening.

And it awakens in many cases through the dream, an unpleasant dream, but that's a long story. Don't need to go, it may make sense to you just by giving you a little hint. There's a nightmare.

Sometimes my life had to become a nightmare before the awakening happened. If my life had not become a nightmare in my own mind, there would have been no awakening. So I'm very grateful that it became a nightmare because if you're in a nightmare, you don't want to carry on dreaming.

You say, get me out of here. If you have a relatively pleasant dream, if it's up and downs, oh, I might as well stay here. I'm quite comfortable in this dream because here's another good meal waiting for me.

And I'm going to eat this in my dream. And it tastes so good. I may be dreaming, but it tastes great.

And then you're sick for a little while, but then there's something else. So your question is, how do you cope or how do you explain? Hi.

[Speaker 7] (6:35 - 6:52)

How do you accept the suffering that awaits? Accept. And one small piece, I'm old enough that I will escape a lot of it, but I think about my children who will live in a world in which there will be a lot more limits and limitations.

[Speaker 1] (6:52 - 15:57)

Yes, that may well be the case. So how do I help them? You help them by teaching them what acceptance really means by making them more conscious.

And you do that by being conscious yourself. And occasionally you might, they might be open to hearing something that you say to them occasionally. Then they will be ready then and they will be able to use the suffering.

I mean, I've been, the first half of the 20th century was a dreadful nightmare for millions upon millions of humans when the first and second world war happened, genocide happened on an enormous unimaginary scale. Insanity often, you can't even imagine the insanity of it. And you ask, will we have to go through something like this again?

Maybe, maybe yes. There is, teach them how to suffer and by learning how to suffer, to go beyond suffering. That's what you can teach them.

And then, so before you depart from this dimension, they will know and then they are ready. Is it possible to live without having a relationship with yourself? Neither good nor bad.

Is it possible to be so completely yourself that the mind made image of me dissolves? Yes, this is why we're here. This is the essence of our gathering.

The mind made image is connected to thought, to continuous thinking. It's fueled by, perpetuated by, upheld by the continuous thought processes, many of which are about me and myself. And so I have a, through thought, I have a relationship with a thought made entity.

Which sometimes feels quite comfortable and sometimes feels not pleasant, don't want to have to live with that person. And of course it's true. Many people live with a self that is very unpleasant, that creates a lot of trouble, a lot of problems, a lot of suffering, that continuously criticizes them, that continuously blames them, that continuously tells them they're not enough.

And they live with that entity, mind made, conditioned mind movements, conditioned in such a way that they attack you continuously. And that's the self that they have a

relationship with. They would never live with a person like that.

You would run out of the room. You couldn't live with a person for more than a day. If your partner, somebody you live with did that to you, what your self image is doing to you through thought, you would have filed for divorce long ago.

But you can't do that with that because it's on the mind. It walks with you. And there you have this complaining and whining and accusing and, oh, get away.

Get away. And a large part of that is because you're identified with thought. There isn't the ability to step back from thought and watch thought, watch that.

And here, the mind made entity, because that self that you have a relationship with is part of the story-based self, the me. That was the self that I had a very unpleasant relationship with for many years. I had a very, extremely painful relationship with myself.

I couldn't live with myself anymore. And so I somehow said, that's it. I can't live with it anymore.

That's it. But that was so total that I no longer sustained, fueled the self through thought. I didn't know anything about it.

It just happened. So the mind made image dissolved. The self that I couldn't live with, that was so heavy, dissolved.

And what was left was simply I. So the I shifted from, whereas before when I said I, I was referring to myself, the unhappy, dense I, the story-based I, that dissolved. And then the true I emerged, had always been there, presence.

I am nothing in particular anymore, a simple sense of presence or beingness. And for the first time I could walk and be without having a relationship with myself. And that there is something so precious in that I or presence, so it's beyond words.

You could say it's like a diamond. It's something extremely, very, very precious. That's why perhaps Buddhism sometimes has the image of a diamond.

But this is not comparative. It's not a sense of that deepest self, not the mind made self, is so precious that it knows itself to be that in a non-dualistic way without needing to compare itself to others. It has nothing to do with a form or any mind form.

So as presence arises, you don't need self-esteem anymore. You don't depend on that anymore because what dissolves is the mind made entity with which you have a relationship. And it's so self-esteem is an intermediate thing that for a little while makes your life more pleasant.

It's fine. And then after a while you see the unsatisfactory nature even of that, because

you cannot uphold continuous self-esteem. It's hard work, all these affirmations.

And then things come into your life that tell you the opposite, inevitably, sooner or later. So then suddenly you don't love yourself anymore, nor do you hate yourself because there's no self to love. There's simply the state of this, which is love.

It emanates.

[Speaker 7] (16:17 - 17:52)

My question is divine inspiration or its close cousin has been called divine intuition. I'm an entrepreneur or otherwise known as an inventor. I work a lot with technology and entertainment.

Like to call myself an inventor as it feels more like a hands-on or old school title. Basically, I'm a child in a man's body who gets paid to play with a big kid's toolbox. I'm the first one to say that I've been blessed all of my life as ideas and solutions flow through me like water.

On a few occasions, I've taken one of these ideas all the way to market. Most of the fun part of the adventure is solving the issues that arise during the build. Designing a new concept feels like you're giving birth and is truly the most fun of the process.

But all things that go up can sometimes go down. How can I know that I am the sole owner of the idea or just another blessed person who is around for the spiritual broadcast to all of this idea? I've taught myself to stick with my intuition and allow nothing or nobody to stop the river of answers that are coming to me.

But then I should have slowed down and done more research to see if the idea was already out there and in production from another blessed person in the one. Do you know of a store like Costco or someplace where I can find a false divine message filter that I can use? Or maybe I can buy a second divine intuition card that will tell me when to chill out and slow down.

Okay. Well, chill out now.

[Speaker 1] (17:55 - 18:55)

Thank you. So from what I gather is that you are very creative. Enormous amount of creativity flows through, which is wonderful.

And the second, there's two other things that you seem to not be happy about. The two things you don't seem to be happy about is that there's too much coming through, is that it? There's too, there's a continuous influx and you are questioning whether that isn't truly yours or a new thing, or whether it already exists.

Can you put in your own words briefly, what exactly, what is it, you're a creative person, which is wonderful, but what is it about it that you find difficult? The downside?

[Speaker 7] (18:56 - 19:28)

Yeah. The downside is that everything is coming so easily that I proceed forward with the project, get very deep into the project, try and find other people that are working on a project like it, then only to find out that it wasn't just me getting the message about building this device. It was other people and I heard it in the now, as opposed to it just being delivered to me.

I was there for sort of a spiritual broadcast where a lot of people heard it and we're all working on the same thing at the same time. Very frustrating.

[Speaker 1] (19:29 - 21:55)

That's often the case because nothing is really yours, nothing that comes. It's something that you, to use a modern expression, I don't, not familiar, you don't usually use computer terminology, but you download, so to speak, and when one original idea comes, there are many examples for that in this 20th century and 19th century, very often it comes to several people at the same time. There's basically, there's only one consciousness.

It operates through the humans, through the human form, and so it's not, it's never your idea. It would be limiting and give you a wrong perspective on it and ultimately could even stop the flow if you ever thought that an idea belonged to you. Now, on a practical level, that's fine.

You can go to the patent office or whatever you do. That's fine, but the behind it, the psychological feeling, that's my idea. You took away my idea.

Well, perhaps it came to several people at the same time, and sometimes it's a race. If you're lucky, you get there first, and the others are just a little bit behind in developing it, so that I don't remember, but if I had a better memory, I could give examples. Perhaps you know them from inventions and so on that were done and somebody just got in and somebody was just behind, it was a little bit too late.

That you just have to accept that that is in the nature of the creative manifestation through humans that especially really new things can very often come through more than one channel, which is a human being. They come through more than one channel. It's something you have to accept, but if you can take practical steps to find out when something comes before you start spending a lot of time on developing it and or getting the finances necessary to develop it, if there's any way you can find out through the interconnectedness that we have through the internet and so on, whether somebody is already approaching the final stage of that particular thing already,

[Speaker 7] (21:55 - 22:04)

in which case it would be pointless for you perhaps to pursue it. What most of us do is hide the fact that we're working on it so you don't see until it's already too late and you've got everything invested.

[Speaker 1] (22:04 - 26:18)

That's right. So then all you can do is do what you feel wants to be born through you and enjoy the process at all levels, all stages of the process. And then you may find either you come out first or somebody else does because then something else will come.

If several things come and only one out of several comes to fruition through you, that's fine. It's similar to a business. Spoke, speak occasionally to people who run businesses.

And often I've heard that they try new things. It's not perhaps as creative as you, but they try new things. And often they tell me out of 10 things they try, eight things prove to be failures.

Sometimes nine things prove to be failures. One thing works. And that one thing makes all the difference for the business.

That's right. That's often the case. So you have to accept when it's not, it doesn't reach its final stage because somebody else has gone there before you.

That's just how it is. Then there's no shortage in you of creative input. It'll come again.

And the next time you will be the first. So the main thing is to enjoy the process, not to allow frustration to build up. Do it joyfully.

And there may even be room occasionally for two people creating two things that are very similar, but not absolutely identical. I don't know, just throwing this out. Cetera.

Have fun, to use a somewhat superficial expression, but really means fun to enjoy doing what is the creative process. There's great intensity there. I know that intensity from the writing process.

When I wrote The Power of Now, the first book, occasionally, there was enormous intensity behind the writing process and I enjoyed it enormously. So there was always this. And then occasionally people ask me, what do you do?

I said, I'm writing a book. Yeah, what about? It's about living in the present moment.

And several times I heard, I wouldn't do that if I were you because so many people have written about that already. I said, haven't you read Ram Dass, Be Here Now? And that's old, that's not fashionable anymore anyway.

So present moment is passé. It's terrible. That's a great story.

So if I had listened to them, I would have thought maybe they're right, there are already so many, and there must be so many other people working on the present moment books. I might as well give up because I would have to compete with the 50 other present moment books. So I might as well do something else.

But fortunately, it was so joyful, the intense, the creative process, it wanted and needed to come out. So it wasn't really me saying, I am going to write this book. The book had to be written.

And if it hadn't been me, it would have been, very similar book, would have been somebody else. And if I had not obeyed this impulse to write, then I'm sure I would have fallen ill or died because it was so strong. I would have closed myself and the energy would have destroyed me.

It's like, it gets no outlet. You're not enabling it to manifest through you. And then it goes, gone.

That's right. So enjoy and it will work.

[Speaker 7] (26:19 - 26:22)

Keep planting seeds. Yes. Thank you.

Thank you.

[Speaker 6] (26:55 - 29:14)

First of all, I want to thank you and Eckhart for everything that you've given me and are giving me now. It's so greatly appreciated. I'm not sure if it's a question, but it's some, I need a response from you to clarify.

It's, it deals with a pain body and challenges, overcoming challenges, transcending challenges. And then I heard, I think I heard you say this morning, I heard Eckhart say yesterday, the good news is we don't have to suffer. So five years ago, coming up to five years, my son died.

And I went through, he died suddenly. So it was, and he also was my best friend. So it was, I can't even think about the suffering that I went through at that time.

You know, it's just like, it was, oh, I wailed, I cried. It was, I didn't have, I, for months, I just went there and that suffering, that pain and that broken heart was torn apart. And I remember to the point I was crawling on the ground down, I have a place down by the sea and I was there and he loved that place.

And we spent many wonderful times there together. And I was crawling on the ground and crying. And I heard him say to me, dad, stop that.

And that came to me, a shift happened. It was a change there. Of course, I've transcended it and I've overcome it, not completely, I never will overcome that completely, I don't think.

But what I want clarification from you on is I don't really believe, I don't fully understand that one can transcend, overcome, or have a choice in certain situations concerning that type of suffering. So there's where I'm wondering. When you say we don't have to suffer, we do have a choice.

I'm saying it has not been my experience in that case.

[Speaker 2] (29:17 - 30:13)

You know, as I said earlier, and what Eckhart says is suffering is our greatest teacher. So the suffering is teaching you. And you already know that in order to go beyond that suffering, that that's the evolution of human consciousness through you.

So consciousness is awakening through you. So not to say that, I almost see you and sense that in order to hold on to the memory of your son, that the fear of letting go of the suffering will somehow get you be less connected to your son. Yeah.

And that's not the case, and that's what your son was saying to you, you don't have to.

[Speaker 6] (30:13 - 30:14)

I appreciate that. You don't have to suffer.

[Speaker 2] (30:16 - 30:22)

Because you will be actually more connected to your son without the suffering being there.

[Speaker 6] (30:26 - 30:29)

Yeah, in a way, he tells me that.

[Speaker 2] (30:30 - 30:40)

Yeah. Yeah, he's telling you that. And he's saying to you, Dad, you don't have to suffer.

I'm right here.

[Speaker 6] (30:41 - 30:51)

Well, could you say that again, please? You know what? No, just tell me that I'm going to

be more connected with my son by not suffering.

[Speaker 2] (30:52 - 31:46)

Yeah, absolutely. Because the suffering is just getting in the way for that real connection of, not of the form, the form is gone. Every form will pass away, but what is left behind is the essence.

And that true essence lives in you. Your son and you are no different. It's the same essence.

So you're going to be more connected to yourself, which is also your son. And that's the gift through his death that he's leaving you, is that space, that empty space, that void that he's leaving behind for you to go deeper into yourself.

[Speaker 6] (31:46 - 32:10)

Well, you know, it explains, when I go to his grave these days, I don't feel that suffering, I feel peace. So that's a wonderful gift. I know he gives me those gifts, and he's more present in a very positive way, in almost a jovial way, you know?

Because I'm trying to communicate with him. Sometimes he just laughs at my way of making efforts to communicate with him, more or less saying, hmm, I'm right beside you, kind of thing, you know?

[Speaker 2] (32:11 - 32:17)

Yeah, exactly. It's right here, it's all right here.

[Speaker 6] (32:18 - 32:19)

Thank you very much.

[Speaker 2] (32:20 - 38:48)

I have to share this story, this last story, because when Maya, our dog, passed away last September, and a few months before that, my father passed away, and actually, Maya was kind of in that very critical mode, even when my father was passing, and it was like, who's gonna go first? That sort of thing. And it was obvious my father was going first, and I said to my father, you know, Maya's gonna come right after you, soon after.

Will you greet her? And when Maya, she died at home in my arms, and when she was passing away in my arms, I felt my father's presence come. And then I felt them both there, joyful.

It was just like, they were so happy. And it was just like, wow, this is incredible. And it brought such peace and such joy.

There was no, there was just absolutely no fear, nothing. I just felt this incredible sense of joy, and I knew that joy was emanating from the essence of who they were. And it was just absolutely so beautiful, you know?

And they don't, they're still there. I could still feel them. When they passed, and when my father, because my father passed first, I was able to touch into that empty voice, that void of just, I remember being in, you know, getting ready to change, and in my closet, and just like, wow, I miss him, and that emptiness.

And then I went into that emptiness, and suddenly there was this tremendous peace there. And it was just like, wow, that emptiness is God itself. And we are God itself, through the form.

And eventually, all forms, as they always do, leave, and it leaves you with emptiness, which is really your God nature, which is God. You're left with God. And he's saying, you're left with God.

Don't hold onto the suffering anymore, because the suffering and the attachment to the form is keeping you stuck. It's keeping you further away from God. God is all around us, right here, right now, through every living being, nature.

And yet, beyond all of that, beyond the form, it's just here. And the forms pop up. But yet, stillness is here.

God is here. That little space that Eckhart talked about all of a sudden became big. That's how it works.

You take that little space, and you go right into that space, and soon enough, that space just, there is more space in this universe than there are stars in the sky. And how beautiful it is that we get to witness the stars and have the experience of our children, of our parents, even though they can bring us to unconsciousness sometimes. But you know, saying all that, when they're on their deathbed, do you think about that?

Well, sometimes you do, if you're in the grip still, the pain body, but as we begin to awaken, we tap into something else that we begin to see right through their own pain. Because that pain that they feel is no different than our own. And we know if we can transcend the pain within ourselves, so too, when we look then at the other in their pain, we don't see them only as pain, only as their pain body, in other words.

We see the essence of who they are. And the pain body is just a temporary thing. We'll get these gifts, and as we become older and older, the things and the people around us pass on, and we're left with this emptiness.

Yes. And in that emptiness, you can say it's also fullness, because you are one with God. You've merged with the essence of who you are, and you don't feel that emptiness.

You become filled with peace, with love, with joy.

[Speaker 1] (39:04 - 48:04)

Thank you. You realize that even there, one cannot say that you are choosing this. You are the expression of consciousness, and consciousness, one could say, is choosing, and you think you're doing it.

I'm surprised there's nothing on Google about Eckhart and free will, but maybe I haven't said anything about it. So here we go. As you know, it's an eternal ancient philosophical question, and there's never been a definitive answer that everybody would agree with, in that sense.

So is there free will, you mentioned everybody's doing their best because nobody can act beyond their level of consciousness, et cetera, for example. Okay, let's start on one level, and then we go on to the next level. On the level of egoic unconsciousness, where you are a conditioned entity, your mental, emotional makeup, it's totally conditioned by the past, and you are completely identified with the conditioning of your mind, and in that state, spiritually speaking, is the unconscious state, it is obvious that in that state, there is no freedom at all, because you are forced to act out the unconscious conditioning of your mind with which you are completely identified. So most people would probably agree, if you understand that, that on that level, there is no possibility of freedom.

Your actions are determined by your conditioned mind. You are forced to act as you do, because there is no choice, because choice would imply some awareness. So on that level, there's certainly no freedom.

Then, awareness comes in. The human being begins to awaken. Then it appears, I'm not saying it is the case, it appears that then the human, freedom begins to be a possibility, because you can choose to step out of the conditioning of your mind.

You can recognize a conditioned thought, and you're no longer compelled to act it out, because there is an awareness there. You can choose a certain course of action, not from the conditioning of your mind, but from the presence. So you can act, and you have much more freedom than before you could not have.

Freedom comes with awareness. So it's then relative to the unconscious state, there is now freedom to act. But if you look more deeply, even there, even there on that level, you are connected with the totality of consciousness.

You're only an expression of the totality of consciousness. You are not really a separate entity. You are a, like a, who said it, you are, was it Alan Watts who said, you are, in the same way that the wave is something that the ocean is doing, you are something that the whole universe is doing, in the same way.

So the wave is something the ocean is doing, you are something that the universe is doing. So although it appears from a certain, relative to the previous state of unconscious, there is freedom, and relative to that, there is freedom. But then if you look more deeply into that, you realize that even there, one cannot say that you are choosing this, you are the expression of consciousness, and consciousness, one could say, is choosing, and you think you're doing it.

Sometimes people ask me, can you choose to be present? And from one perspective, you can choose to be present. From another perspective, one could say that presence chooses you, it chooses to become present through you, depends how you look at it.

So in ultimate terms, or in relative terms, there is freedom relative to the unconscious state, when you become unconscious. But even there, it's only relative to the unconscious state. Even there, there is not absolute freedom, because you do not exist as an independent entity, you are part of the web of interconnectedness that is the whole universe.

So in that sense, there is no freedom of choice of the individual, because ultimately, there is no individual. Thank you so much, I appreciate it. Just want to add one more thing to that, because you mentioned everybody's doing their best, and so on, and I agreed that nobody can act beyond their level of consciousness.

A question that may arise, though, is responsibility and punishment, because if the criminal or whoever the perpetrator is not responsible, because they are totally in the grip of their conditioning, does that mean then that the perpetrator is not responsible for what they do? And it does seem to be the case, a very unconscious person, in that sense, is not responsible for what they do. Now, does that mean we must not punish this person because he couldn't help it?

Now, that's a difficult point. There is a destiny for human beings. Human beings are meant to move out of the unconscious state, and if they are not moving out of the unconscious state, they create suffering, and they will have to suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness, which eventually awakens them.

So when humans suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness, eventually, this leads to suffering, and then there is a possibility of awakening. So although they may not be conscious of what they do, it doesn't mean that karmic retribution on that level does not operate. Punishment is necessary, and sometimes it could be at the hands of the law or the judicial system.

First of all, other humans need to be protected from them, so they may need to be put away. And although they may not be responsible, but they will have to suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness, and by suffering the consequences of their unconsciousness, there is a possibility of awakening. And so, therefore, I have had

contact with quite a few people who are imprisoned, and they have written to me, and they have experienced an awakening in prison.

They suffered the consequences of their unconsciousness, and that led to an awakening. I was actually scheduled to talk in a couple of prisons in California, but I fell ill earlier this year, so I had to be canceled, but hopefully soon, I will be able to talk to prisoners. I have scheduled talks to a women's prison and a man's prison.

[Speaker 12] (48:33 - 48:46)

My heart is pumping. Really hard. Thank you, Edgar, you changed my life dramatically.

Well, thank you for being the vehicle of the higher power.

[Speaker 13] (48:47 - 48:47)

Thank you.

[Speaker 12] (48:50 - 49:38)

This is like very important. It's not important. It's just, nothing's that important.

Do you cry? Because I cry a lot about just good things. Like, when good things are happening, I cry.

When bad things are happening, I don't pay that much attention to them, but I sometimes cry, too, and it's, I mean, I know it's okay, but do you cry? Because I see you as an example of, when I deal with something, I'm always thinking, well, what I could do, you know? I don't know.

I don't know. And you don't have to answer that question, but is it normal to cry? Yes, I do.

Let's see.

[Speaker 1] (49:42 - 53:31)

Well, apart from a movie that I saw recently where I cried, but the other occasion was maybe a year ago or whenever it was, the beauty in nature. Well, that happened to me. It could be anywhere.

It's happened quite a few times. It does happen occasionally when there's intense beauty. And then I was driving along the, in approaching the Big Sur Coastal Highway along the Pacific Ocean in California, and there was the sea, the clouds, the mist, the vegetation, incredible beauty and presence, the aliveness in the energy field.

And as I was driving, I was crying. So beauty is very often that does trigger that. It's a

very, very happy crying, a joyful crying.

And then I cried in a movie recently. That happens occasionally. It was about a dog.

And sometimes also I cried when I see human suffering. It could be somebody in the street. Could be even be something on television.

Occasionally it happens. So the, I hadn't actually given it much thought until you asked me. So it's quite lovely.

I enjoy it, crying. It's an, some people cry when they sit here and it touches the emotional field. Although our gathering is not at all emotional.

Because that would be a very different gathering. It would go like, wow, yeah, now let's all jump up and sing. So we, this is not what happens here.

And yet sometimes as presence arises, it can, the emotions can also begin to vibrate with it. And so some people sit here and cry and I know they're quite happy, basically. But they go.

Something resonates, the emotional field is vibrating and perhaps a healing is taking place at that time. Who knows? So it's again, acceptance.

There's another kind of crying, of course, that is more dysfunctional. For example, when you're telling yourself a sad story in your head about your life and you start crying. So you believe in the story that you're telling yourself in your head and how dreadful your life has been.

And you, it's been so awful, it's just. Why, it's just not fair. Life has treated me so badly, it's just not fair.

Wake up. There's just this moment.

[Speaker 12] (53:32 - 53:52)

Don't tell yourself a story and believe in it. So when do you cry? I cry when I watch a movie, when I think about my nieces right now, like I'm not there with them, when I think about my family right now.

I'm just so happy, you know?

[Speaker 1] (54:12 - 1:09:54)

Then you can have mental viruses of a personal nature. You have a certain various thoughts that repeat themselves again and again, and then become so deeply lodged in your mind that like a parasite that gets its teeth into you and it won't let go. And they infect other thoughts around them.

Identifying with a political movement or a religion can be also something that you add to the self-image and you have self-assertion. These days, as we know, there's a talk, a lot of extremism, extremism, religious extremism. You have especially young men, they say they become radicalized and then they do totally evil and crazy things.

Those are extreme forms of ego, but the mechanism behind it is the same, or a more extreme manifestation. The mechanism behind it is the same as normal egos, which are not as extreme. What is the mechanism behind it?

It's a search for a sense of identity. And many humans have a search of identity where there's something huge missing. So they're looking for a deep identity through strengthening their ego.

They don't know it, they're seeking more self-assertion. And if there's a young man living in the West, perhaps even was born in the West, parents came from maybe a Muslim country, and this man doesn't like the society he lives in. Maybe he can even see the emptiness of the society or he doesn't participate fully, he's not given his due ego.

The ego seeks something to identify with, it wants to assert itself. And then it uses religion as an ideology and that becomes, you adopt certain belief system, which are bundles of thoughts, and completely identify with that. It gives you your sense of self.

And you have an enormously strong sense, you can now be so special that the entire society you live in, except those who share your particular belief system is regarded as evil. So you are trapped, and this is not uncommon, it's not only in that area, it can, entire nations are sometimes go through a wave of deep collective unconsciousness, when almost every human being in that nation is infected by a mental virus that takes possession of your entire mind. It happened, for example, in, well, or certain countries like National Socialism in Germany, Soviet Communism, Mao Zedong, the Cultural Revolution.

It's like every human being becomes, is possessed by the same mental virus, which is thought structures that spread in your mind and take possession of almost 100% of all your mental content, very much like a virus on a physical level. I mean, you've all experienced not being able to get a certain tune out of your head, a musical tune, which is a very minor variation of a mental virus that won't go away. And some of you may also have, but of course, after a while, it does go away, and that's a harmless thing.

But then you can have mental viruses of a personal nature. You have a certain, various thoughts that repeat themselves again and again, and then become so deeply lodged in your mind that, like a parasite that gets its teeth into you and won't let go, and they infect other thoughts around them. And so some people go through life with preconceived ideas of what the world is like and what people are like.

And these are very, very structured belief systems, and they interpret reality through the screen of their structured belief system, which may still be a normal thing. You might just have very strong political views or very strong religious views, not religion, the spiritual dimension of religion. Religion without the spiritual dimension is an ideology.

So that can be still considered normal, and then you go take it a little bit further, and then you can see that it's actually a form of insanity. And so it's, for example, normal to have... I had a, I have a relative who I've known since I was 10, since my teenage, early teenage years, and this relative was always very critical of people and very highly critical, and always, even when I was a teenager, I always thought there was always some hidden intention that he or she, I wouldn't want to define, was looking for when after going to some visiting somebody's house, he said this, what did he mean by that? What was his intention?

He had some evil intention, and then it's always looking for, people wanting something from you, wanting something to do to you, wanting to, and that was strange. And this person later developed, this grew and grew, this mental virus, and later had to go to a mental home with paranoid schizophrenia, and which is basically an extreme mental virus that infects your mind that says that the world is full of people whose main function is to destroy you or to follow you or to do something to you, and you see these enemies everywhere. And it is also a way of unconscious self-assertion because you are so important that all these people are after you.

So you make yourself really very special, but it's an unconscious process. So many normal egoic traits, when you take them to amplify them a little, then you can actually see it's a form of mental illness. So thought can be very much seen as little entities.

Thoughts are energetic entities. Every thought is an energetic entity, and some thoughts are short-lived. Other thoughts get lodged in your mind and to take up their abode in your mind, and you can't get rid of them, and they become who you think you are.

That's living through thought. And that's why what the spiritual path is about is to not one by one take these thoughts out or figure out where they came from, but just pay attention to that which is beyond thought, first as little gaps, and then as being aware that there is a dimension of stillness in you. And that's the only place where true sanity arises.

And it's the only place where then, once you have that connectedness, then the mind is no longer insane. Then the mind can be a wonderful and helpful tool. And then you no longer seek yourself in the mind.

You no longer have an identity that's based on a narrative in your mind or a mental image. And then you can use Facebook without becoming more unconscious through it. And you can actually present a true version of yourself on Facebook.

It doesn't have to be the happy selfies necessarily. Anymore, although when you are happy, that's fine. Now, from self-assertion to self-transcendence, that is the way humans go.

Self-transcendence is the awakening of consciousness. And self-transcendence is why we are here. We could, depending on how you use language, you could say we are transcending the self.

This would be a Buddhist terminology, transcending yourself. And the Buddha said there is no self, but that's only one way of putting it. You could say that the formless is the essence of who you are.

Consciousness is the essence of who you are. So that is the self. But it's probably Buddha was very wise not to make it into a mental concept.

His teaching mainly was through stating things in negative terms, not negative in a conventional sense, but denying. So the Buddha never talked about God because he didn't want you to believe in a mental concept of God. He didn't say there is no God, and he didn't say there is a God.

When he was asked about God, he kept noble silence. And that was the answer, of course. But not many people got it.

Is there a God? So there were, and then one or two people got it, in the traditional stories that says he got it. And at that moment, when the Buddha kept noble silence, he became enlightened, the listener.

And the others didn't get it. And then I imagine, and I'm sure it happened, after a few minutes, another monk said, excuse me, did you hear my question? This is a very profound answer, to keep noble silence when you ask, does God exist?

Which is very similar to the wonderful meditation that we're going to do now. It'll only take a few minutes. It's very similar to the meditation, who am I?

Because that also, when you ask yourself who am I, consciousness awakening, at first it's painful. And then, it says, what am I doing here? Not another incarnation.

When you ask yourself, who am I? The important thing is to realize that you won't be able to answer that question. So anything the mind comes up with is wrong, no matter what you say.

And even if you say, who am I? And even if you say, ah, I've got it, I'm consciousness. Wrong, because it's a concept.

Who you are is not believing in a concept. It's just a concept. So who am I?

This was recommended by Ramana Maharshi and other spiritual sages as a profound meditation. Who am I? That question, you can ask it yourself with eyes open or eyes closed.

And then wait for the answer, which is not going to come as an actual answer that you could identify. It's not going to come as a thought or a word or anything you can talk about or think. The answer is the space after the question.

Who am I? You become more interested in that little space around it than in the condition. So you give more attention to that, the spaciousness that comes with the acceptance of what is, and you can sense that space a bit more.

[Speaker 10] (1:10:00 - 1:10:45)

It feels sometimes that the yearning for getting back to the source is very undeniable and very strong. But in equal strength is the resistance, which seems to me to be almost, it almost sort of manifests as a physical energy, which I feel is a sense of sorrow and loss, which has nothing to do with this lifetime and nothing that I can understand or put my finger on, but it seems to get stronger, not any less strong. And it sort of seems to be almost a sense that if one drops into that space, there's something almost unbearable has to be born.

[Speaker 1] (1:10:46 - 1:10:54)

Can you just talk a little bit more about how you experience the resistance? How does it manifest?

[Speaker 10] (1:10:57 - 1:11:23)

Sometimes it's almost a physical, I can feel it as a physical resistance in the body. I can almost feel like there's a physical energy that I can't get underneath. And I guess, even in meditation, when it feels like maybe the mind is stilling a bit, it just doesn't go there.

It's just avoiding something.

[Speaker 1] (1:11:24 - 1:11:41)

Are you able to step out of thinking when you choose to, like taking your attention, as we said earlier, to take a conscious breath or place your attention in something else? In the body, you're able to do that?

[Speaker 10] (1:11:41 - 1:12:01)

I can do that in moments of Qigong or meditation, but I- In everyday life? Yeah, moments, but not as much as I'd like. But I think that has almost got worse.

I think the games that the mind is playing have almost got worse as this energy's got stronger of late.

[Speaker 1] (1:12:01 - 1:12:16)

Yes. And the yearning, how do you experience that? For stillness or peace?

[Speaker 10] (1:12:20 - 1:12:28)

Both of those, but also a sense of sorrow, strangely. If that makes sense.

[Speaker 1] (1:12:28 - 2:23:05)

Yes, well, I'm trying to feel myself into your reality as it is, as the moment. And a very, a powerful transformation can happen when you, and this is one way of approaching it, which may be helpful to you, is not to desire anything within you to be different from the way it is now. So that would mean complete acceptance of whatever it is that you experience at any given moment.

At the moment, there are these energies in you, but you don't really want them. So there's a conflict between what you want and what you have. Now, if you approach it in a different way, instead of having what you want, perhaps you want stillness, you want peace.

You want that deeper sense of aliveness. Perhaps that's the yearning. You want to be fully yourself.

And what you have is you perhaps, you feel contraction in the body. You feel excessive mind activity. You feel an almost semi-physical energy field blocking you.

So you have the two. You have what you want and you have what you have. Now, as a practice, I would suggest, and next time we meet, you can tell me how it went.

I suggest that you do away with a conflict between what you have and what you want, and you want what you have instead, which means whatever your inner reality or outer reality, but we're talking mainly about inner now. Whatever your inner reality is right now, as it's always now, of course, it's not a big thing. It's only the reality now.

Accept it totally. This is what it is. And so bring that.

Acceptance is a strange thing when you really can say, well, that's what it is. You might as well accept it because it is a reality of this moment. So if you bring that acceptance, no matter, even if it feels not pleasant, if it might be a contraction in the body or my mind is just so active, okay, let my mind be active.

Bring the allowing to it. And that strange thing happens, you may find, when you do it,

you already have a little bit of space around the condition that you dislike, but now you accept. And so you accept the condition that you previously disliked, but now you say, well, that's what it is.

So I allow it to be. And what you then can sense if you're inside of you, a little bit of space around the condition, to not much at first, just a little bit. So let's say you have a contraction here and say, that's what it is.

And this acceptance brings space. So here's a contraction, then here you have a little bit of, that's what it is. And then it may grow a little bit, the space around it.

And then you find you become more interested in that little space around it than in the condition. So you give more attention to that, the spaciousness that around it comes with the acceptance of what is, and you can sense that space a bit more. And then it's, what I'm saying is not literally true, but I'm just saying it grows.

It seems to grow, and then there's a bit more, the condition is still the same, but it has receded somewhat. It's no longer the center of your attention. You're more aware of the space.

You become the space for it. Don't argue with me because you need to try it first. Thank you.

But you can argue next time we meet, if it didn't work, we'll talk again. Because any arguing would be the mind saying, no, no, it's not going to work. How do I deal with being impatient with myself?

Because after having a spiritually unconscious episode, I realized that with all the tools you have given us, I should know better by now. Interesting uses the word tools, so and I use the word key. Well, a spiritually unconscious episode, and then when it's over, you suddenly realize, oh, I forgot to apply the tool, or let's use the word key again.

I left the key in my pocket again. Well, at least you know it now that you left the key. And at that moment, you've taken the key out because you've taken the key of awareness out of your pocket, that suddenly you realize you had lost it.

You had lost the awareness, or not lost it, but you didn't remember that you had the key in your pocket. And then it's over this, oh, oh yeah, that's this. And then again, you lose the key when the thought arises, you should know better by now, shouldn't you?

What's the point? You can't do it, you see? Even after years, you can't do it.

What's the point? These are the thoughts that go through the head, which means the key is left in your pocket again. Then you take it out again and realize, okay, at least I'm present now.

Whoever you are judging through your mind is a fiction anyway. It's unconscious pattern that has arisen in you and you make it into some kind of me identity. It's a fiction.

Of course, that only happens when you again put the key back in your pocket. So you continue to apply the key and then it's okay, at least now, there's awareness now, that's enough. It's always enough for now.

All you ever need to be responsible for is the present moment and that's all you need. And then you don't make it into another problem. The fact that you had lost it or not used it doesn't become a problem, which is another episode of unawareness if you make a problem out of it.

There's no, your identity is not there. Your identity is present and it's present now. Your identity, you are here awake now.

And then next time, perhaps it happens again. And then real progress is there when in the middle of it, you realize you lost it in an old mind reaction and negative reaction. And then you can choose to take the key out of your pocket and apply it, open the door to awareness and the shift happens and you're no longer reactive.

So I recommend that you are very alert to see what kind of energy you're putting out into the world. Is it tinged with negativity? In which case you are mind identified, ego identified.

And once you notice it, then you can apply the key. So all self-condemnation is not helpful. It's part of the unconscious patterns.

Impatient with yourself. We are dealing with collective. These are not personal problems of yours.

We are dealing with collective mind patterns that have been around for thousands of years that each individual inherits. So it is a monumental thing that's happening now that more and more humans are able to evolve beyond the inherited collective mind patterns, but they're still very strong. They have an enormous pull still.

It would be silly to deny that. The pull is still very strong. So it's not a personal problem of yours.

It's an evolutionary transition, misperceived as a personal problem. When these thoughts come, instead of being drawn into those clouds, and then the clouds get bigger and bigger, you remain the sky and allow the clouds to pass and then to pass away. Well, that's a good question.

What do I want? I'm 34 years old and have a good job, a good home. I'm married to a wonderful man.

I have bad anxiety, and I have no idea what I want from my life. I have low self-esteem and get defensive easily. I'm rarely content or grateful.

My thinking is so negative. I need approval from others. This doesn't seem to be a question, but...

But maybe there's a question hiding in there. Now, first I'd like to congratulate the questioner on her, yes, her, probably, her self-knowledge, because the questioner is aware that she's anxious. Not everybody who is anxious know that they are anxious.

They're just taken over by anxiety and it's virtually their normal state. And if you ask them, are you anxious? They say, no, I'm not anxious.

I have no idea what I want from my life. It looks like the beginning of the place of not knowing, which is good. I have low self-esteem.

Well, but you have the awareness to know that you have low self-esteem and I get defensive easily. Again, yes, but you don't just get defensive. You know that you get defensive.

The question is, do you know in the moment of getting defensive that you are defensive or do you know it afterwards? You can look into that. I'm rarely content or grateful.

That's interesting. That's very good self-observation too. I'm not content at this moment.

I'm not content. My thinking is so negative. Another good piece of knowledge.

My thinking is negative at this moment. What are the thoughts that are going through my head? So if you apply the awareness that is already there hiding behind all these things, if you apply the awareness to the present moment when these things arise, defensiveness.

What is low self-esteem? It's something that you tell yourself about yourself in your mind. It's certain repetitive thoughts that the voice in the head tells you.

Those are, this is low self-esteem. There might be certain emotions that go with it. Emotions that are, ooh, ooh, ooh.

But really, the basis for low self-esteem is something you tell yourself about your low worth. It's thoughts. Now, the questioner already knows that she has low self-esteem.

And if she can know that she has low self-esteem in the moment of the low self-esteem arising as thoughts, she can recognize them as thoughts and not necessarily true thoughts arising, repetitive thoughts that condition thoughts, perhaps this low self-esteem might have started in childhood. It often happens to people whose parents are very critical or parents tell them you're never good enough. This can be one reason.

So it might have started there. It's a conditioned way of thinking, conditioned thoughts. Now, the awareness that's already there in the questioner would need to be there in the moment of those things arising.

And then you can see when these thoughts arise, you recognize them as thoughts that are arising and you're no longer completely trapped in what these thoughts are saying. In other words, to use an analogy that we used not long ago, your sense of being is not in the thought anymore. It's in the awareness of the thought.

In other words, if you look at the sky, the vast sky, daytime, at this time, let's look at a daytime sky, the vastness of that huge expansiveness of the sky is awareness in this analogy and clouds that come are thoughts. So when the clouds come, why can I never do anything right? Why are other people more successful than me?

Or I'm no good at this? When these thoughts come, instead of being drawn into those clouds and then the clouds get bigger and bigger, you remain the sky and allow the clouds to pass and then to pass away. And that means you begin to no longer, you're no longer feeding conditioned thinking and you are separating who you are.

You're taking your identity out of thinking. Thinking for a while has still a momentum. Old patterns will come again and again, but you're no longer renewing them.

You're no longer feeding them by, how do you feed them? By identifying with every thought that comes. There's a self in it.

So you separate, you are the awareness behind the thought. Same applies to any kind of negative thinking. You recognize it as automatic.

It arises and it's a thought. So, but you are the awareness that knows that this is a negative thought pattern. And if that can grow, because it's already there to some extent, if that grows, which means deepens, then those conditioned patterns will diminish.

They get transmuted. So another one point here mentioned, I get defensive easily. Defensive can happen, happens very, very quickly in human interactions.

The defensiveness can come up so quickly. It's an automatic pattern. And you may only know it afterwards.

Oh, that was defensiveness again. And defensiveness is, of course, these are all ego, ways of the ego to protect itself. Ego being the mind made self.

Defensiveness will just come up with any lie just to keep its ego identity intact. So it'll come up with anything just to keep, it's automatic. So you can, of course, in miracles has a lovely saying, which is whenever you become defensive about anything, know that you

have identified with an illusion.

You have identified yourself with an illusion. That's interesting. Is that true?

Let's say you say that the distance from here to the moon is 300, I think in kilometers is like 350,000 or so kilometers. And that the light takes just over one second to travel from the moon to the earth. And you know that for a fact.

Well, I know that. I haven't verified it myself, but it seems to be true. And somebody else says, no, that's completely untrue.

It actually takes one minute. It does. Now this is just a difference of opinion or viewpoint.

And of course, you know very well that the other person is wrong. Now, if you say, no, that's not right. Is that defensiveness?

Well, it depends how you say it. The question is, are you identified with your mind, which has this position, which happens to be true, but are you identified with that mental position? In other words, do you derive your sense of self from thought?

If you identified with, you will get angry and defensive about the other person who is so completely wrong. And you might say things like, well, if you know that person well, you always doubt me. Why do you always doubt me?

You never believe what I say, do you? That's called defensiveness. And that's the ego trying to protect itself.

And then the cause and miracle thing applies. Know that when you become defensive about anything, know that you've identified with yourself with an illusion. The illusion is not that it takes one second for the light from the moon to travel to the earth.

That's not what the illusion is. The illusion is that you identified with a thought, with a mind pattern. And so you are strengthening an illusory identity by identifying, by strengthening the mental position of me, my mental position that's unconscious.

So this is how just a difference of opinion can degenerate into huge conflict. Just a small difference of opinion because the ego becomes defensive. So that requires alertness on your part so that you know when it arises.

Oh, so whenever you become defensive. So without ego, the same conversation would go, no, it takes one minute. I know that for a fact.

The other person says, it takes one second. The other takes a minute. Well, no, you're wrong.

It takes one second. Okay, well, we leave it at that then. I think it's a second and you

think it's a minute.

End of the story. That would be without defensiveness or ego. Okay, and then you can go on where everybody goes on the internet and that would definitely solve it.

And in extreme forms of egoic unconsciousness, you will say what it says in Wikipedia is wrong. It's wrong. They didn't get it right.

That may bring me to another question. Oh, just to end on this question. The key is your awareness so that that deepens then all those patterns that you mentioned will weaken.

And there's already a considerable amount of awareness in this person, the questioner. The awareness, of course, isn't the person, but it's deeper than the person. The thing is to apply the awareness to the present moment when things arise, not in some abstract way.

I am a defensive person. Will I ever become a person who is not negative? I can't get rid of my negative patterns.

I'm so negative. So it doesn't matter. This moment is what matters.

So just apply your awareness to this moment. You can't change things into mental constructs. How can I change myself?

I don't want to be that kind of a person anymore. Look at it. This moment, this is where you apply presence.

I sometimes call it, I haven't used that expression in a while, the sword of presence that cuts through time and you go, and then you apply it to this. Usually you can recognize that it is an ideology by the fact that they are not peaceful human beings. And by the fact that they have enemies.

The question is specifically about focusing on Christian religion, but the answer, I suppose, I don't know what the answer is going to be, but it's going to be probably also referred to other religions or religions in general. Is religion necessary? It depends who you are on the level of the form.

For some people, it can be necessary or helpful for two reasons. It can provide the more superficial reason. It can give your life a certain amount of structure, which for some people can be helpful.

Regular practice gives you a feeling of comfort. Some people have too little structure in their lives and others have too much already. If you have too little structure in your life, then religion can provide that.

More importantly, on another level, religion can either obscure the spiritual dimension

within yourself, and often it does, or if used rightly, if approached rightly, if understood on a deeper level, it can help you access and stay in connectedness with that deeper level of yourself or the transcendent dimension of consciousness. Whether or not you need it, only you can know. Whether you find it either helpful or a hindrance, it can be either, depends on you as a person, your past, what function it had in your past, and so on.

It is a hindrance if religion becomes an ideology. Then it operates only on the level of the mind and is very similar to any other kind of ideology that you may believe in, whether it's communism as an ideology or any political theory or anything that explains the universe. It could be a metaphysical system that you completely believe in, philosophical system, and so on.

So an ideology is something that takes possession of your mind and exerts a controlling function, and it can influence almost your entire mental functioning if it becomes something of overwhelming power in your mind. It's a little thought that grows into a huge thing in your mind, and the tentacles reach into every aspect of your mind, and there are religious people like that. Usually you can recognize that it is an ideology by the fact that they are not peaceful human beings, and by the fact that they have enemies, enemies, either even within their own religion or another religion.

Anybody who does not agree with their ideology becomes an enemy. In the same way, the people who were not nowadays that many were deeply believing in communism, which was a wonderful idea to start with, of course. The road to hell is paved with good intentions.

It was a beautiful idea of equality, everybody the same, that is wonderful. No personal possessions, sounds wonderful, too. And the only mistake was it was imposed from outside by people who themselves have not gone beyond the egoic state of consciousness.

They just played it in their minds. That's a good idea. And then it was imposed on other people who also were not in that state of consciousness.

But most importantly, those who imposed the idea on others, forced them to live it out, the ideal became contaminated with ego. So when these people came to power, their egos became inflated to an enormous degree, almost to absurdity, and without realizing it, they reenacted the same evils, in some cases worse than those that they were fighting against. Like in Russia, they saw the injustices associated with the Tsar regime and so on.

And they truly saw that, and they truly wanted to remove that, and that seemed a good thing. But they had overlooked their own state of consciousness. And the great challenge is for people, power, you can have that very meek person that seems, oh, this is what a

lovely person.

He seems to have no ego, or very little. He's so, give that person power. Then the latent ego, which was there in a, let's say a person's very poor, has no power at all.

Give that poor person power, then the latent ego will no longer be latent. It will suddenly come to life. And that happens, is repeated, and has been repeated many, many times in countries where frequently the government is overthrown.

And then the previous rulers are accused of corruption. And the new people who overthrow the previous, they truly believe that now they have a just, more just society is going to arrive, because they, again, they don't know themselves. They have not observed themselves.

And the moment they achieve power, they are seduced by that, and their ego suddenly grows. And they reenact the same thing again. So ideology, religion can turn into, and often does turn into ideology.

You can recognize it, as I said, by the fact that these people are not peaceful. They will condemn other people, or other groups of people as evil. They may verbally, even physically, attack others.

And if it's not that extreme, it might be that they simply are extremely intolerant towards anybody who does not share their belief system, their ideology. And so that's a clear sign that that kind of religion is a hindrance to the spiritual dimension, to knowing who you are, to being a peaceful human being. It's in the service of the ego.

It's an egoic creation. The ego can take scriptures that are beautiful and point to the truth, and can corrupt them, completely misread and misinterpret them. And then they're used in the service of the ego.

So that's how religion can become a huge hindrance. But religion can also become an opening into the spiritual dimension. So a religious practice, or a religious reading, a reading of a sacred text, an ancient spiritual text, can be a wonderful thing.

The questioner mentions Jesus, following in the steps of Jesus, is that, or is only presence important? When you use it in a deeper sense, following in the steps of Jesus means becoming present. How?

First of all, Jesus taught presence in quite a few of his utterances, starting from the flower, that you said you should really look at a flower and see how it lives in the present moment without worry and anxiety. He taught egolessness, deny thyself, which means recognize the unreality of yourself. He spoke of the I am as the foundation, and which is misinterpreted.

We have, let's just for a moment, in Christianity, we have a historical person, probably, Jesus, and we have Christ. Now, Christ was not his actual name. It was a title given later.

And that's already mentioned in the more enlightened parts of the New Testament, that Christ is a dimension of consciousness. And I believe he's saying, Paul, who says, I must diminish and Christ in me must grow. This is a mystical, deeper interpretation of Jesus, who was an historical person who realized his kinship with the transcendent dimension, the divine, whatever you want to call it.

He realized his connectedness, his kinship, his oneness with that. And as he realized that, he became, the transcendent dimension emerged in him, as it does in you. It emerged in him, and then the historical person, Jesus, became the Christ.

Therefore, we have in mystical Christianity, the term Christ consciousness, which is the transcendent consciousness that emerges, where before there was only the person. And we have in certain Buddhist traditions, the term Buddha nature, that says that every human being and everything that's alive has at the core of their being is Buddha nature or the Buddha, as the reality of who you are. That's the teaching in some Buddhist traditions.

And it's a beautiful teaching, that your true nature is Buddha nature. And you just have to realize your true nature is Buddha nature. Isn't that what we've been talking about?

It's just a different name attached to it. In mystical Christianity, it's Christ consciousness. And so Jesus was a precursor who showed the way to Christ consciousness.

And if we're focusing on the historical figure of Jesus and realizing that he embodies both the person and the Christ can become a vehicle for you, if that is suitable for you. And if you still feel drawn to Christianity or any other religion, that is the way for you to go deepen that rather than think you have to move into something else. But if that doesn't work for you, then fine.

Then walk away and find Christ consciousness somewhere else. And some people don't need any religious structure anymore. This is for the first time, perhaps in the evolution of humanity, there's spirituality that exists outside of formalized religions.

And that's an amazing thing. So many of you may not need the formalized religion anymore and others may need it. And that is a beautiful thing.

You can deepen the way in which you live, practice and understand your religion so that it becomes an opening into the transcendent dimension within yourself. If you are a Christian and want to deepen certain readings, I would highly recommend there were certain teachers who expressed the truth of Christianity from a deeper level than the conventional church Christianity. The most, in the past, Meister Eckhart, who lived in the early middle ages.

The most wonderful, his writings are superb and in fantastic depth to them. And he uses Christianity to take you very, very deep into the core of it all. The core of all things into yourself.

The desired outcome. If the desired outcome occupies a place in your mind that's overwhelming or you desperately need to go to arrive at that place, then in the meantime, all the things that you do are then simply a means to an end. Perhaps we can start with a few, before we go on to questions, a few additional remarks about the important subject of being and doing.

Being, that's what we started with in the last session. And finding a balance. And before finding a balance, being able to enter to access the being dimension.

That's already a good start. And then at first, what tends to happen, but also not invariably, is you enter the being dimension or access it when you're in a place that is conducive to a stillness or a serenity. Or here, a protected space.

Or perhaps at home in your room or here in your room or in nature. And at first, the being dimension is associated with cessation of doing. That's how you first realize it.

It's when you're not doing anything and you can just be, consciously be, which implies a, no matter how brief, says a cessation of the primary doing, which is the thinking doing. Without a, no matter, a brief cessation in the stream of thinking, it's hard to find the being dimension. But later on, as you become consciously rooted in the being dimension, thinking and being can come together.

They are not irreconcilable. And in fact, that is one of your tasks, is to, when you do think, not to be totally identified with a stream of thinking. In other words, there's some attention in the background.

Some, there's an awareness, a field of, or a space of awareness in the background, even while you're engaged in thinking, as it is now, as I'm speaking. Of course, the mind is operating, but I can sense, and perhaps you can, in the background, behind the words, beyond the words, in between the words, there's that space of stillness, beingness, whatever you want to call it. And if you can sense it, you might believe, if you sense it's coming from here, if you can sense it, it's in you.

Because only being can be aware of being, not the mind. If you believe being emanates from me, I suppose it does, but at that moment, you, there's the recognition of being can only happen through accessing that dimension within yourself. Only being can recognize being, not the mind.

The mind, however, may come in when you, let's say you recognize the being dimension that emanates from this thing, that's the body or whatever it is. It emanates, and you sense it. The moment you sense it, it's in you also, consciously.

Now, it's possible that the mind may come in and misinterpret what's going on. And the mind may confuse the form of the spiritual teacher or whoever it happens to be, the form identity with the being dimension. And then suddenly the teacher is regarded as a being, a supernatural being or a kind of God-like figure or some great guru or whatever, because you confuse that which transcends the form, for which the form is only an opening, you confuse that with the form.

And then you make that person through whom being shines you make that person very special. This can happen easily. It's a misinterpretation, but at least you recognize being.

But what you overlooked is, because not everybody will recognize it in the being dimension in a human being. If it shines through strongly, not everybody will recognize. Some people say, what's this all about?

Why are these people all listening to this guy for two hours? And he's not special. He doesn't even jump up and down the stage.

He's just boring, isn't he? He's boring. So that's a danger.

That is also a danger as far as the spiritual teacher is concerned. Because there may be remnants of ego left in him or her. And if the teacher is bombarded with continuous projections of specialness, he or she may begin to believe.

In other words, the ego comes back through the back door and regains ascendancy and the ego comes back and the teacher begins to think, to feel a specialness in the person, the form. And then this teacher, it's happened many times, the teacher makes statements such as, I'm certainly the greatest teacher alive on the planet at the present moment. And, or it may go so far as to say, I'm the greatest that has ever lived.

All the others were precursors. I have arrived. There is something incredibly special coming through, but it is not, it is nobody's possession.

It's nobody's achievement. It does not belong to the form dimension, but the form dimension can be an opening, just like a window. In a way, one could say, this body and this mind is the window frame.

What you see is a window frame, but what the most important thing about the window is the light that comes through the window. That's the opening. And this may also happen to you when you, as presence arises, you will, if it's not happened already, for many of you probably has happened already, you come into contact with people who are helped by your presence.

Even if you don't feel that you know what to do, because it doesn't work like that. They're helped and they're drawn to you. They're helped by your presence.

There's a kind of transmission. It can awaken the presence in the other, that dimension, the being dimension in the other. And then you can find, they may then become attached to you because they feel so good in your presence and they can't let go.

And again, the danger already arises then that you feel, I, I have done this. There's a, one could call that healing in a deeper sense, not just physical healing, but the true healing is the reconnection with the being dimension. That's the true healing.

And there's a phrase in this book called the Course in Miracles. It says, the healer does not heal. He lets healing be.

He does not heal. He lets healing be. So when you are with people who are seeking help, then you don't need to go into your mind and say, how can I help this person?

It has to go, the person is talking to you and you already think, well, perhaps I could say that. I can say that. Doesn't work like that.

You're just present. At some point, you may say something from some sort of deeper place, or you may not even say anything. And there's just an answer that may suddenly appear in the other person.

And it's only, oh, and you never said or did anything. You just sat there. So at first, the being dimension, you find it as separate from external activity or thinking.

And then that's a good beginning. And then gradually you learn that it can, it is not irreconcilable with external activities. It's a presence through movement is a good practice because it shows you do not need to sit still to find stillness, which is another word for it, which people believe initially.

Stillness also has kind of two meanings in English. There's on the one hand, stillness means the absence of noise. But there's another meaning of stillness is the absence of movement.

When you say sit still, it's the absence of noise. He stood still, he sat. So it's stillness points in English to the absence of either noise or movement.

So when we talk about stillness, you might think you have to, you can't move in order to be, to consciously sense the being dimension, you can't, you mustn't move. And then you learn you can actually move. And in fact, it can be helpful.

You begin with that, and then you can perform certain tasks and still being that connectedness with being instead of completely losing yourself in the activity. You can have goals to pursue, which is in the realm of doing. It's good to have goals, although there may be periods in your life when you don't need any goals.

Certainly, if you reach a certain age, it becomes increasingly pointless to pursue goals,

at least at the latest by the age of 95. You don't need to pursue any more goals unless for some reason you have to. But even before then, there may be time periods in your life when the pursuit of goals is not necessary and you can become more deeply immersed, just be engaged in ordinary everyday activity without pursuing any particular big goal, big or small, working towards something.

But on the whole, it's good to have goals. But again, goals belong to the realm of doing, and that's fine. The problem arises if the goal absorbs so much of your attention, meaning the desired outcome, the place you want to arrive at, whatever that may be, passing an exam, achieving a certain position, acquiring mastery in some activity, whatever it may be, the desired outcome.

If the desired outcome occupies a place in your mind that's overwhelming, or you desperately need to go to arrive at that place, then in the meantime, all the things that you do, the steps you take, the activities you undertake in order to arrive at your goal, are then simply a means to an end. They are not enjoyable because you desperately want to have arrived already. To summarize the question, of course, as you mentioned at the beginning, adversity can either, it can strengthen the ego, or it can gradually, or in some cases, suddenly, dissolve the ego, or at least diminish it.

It can go either way. And I must agree with you, I don't know whether you literally said it, in perhaps still in the majority of cases, it strengthens the ego because nobody knows, people don't know the opportunity that every adversity represents. So why does it happen?

How does it strengthen the ego? You can see it sometimes with people who are sick, or people who are disabled. Let's say I've met disabled people, people with physical disabilities, for example.

And in some cases, they are very, really angry with the world and bitter because look at what happened to me. They say, why do I can't move anymore? I've been afflicted with this.

What have I done to deserve this? And these are questions that are justifiable questions. The question, what have I done to deserve?

Why has the world, or whatever they say, God, the world, the universe, or whoever they've done this to me, and then they become bitter and angry, and the ego becomes more and more rigid and hardened. And that is one way it could go. And then I have met people with disabilities who through their disability, at some point, whether through a spiritual teaching, and in some cases, never coming to contact with any spiritual teaching, it just happened that at some moment, they realized intuitively that all the suffering was generated through resistance.

And then the resistance to the isness of their life, this moment, they were able to let go because perhaps the suffering was getting too much. Something happened, something clicked inside, or even if it didn't happen completely, they were able to have moments of inner peace, an inner peace that is not caused by an external condition, an inner peace that seems to be in contradiction to an external condition, so that they would say, how could a person who is suffering this feel so peaceful? And so also that applies to people who are approaching the end of their lifespan because they have some illness and they have been to the doctor, and the doctor says you have six months or one year, and suddenly something in them opens up, and all that remains is that the person already dies, there's no more future, and all that remains is the present moment and the aware space.

So I've had the privilege of working with, when I was still seeing individuals with two or three people to whom that happened, and they became luminous beings in the last few weeks or months of their lives, and became just, there was no, I couldn't see that there was any person left, there was only a space of conscious presence left, just wonderful, as if they had just come into this world. So they came, and then they came to me, and then still asking questions, very profound questions, wanting to understand what happened, and it's beautiful. So this can happen, it can happen collectively to people who have, who go through warfare in countries or become refugees, they lose everything, and again, it can go either way.

Whenever there's any great loss in your life, that again, an opportunity opens up. If you resist, and you resist the resistance origin, the origin of the resistance is a narrative that forms in your mind, that says something about the situation and about your life and about other people. So the narrative forms in your mind, and the narrative is an unhappy one, and then there's continuous resistance, a non-alignment with the isness of the present moment.

Now, one could ask, well, how could somebody who has lost their home, perhaps even lost loved ones, and then they don't know where to go, how could this person be in a state of alignment with the present moment? Isn't that, how can somebody accept the unacceptable, accept that which in conventional terms would be regarded as unacceptable? How is that possible?

But that's precisely it. If you can accept the unacceptable, that is the sudden, the opening, and then you realize the unacceptable is actually not unacceptable, it is acceptable. And the, I was homeless for a certain period in my life with not knowing what to live on the, next day or the next week, and I had already gone into a state of acceptance, so it was a very pleasant experience, but potentially would have been extremely unpleasant.

So not having a home was for me already something that was not experienced as

something bad, but I knew I had to take some action eventually to get a home, and so gradually something happened. I don't want to talk too much about that. I also mentioned in the New Earth, I believe, when I was at university, there was the Stephen Hawkins, the physicist who was confined to a wheelchair, passed away a couple of years ago, and there it was.

He would always, he wasn't famous at that time, only famous locally in the university. We would always be in the same dining room, having lunch, but not the same table. I never met him, wasn't introduced to him.

Observed him many times, sitting at a neighboring table, and then I, one moment when I held open the door for him, he was coming through on his wheelchair, and I looked into his eyes, and I could see there was no unhappiness. Of course, everybody here suffers from a fatal affliction. It's called time, and eventually it's going to kill you.

But before it kills you, unless it does that very quickly and suddenly, and if it doesn't do it very quickly and suddenly, before it kills you, it does things to you. You notice those things that it does to you when you look in the mirror in the morning, and especially if you compare it to a photo taken 20, 30, 40 years ago, you notice the effect of time on you. You may not need to get ugly because the less you're identified with your external self, and as you grow old, the opportunity is there for you to identify more and more with the presence, and the presence shines through the fading form, and when the presence shines through the fading form, it's actually very, very beautiful.

It's different from the kind of beauty that's there when you're 20 years old, and it's like the apple that's just been, just fallen from the tree, and it's still not totally fresh, and you have that biological, might have maybe beauty, and this. So that's nice too, but it doesn't last. There's a deeper beauty that can shine through, and it happens to those humans who are connected with the presence that they are, and then you don't turn ugly.

In the absence of that, if you're only identified with your physical form, then I must admit, it could happen that you turn ugly. Irrelevant is another word the questioner uses. In our civilization, old age is not valued, so people who grow old have the feeling that they are irrelevant, or they are regarded as irrelevant.

Old age is not associated with wisdom. In our civilization, because our civilization doesn't even know what wisdom is. It's not highly valued.

Cleverness, yes. High IQ, yes. And whatever else, but not wisdom.

How do you measure it? What is that? But that is going to change.

We already have, in traditional cultures, ancient, older cultures, the elders are the most important people. And in the Western societies, the elders are the, well, to be charitable,

they are called the elderly, and they are somewhere in a home, and you visit them. Once or twice a month.

And then they sit in their chairs, watching TV, not realizing the opportunity of old age, because nobody has told them. So you can appreciate your appearance if it happens to be good, and you're still relatively young, and your body looks good, or your face looks good. You can appreciate that in the same way you appreciate other things, lovely things.

There's nothing wrong with that. But it would be important, when you look in the mirror, to also feel your presence, so that you don't get excessively attached to the external form. You can appreciate it, but there's no need to be attached to it, because you can only not be attached to it if you can sense the underlying presence.

So when you look in the mirror, maybe you even apply makeup. They apply makeup to my face before I come on, because it looks too oily otherwise, apparently. And I noticed last night it actually does, because last night I didn't have makeup.

I saw myself on the little screen.

[Speaker 13] (2:23:05 - 2:23:06)

I said, I'm very shiny.

[Speaker 1] (2:23:12 - 2:48:00)

And it wasn't the inner emanation of presence that was coming through. It was a different kind of shininess. Yes.

So before I go on camera, they apply makeup to the face. Does it mean I'm vain because I don't want to be shiny? Maybe.

So you may apply makeup, especially if you are a woman. Men, I don't know, some men might do it too, I don't know. And there's no reason to think, oh, should I really, or shouldn't I, or there's something wrong with me if I do it.

That must be ego if I apply makeup. Don't complicate life too much. If you want to apply makeup, apply makeup.

But while you apply makeup, feel the underlying presence. And while you look in the mirror, sense the presence of yourself, the presence of presence, the stillness. And then it's not a problem when suddenly you look in the mirror again and you realize that 25 years have passed.

And you see, oh, the apple doesn't look the same anymore. It's wrinkly. Time is a strange thing.

I described it just now as one way of looking at it, as something that is ultimately going to destroy you. And it does that to everything. But you never catch time.

You only catch the evidence it leaves. So it's a criminal. That criminal commits all kinds of terrible crimes, murderous sprees, and you can never find the criminal, because all you can ever find is the evidence left behind by the criminal, which is dead bodies.

But they all appear in the present moment. There's only ever the present moment. Nobody can experience time as such.

So time exists and doesn't exist. It exists on the surface of things, but does not exist in the depths of yourself. Nobody is evil, but they manifest extreme unconsciousness, which we can call, in many cases, evil.

Do people start becoming nicer as you become more aware, or is it just that you no longer get consumed by the anger that arises when in the company of not so nice people? Well, I would say both. When you become more aware, you're not reactive anymore towards people.

You don't personalize things anymore, make everything personal, and are always looking out for some kind of hidden insult, or look at what his real intention behind what he's saying, what does he really want. You're just, there's an openness and a non-judgmental attitude towards others that non-reactive relationships then generate already more consciousness in the other, because unconsciousness is too unconscious people to strengthen each other's unconsciousness. So if somebody says or does something that may be unconscious and I don't react to it, it does not become amplified through my reaction.

If somebody says or does something unconscious and I react to it, condemn it, even if it's just in my mind, I actually amplify it, and I myself become part of that unconsciousness through my judgment. If I can be non-reactive, I can allow other humans their behavior, because that's their present stage of consciousness. They behave as they have to behave at this moment.

So I allow them to behave, to do what they do. I accept it. And then suddenly there's a different energy there.

So I don't amplify that. And those people then, I don't condemn them. I don't equate their unconscious behavior with who they are.

That's why it's so important not to judge others. It doesn't mean you kind of go through life saying, oh, they're all, everything is fine, that you don't see unconscious behavior. You see what they do, you know what they do, but you don't equate that with who they are.

You know it is an overlay on, it is human unconsciousness, they're expressing that. It's not who they are in their essence. If you confuse the unconscious behavior with who they are in their essence, then that's called judgment.

If you see that somebody is doing something extremely unconscious, that's not judgment because you don't equate it with who that person is. And so you don't say he is evil. That statement would be wrong of anybody because in essence, nobody is evil, but they manifest extreme unconsciousness, which we can call in many cases evil.

So that's important then not to strengthen that and to get trapped in illusion because when we believe in our own judgments, we get trapped, it's not only we trap others in the judgments, we ourselves get trapped in the judgments. Also, people become nicer, which is true, what the questioner says. People become nicer when you're present and aware because they can feel the absence of judgment in you.

Even if they don't, they may not be able to tell you, but I can feel the absence of judgment. They only feel it as a certain goodwill flowing out from you towards them or an acceptance flowing out from you towards them. And humans can feel that.

Even unconscious humans, unconscious, they can feel that. And everybody's grateful for that. Underneath all their madness, they feel grateful because somehow in that acceptance, in that goodwill that kind of flows out in that space, through that space of acceptance, they feel a little bit more themselves than they usually are.

So, and when a human feels a little bit more at ease in themselves, when they come to you, they like you and they are very nice to you. They don't know why. And their usual ego patterns, not all of them are operating anymore.

Some may still come up, of course. So the ego is less, the ego doesn't feel threatened. It feels, oh, there's no need to be that defensive here.

The ego feels it can kind of relax a little bit. Of course, it's still there in the background, where you're just like a little, like a dog. But it's not at its usual state, like the Rottweiler.

So it's just, okay, can relax a little now. And then they like you. So you become a nice person to them.

That's perhaps all they know. When they ask him, oh, he's such a nice guy. Like to see him, like to go to him, and that's a nice, okay, so yes, you do experience that.

So partly simply because presence, acceptance is there and is recognized. And partly because there's the absence of reaction. When somebody suddenly blames you, for example, says, you left that door open, you shouldn't.

And say, oh, I did? Yeah. The usual ego thing, of course, is to say, no, I didn't.

Whether you did or not, because it's regarded as an in, as the ego feels diminished when somebody blames you. You did that. No, I didn't do that.

You did. And it starts from there and then escalates. Why do you always blame me?

Look what you did yesterday. That's called reaction, defensiveness. And that's not there.

So then it's just, you're stating the facts. You left that door open again. No, I didn't.

And then there's no further arguing. Yes, you did. Well, maybe, if that's what you believe.

Or say, yes, you're right, I did that again, sorry. You don't feel diminished when you were wrong. The ego feels diminished.

Just to admit that you've been wrong is a dreadful thing. So the ego can't do that. It's like a little desk.

To say that you've been wrong is a little, and if somebody proves to you that you've been wrong, it makes things even worse. And then some people will start hitting you. That's how the ego can, an ego can easily do.

If it's so obvious that you've been wrong and somebody proves it, then you start hitting them. That's a big argument. And if you knock him out, the ego still wins.

Yes, there is a general improvement in relationships, of course, with presence. The deepest prayers, they're no longer prayers as such. They are when you adopt a listening attitude rather than a saying words.

Perhaps you can upgrade your prayers from petitionary prayers, please make this happen, the petitionary prayers, to what little just mental pointers towards peace, for example, little mental pointers that still use concepts, because every prayer is some kind of, it consists of words, and concepts, in other words, to use a concept to point, to help you go beyond concepts. You could say, for example, an affirmation, the one we talked about earlier, which really what Jesus said, I am the light of the world, is an affirmation. And it's a concept, it points to a deeper reality that is deeper, that far deeper than the words.

You can say, please let me know if you still want some petition, please let me know that I am the light of the world. Duality is implied usually in the usual prayer, it implies that there is God and he is me asking God. The ultimate, of course, is that that duality is ultimately an illusion, because you are an expression of God.

You and God merge, and the deepest prayers then are no longer prayers as such, they are when you adopt a listening attitude rather than a saying words. So if prayers gradually become from saying, as long as you enjoy it, that's fine, but gradually get

away from asking somebody to do something for you, because that keeps you stuck in duality. But if you can realize that this, affirmations are, if they are done rightly, can be very beautiful substitutes for prayers.

I'm healed and whole and at peace. And after that, let there be a space. And really the power is in that space.

In the space you experience that you are already whole. The outward form might tell you something different. I'm holy, because in miracles says, I am holy, for example, that's, again, you are.

And so it's simply an affirmation of how this is how it is. Or if you're healing for somebody else, you're either with that person, or that person comes into your mind, you're thinking about that person, and that person may be ill. And then the most powerful healing I find is to be, to hold the image of that person, and then go deeper into yourself where the wholeness of life lies.

Where nothing is needed, nothing is needed to be added. And there you find the wholeness also of that person. They're already healed at that deepest level.

Beyond form, they're already healed. So you go from form, and then into formlessness. That is the healing that was practiced by Joel Goldsmith.

He has a little, a lovely book called The Art of Spiritual Healing. And that is really to, not to dwell at all on the condition that needs to be healed, but to focus on the essential reality of that human being, which is one with your essential reality, and go into deep stillness where nothing is needed. So he would often get phone calls, sometimes in the middle of the night, somebody desperately needs healing, and they would say, that's the name of the person, and that's what he or she is suffering from, is this and that.

And what he would then do is immediately put the phone down and go into absolutely no thought. For a moment, he heard the name of the person. He heard what was wrong with the person, and immediately let go of that, and immediately, just for two or three minutes, went into no thought, just absolute presence.

And in that, there's absolute perfection in that realm of the formless. And that is the essence of that person that needed healing. So you take the form into the formless, where the form is no longer, no condition to be treated, nothing is needed, just go into that.

And that was his way of healing. He was quite a powerful healer. That is the ultimate form of healing.

And that really is the non-dual kind of prayer. It's no longer, it's going beyond prayer, where you say, please, God, heal. You go to the very source itself that is inseparable

from who you are, and is inseparable from who that person is.

And so that's the, listening, if healing, if prayer can gradually, as I said, become listening, listening to God rather than talking to God. What does listening mean? Listening means there's a field of bare, pure attention.

And listening doesn't mean that you're waiting for some answer, then you're not really listening. In listening, you're not waiting for anything. There's just a field of just pure attention.

And that is a much deeper prayer than any words. That's the attitude of, that's true prayer, is that where prayer also becomes meditation, you could say. Not even wanting an answer, it's enough to be in the silence.

And sometimes an answer comes, or the thing becomes resolved. Sometimes, suddenly, listen. Any trouble in this world, any disturbance, and they happen all the time.

People around you, maybe even a disturbance in your mind, go into just pure, aware, bare, listening presence. Because presence and listening are very, just listening is a way of speaking about presence. You can say, when you're present, it is as if you were in a state of listening.

Now, listening usually is associated with the auditory sense perception. But this listening goes beyond the auditory sense perception. It's the state of consciousness that underlies the auditory sense perception.

Everybody knows what that is like, because when you're really listening for some faint sound, what is the state of consciousness that underlies this listening to the faintest sounds? It's a state of absolute relaxed alertness. So when we say listening, listening is a helpful thing because everybody knows what listening means, but I'm now just pointing out that it's not the external sense perception that's the essence in listening.

The essence in listening is the underlying state of consciousness, of alert, absolute receptivity and alert presence. This is why I believe that Jesus had those parables about the servant and the staying awake, because the master doesn't know when the master is going to come home. So the servant needs to stay awake to know when the master is coming home, otherwise he'll be asleep.

And I think what he really was talking about, because many of the things have come down in a somewhat distorted way because it got transmitted verbally and verbally again, and finally written down, and in the process, some things got turned around and missing. I think he was talking about the attitude of that absolute, he was talking about the state of consciousness, this servant waiting just to hear the master come home, just waiting in a totally different sense from the normal thing that we call waiting, which is the mind saying when it is going to happen, why isn't it happening yet? He uses waiting

in a totally different sense.

So there are quite a few, many times Jesus talked about, obviously about staying awake. That's an important part of, very important part of his teaching. Stay awake.

Don't go to sleep. Stay present. That's, so any words you use in prayer, use them as pointers towards that.

You could say, I'm listening. So paths come, go, but it's still predominantly really awareness. It's so much nicer than thinking.

[Speaker 11] (2:48:06 - 2:49:04)

So I had the opportunity to interview you once before Eckhart about 10 years ago. And one of the things you reported to me then was that after this awakening, you experienced an 80% reduction in mental activity. And I'm curious in your life, what it's like for you in terms of your relationship to thoughts, meaning do you sometimes have hours go by where there literally are no thoughts or are there thoughts coming, but they just float by and there's no attention is given to them.

So what's it actually like? And I'm sure it's different. Obviously, if you're in the middle of a airport doing something than if you're just relaxing at home, but I'm curious to know more about the interior of your experience.

[Speaker 1] (2:49:05 - 2:55:05)

Well, there are long stretches of no thought and I can still function in that state. For example, you talk about airport. I can perfectly check in or walk to the, go through security check.

And then onto whatever the lounge without any thought. And this would not be uncommon that I would do something or go from where I get into the car and drive to the store to buy something. And again, virtually no thought is not uncommon.

So, and all it does make occasionally little fragments may come up like little puffs of clouds and then they're gone. So it's, there can be, or let's say I'm sitting at home not doing much and occasional thoughts can drift in and out of awareness like clouds, like the sky is blue, but little puffy clouds come from time to time and they go, the thoughts have no, I don't follow them and they don't even try anymore to get my attention as is the case with people who are still very strongly identified with thought. Every thought pulls you.

Every thought pulls you where it wants you to go. And thoughts don't really have that pull anymore. They just, when they appear, there's a blue sky and the clouds appear and disappear, appear and disappear.

And there could even occasionally be a stream of thoughts in certain situations, or maybe not even connected to anything happening outside of me. There can be times when there are certain streams of thoughts, but again, they are harmless. They are not the thoughts that have this gravitational pull that just, and you have to follow them with your entire attention.

But it's a thought that, yes, from time to time, there may even be more clouds than blue sky, but these clouds are not, no longer the heavy weather clouds that I had in the distant past and that other people perhaps recognize in their own lives. They are more like innocent little puffy clouds with thoughts, but no thought matters that much. And then it disappears.

It's not amplified by following it up and identifying with it and then becomes a heavy thing that takes possession of you. So it never feels as if any thought were taking possession of me. So yes, then to summarize, I think if anybody entered my inner state, they would be surprised how little thinking there actually is compared to probably what I still, is still for most people normal, almost continuous.

How relatively little there is. Yes, there is some, and that which there is, is doesn't have the heaviness anymore that it has when you're identified with the thoughts and they have a gravitational pull and they develop into streams and proliferate and develop into streams and you lose yourself completely in it. So that doesn't happen.

So I, I'm most, the not thinking is almost, would say predominates unless there's something specific to think about. But then occasionally, yes, clouds come and go and so on, but there's always an awareness of the sky also. It's, and it doesn't really matter whether I'm in, out in nature, in the, walking in the forest, looking around.

Let's just describe, let's just describe perhaps one minute of let me walking in the forest, walking, looking, looking, the dog, trees, no thought, just looking at the trees, the plants, the aliveness of it, sensing the energy field. And then a thought may come and says, oh, when I get home, I need to, I need to do this or that. I forgot to do that.

I need to, when I get home, I still need to do that. Or I need to buy some, I need to buy some bananas later. Okay, and then it's gone.

And then, and then some other thought comes of something, maybe could be anything. A person that tried to contact me the other day, didn't. And then it's gone again and back.

So puffs come, go, predominantly really awareness. It's so much nicer than thinking.

[Speaker 11] (2:55:07 - 2:55:25)

So just to be sure that I fully hear you correctly, it never happens that one of these puffs

kind of has a little hook that comes down that catches you by the neck or something like that. And, you know, just a little hook that comes in like I forgot to do something.

[Speaker 1] (2:55:27 - 2:55:51)

Good question. I have experienced in the past, not for some time now, occasionally some thought coming in and hook is a good word. I experienced in the past sometimes, and I can't remember when the last time was, occasionally some thought coming in and wanting more of me than just appear and disappear.

[Speaker 11] (2:55:51 - 2:55:52)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (2:55:52 - 2:55:56)

It goes, I perceive it, it goes like this. It pulls your sleeve.

[Speaker 11] (2:55:57 - 2:55:58)

Yeah, yeah.

[Speaker 1] (2:56:01 - 2:56:16)

And so that's, usually I notice it and then there's an intensification of presence. There's a conscious choice at that moment to be more intensely present.

[Speaker 11] (2:56:16 - 2:56:17)

Interesting.

[Speaker 1] (2:56:17 - 2:57:40)

Yeah. The same thing happens when a challenge comes in everyday life, something goes wrong, whatever it may be, and a challenge comes in and what otherwise could easily develop into some kind of minor drama. And again, at that time, usually it's not even so much a conscious choice.

It almost happens naturally that immediately there's an intensification of presence. So that's something that I hadn't mentioned before. There is the normal level of presence is the taking over of the normal level.

When a challenge comes in, there is, I call it sometimes the dimmer switch, is turned up and there's more intense presence when the challenge comes because only more intense presence can burn the thoughts that want to arise there. And so there's then a hard to describe what a heightening of present is, but if I could act it out.

[Speaker 11] (2:57:40 - 2:57:41)

Please. Ha ha.

[Speaker 1] (2:57:43 - 2:59:18)

It's like normal presence is, and more intense presence is, and back to normal, more intense. The more intense presence is, this presence becomes a sharp sword, as I sometimes compare it to that in intense presence, which if you're surrounded by pandemonium, ha ha, could happen, then that is required. And so there's the, or if there's a very strong pull by some thought, there's come this way.

I will lead you to a wonderful place. It's called drama and unhappiness. Just follow me.

You will love it. And then you have to go. You can't fight that thing.

You can't say, no, go away. You give it more power. You just go.

You have to have that fierceness then. The presence becomes fierce presence, whereas before, presence was gentle, gentle presence.

[Speaker 5] (2:59:21 - 3:00:39)

Thank you. I have a question about stages that we go. I read the first one, Power of Now, changed my life.

And then I came to a new earth. Thank you for paradise. And so the stages, the truck, you get stuck, you either accept, and then the next one is you enjoy.

And so I already went to enthusiasm. So I found my enthusiasm when I thought, but then it felt like the ego. So is there a way to know which one is which?

It's like, okay, so am I enthusiastic because this is what the universe is pushing me to do? Or is it just me trying to be, you know, oh, I'm the enlightened one. I'm the spiritual one or so on.

[Speaker 1] (3:00:40 - 3:05:01)

Okay, I understand. Yes, thanks. So that goes back to, in the new earth, I think I wrote that the three modalities of being, if you're not one of the three modalities, you are in a state that is not harmonious and egoic or dysfunctional.

The three modalities, acceptance, you either, whatever you need to do or whatever the situation is, you accept it. If you cannot enjoy it, there's some things you can't enjoy, but you can accept that this is what is. Acceptance, then, is that important.

Others, enjoyment comes in. Enjoy the work, see if you can enjoy it rather than just

accept that this, if you really, anything you do with resentment is a dysfunctional state, causing suffering. Without knowing it, you're causing it to yourself in any state of resentment.

What you're doing it, but you resent doing it. You are somewhere, but you really don't want to be there, but you are there. So these are states of dysfunctional states that actually cause suffering.

You cause it unnecessarily to yourself without knowing it. So acceptance, enjoyment, there's a flow in what you do. You are present in what you know where you're going, but you're fully present in the process of moving towards there.

The movement is more important than where you want to get to. And then the enthusiasm is the stage that I describe as happening during the creative process. When a new thing, when you are giving birth to something new in whatever form, there can be an enormous influx of energy that I call enthusiasm, which is the ancients believed that there was a higher spirit moving through you at that time, because I mean, literally enthusiasm means in God.

So enthusiasm is the stage of creativity. Now your question is correct. It can sometimes, there can be egoic, excited egoic states masquerading as enthusiasm.

And sometimes at first sight, not easy to tell the difference because you're on a high, you're on an egoic high. Now there are, but there are some signs by which you can recognize whether or not it's the ego or whether there's a deeper creative process, consciousness wanting to create something through you. One thing you can recognize the ego by is when you encounter obstacles to whatever your action is in that state of either enthusiasm or egoic excitement, when you encounter obstacles, the ego, if it's the ego, you will quickly fall into negative states the moment you encounter obstacles to what you're doing.

If it's true enthusiasm, you do not fall into negative states when obstacles arise and obstacles will arise in any creative endeavor. It's something that doesn't mean you're supposed to stop when an obstacle arises. Then you look at an obstacle and see either you can use it and transform it and incorporate it into what you do, or you can bypass it.

That's how true enthusiasm, but the ego gets resentful when an obstacle comes. It takes it as a personal insult. So that's a good sign that it's egoic or not.

And another sign of course is always, but that is more when you're getting towards the end of the achievement, when you have achieved something and it does not satisfy you soon after achieving it, then you know it was the ego too. So you always know the ego. There's a satisfaction, but not short-lived when it's ego.

So the Course in Miracles actually tells you, you can always recognize an egoic goal

when you achieve it by realizing that it hasn't satisfied you.

[Speaker 5] (3:05:03 - 3:05:46)

That makes, thank you, of course it makes sense. Because at the moment when I do get creative, I write and I write the stages and it just makes sense. And I know I'm not writing it.

It has to do with autism, with my child. And I'm like, but this makes sense. How come nobody has thought of this?

And when I show it to people, they say, oh, well, yeah, this is great. So I know that this is where I'm going. And I know it's not me.

It's not this form doing it. So that's how I know. And then I find obstacles.

And then it teaches me about me because now the pain body comes and says, well, but I have to be nice. Now I have to be nice. But that's not this form.

This form is not nice.

[Speaker 1] (3:05:46 - 3:05:46)

Yes.

[Speaker 5] (3:05:46 - 3:05:49)

Sorry. This form has to be.

[Speaker 1] (3:05:50 - 3:05:52)

Yeah, I know what you mean. We know what you mean.

[Speaker 5] (3:05:52 - 3:05:53)

I really know what you mean. Oh my God.

[Speaker 1] (3:05:54 - 3:05:58)

The form is nice too. But there's something nicer even than that.

[Speaker 5] (3:05:59 - 3:06:10)

Yes, because that's what you have to do. Like, I heard like sometimes the universe wants to, you know, kick someone. That is what you have to do.

It's not violent, but that is what.

[Speaker 1] (3:06:11 - 3:07:05)

Yes. Now, another thing, the ego, of course, also whenever there's an ego endeavor with that kind of excitement that sometimes goes with ego, I just mentioned the obstacle that when an obstacle arises, there will be resentment and negativity. And also you recognize the ego when it, there's always an excessive focus on the end result that it wants to achieve.

So it's very excited about the end result that it wants to get to. In all the doing is a means to getting to the end result. And yes, it is excited about getting there.

It imagines getting there. But in the meantime, the state of consciousness that underlies your action or your activity is not the highest. If there's a lot, there can be a lot of stress arising with it and.

[Speaker 5] (3:07:06 - 3:07:45)

Yes, but it's not really stress because I don't know what the end result is. I don't know. And that's what teaching is like.

This is not me because I don't know. I don't know what the end result and it doesn't matter. It's not like it doesn't matter, but it's a different, it doesn't matter.

It's like, it's okay either or, but it's the process that when I'm going is, should I stop now? Will I stop because I have to be nice and well, that's just how it is. But that doesn't, this feeling doesn't let me, it just pushes me.

It's like, no, you have to keep going. I was like, why can't I just be nice? Why can't I just stay here and then do yoga?

But no, that this form is meant for something else.

[Speaker 1] (3:07:45 - 3:12:15)

Thank you. Thank you. So if you discover within yourself that a lot of the time you're in a state of lack, of insufficiency, of not enough, and you feel that the answer to the remedy is to be active in this world and achieve and do as much as possible, then you'll probably find that ultimately that is not the answer to your state of lack in order to transcend, to go beyond your state of lack, of neediness, of not enough.

Spiritual practice and spiritual realization is necessary. Focus on the realization of being. It's only there that you can go beyond that state of lack, which is ego.

Go within and discover who or what you are beyond. The person. Does presence require us not to be too excited about something?

Is presence serious? Don't laugh. I see being too excited about something as weakness and I feel presence should be strong.

Please explain the relationship between the two. No, well, presence does not require you to be not to be excited about something. It doesn't require anything.

Well, there are certain requirements for presence to arise. And that is, for example, finding the gap between two thoughts. Once presence has arisen, presence doesn't have requirements and doesn't say, now you must be serious.

There's a related question, but I don't know where it is. Sometimes it's nice to answer two questions in one answer. It could be anywhere.

Well, I'm sure you have seen the, there's a little symbol symbolizing the theater, which the origin of this symbol, which has two images and it goes back to ancient Greece where theater first started. The actors in ancient Greece wore masks and there was a mask for, a smiling mask. And there was also, there might've been others too.

And there was the sad or miserable mask. And traditionally to symbolize, you can even see it at the entrance to some theaters. You have the two masks, a smiling masks and next to it, a miserable looking mask.

And, and that is symbolizes comedy and tragedy. And so the excitement that you mentioned here would be the smiling mask. Oh, it's all going so well.

[Speaker 6] (3:12:16 - 3:12:18)

It's great, I got it, I got it, I got it.

[Speaker 1] (3:12:19 - 3:23:13)

Are you excited about going to Costa Rica? Somebody asked me and I said, no. And that person didn't understand how one could be not be excited about going to Costa Rica.

So that's the positive excitement. And then there's the negative excitement of, I'm in Costa Rica and I got stung by mosquitoes and I've got diarrhea. And it's too hot.

And there's the drama, that's also an excitement, the negative excitement of drama. Oh, what he did to me, what you do, I won't forget that. So it's not that presence requires you not to be excited.

There's a natural thing that comes as presence arises more in your life. You still, you take pleasure in the good things and you have a, you would rather have something nice than something not good. So when something sad happens, something might make you sad, you go, oh.

But there's no longer these extremes that is an overvaluation of conditions, circumstances, an overvaluation of circumstances in your life, either on the positive or on the negative. Now I'd like to think you have a third image because we have the

smiling and we have the miserable mask. And that is the good Buddha images.

And you might have seen some on the good Buddha statues or paintings. And as you may remember, I mentioned what that really represents is not a person who lived 2,500 years ago. It represents a state of consciousness.

And on the good paintings and the high quality inspired statues, the Buddha always has a slight smile on his face. It's not the big smile of the happy mask, but it's a hint of a smile. And then you get some not so good Buddha images where the Buddha looks deadly serious, almost scary.

So that's that hint of a smile of the Buddha points to another state that is neither the positive excitement nor the negative excitement of drama. It's something deeper that again, we come back to the vertical dimension. The Buddha, Buddha is a state of consciousness, the awakened state.

The word itself means to be awake, the awakened one, the one who is awake. And that's you. So the vertical state is the state of depth.

And when you're rooted in the vertical, you're not swayed so much anymore by either when something good happens, you go, and when something bad happens, you go, you still appreciate the good. And when the bad comes, you accept what is, and you can enjoy the good, and you can accept the so-called bad. And it's not even good and bad anymore if your mind doesn't label what happens in your life.

It is, this moment is as it is. And so I can enjoy going to Costa Rica and being here, and even to some extent, look forward to going there a little bit. And at the same time, or more fundamentally, be rooted in that deeper sense of presence.

And out of that arises that strange thing or no thing that produces, that causes the Buddha to smile. And that's a kind of flow of joyful aliveness. That has nothing to do whether or not you're going to Costa Rica, whether your trip is canceled.

And even diarrhea won't affect it too much. Although on the surface, it doesn't feel good. And so if you're rooted in the vertical, then the extremes excitements just naturally don't occur anymore because the overvaluation of circumstances doesn't happen anymore.

If you overvalue circumstances, then you've always very quickly experienced the other polarity. What makes you happy today makes you unhappy tomorrow. Or what makes you happy today doesn't make you happy anymore tomorrow because you got used to it.

Or it's very often the case, a mental projection of what is going to make you happy when you achieve it doesn't work. Or if it works, it works for just a short time. Of course, in miracles mentioned somewhere that you can always recognize an egoically motivated

goal in you by the fact that when you reach it, it doesn't satisfy you.

Even if, as I said, even if your body is strong and beautiful and you identify with that, you have moved towards suffering. And if your body is not, you're not happy with it, you're suffering already. So hold your form identity loosely and don't let it get in the way of your happiness.

Because obviously everybody has a form identity. It consists of many different things. It depends what importance you give certain aspects of your particular physical, psychological form.

Obviously you have a form identity. It always starts with the body because to some extent you can't get away from that. This form identity begins with the body.

As you may remember, when I talk about form identity, you have to differentiate between form identity, which is physical form and psychological form, and essence identity, which is who or what you are beyond the physical and beyond the psychological, you as the consciousness, the transcendent consciousness, which is there the moment you become still and you're still awake, you haven't fallen asleep, stillness remains.

That is the beginning of realizing your form identity, but your essence identity. But your form identity, yes, it varies from person to person. What importance could you give certain aspects of your form?

As I said, it begins with the physical body. And for some people, that's already a huge chunk of their form identity is their physical appearance. And in some cases, it's a source of pride.

So it makes you feel special, because relative to others, your body's better looking or stronger. Or for many others, it's a source of suffering and shame because the body isn't good enough. It doesn't look good enough.

It's not, when you compare the ego, always comparative in its, it compares its identity with others. So, and then you look at other, many people, some people are made temporarily happy by their bodies, identifying with it, and others are made unhappy by their bodies. But in either case, it's egoic identity.

You might think that if you have a beautiful or strong body, obviously only for a few years, then you begin to, if you are really identified with the beauty or strength of your body, then you're in for a lot of suffering. When that beauty or strength diminishes, then you begin to really suffer. Your sense of identity begins to crumble.

No matter how hard you try to repair the decaying form, you can't really, well, you can spend a lot of money trying to patch up the things, but you can't go on forever. And then

eventually, as sometimes it happens with some very beautiful actors, actresses, actors, when they get really old and even the repair jobs don't work anymore, then you never see them again. They live in hiding.

[Speaker 6] (3:23:13 - 3:23:14)

It's very sad.

[Speaker 1] (3:23:15 - 3:50:12)

They live withdrawn, don't want to be seen by anybody anymore. It's a very sad end to their lives. So the identification, you know, you might think it's particularly egoic if you have to take pride in your, by the way, there's nothing wrong with being very happy if you have a strong and beautiful body.

Enjoy it while you can is my recommendation. But it's not to be despised. It's lovely, wonderful.

It's not essentially who you are, obviously. So find who you are beyond that as soon as possible before it starts to decay. Find who you are beyond that.

That's important. So, but it's not only the ego. It's not only amplified by identification with a strong or beautiful body.

It's equally, the ego is equally amplified if you have a shame or unhappiness attached to what you consider to be an undesirable looking body that's also of strong egoic thought form. It's just as strong as the one that takes pride in your appearance. Sometimes people think ego always refers to somebody who feel better and bigger than others.

Big ego seems to be like a triumphant sense of identity. That can be the case. But the ego is equally strong in the opposite of that, regarding yourself as inferior and suffering because of that, comparing yourself unfavorably with other people on whatever level, seeing yourself as a victim of life that's an equally strong egoic identity, a thought form.

So it's not just the ego. It's not necessarily and always a triumphant sense of identity. It can be just as strong as the opposite of that.

So identification with the body, which can ultimately, it will bring you suffering. Even if, as I said, even if your body is strong and beautiful and you identify with that, you will move towards suffering. And if your body is not, you're not happy with it, you're suffering already.

So in either case, go deeper, go deeper. Don't, and then that's one identification. The other identification may be other external things to your body.

Now, obviously, to some extent, the things that you put on your body become an

extension of the body. So you look for, if you want to create a certain image or to reinforce the image that you have already created for yourself, the way you dress becomes an extension of, you identify with that as much as you identify with the actual physical body. It becomes an extension of the physical body.

So that can become important too. What you put on becomes part of your identity and all the advertisers, the manufacturers of clothes and brands, they all know that, that ultimately, you're not buying a piece of clothing, but you're buying an identity. And they all know that.

And that's what they advertise. They advertise an enhanced sense of identity. And again, it does not mean there's anything wrong with enjoying something beautiful to put on your body.

The question is, does that give you your sense of identity? Or is it simply something that you enjoy? Very big difference.

In the same way with a possession. There's no need to let go of all possessions because if you radically, as some spiritual people have done and still do in the past, sometimes it may work, but the danger is, let's say you're so spiritual that you say, I don't want any more possessions, nothing. And that still exists in some countries.

In India, there's an unbroken tradition going back thousands of years of humans who have done that. And some still do it. So they walk, some of them are actually totally naked.

Some were just in loincloths. They live on, they are supported because it is valued there. As to relinquish all attachments completely in your attempt to find the deeper dimension where you, the being of you, that is where you are connected with the divine, with God's source.

The danger is when you do that, that you create a substitute identity for yourself as a thought form of me, the one who has let go of everything. Therefore, the me that is superior to all those who are still attached to all those things. And that's the spiritual ego.

And that's very subtle. It can be very deceptive. You can spend the rest of your life, if you let go of everything, and then you have this huge spiritual ego walking around and you don't know it.

It's much more helpful, except in some exceptional cases, if that is your calling to relinquish everything, if you very strongly feel that is your calling, then that's why you have to go. But be careful that you don't create another identity for yourself, a mind-made identity out of that. Then you're trapped again without knowing it.

But if you do, my recommendation is, first of all, don't, because you probably have to let go of most of your clothes, too. Don't go and live in North Dakota or Canada. Move to Florida or here.

Then at least your body's relatively comfortable. But even then, you would still encounter problems. So my first recommendation would be to move to India.

And there you will be looked after by people who kind of recognize that there's a spiritual seeker there. India is still many of these people. Unfortunately, a significant percentage of them, the renunciates, the sadhus, some are genuine, wonderful beings, and others do it for a living.

It's great, you don't have to work. People give you food. You can just sit around all day and be respected.

So you have, for some, it's genuine, and others are fake. So identity, then, for some people, gender is an identity. Traditionally, being either a man or a woman was always an important part of your sense of self.

How important varies from person to person. In some countries where genders are still clearly defined and separated, your gender identity can make up an important part of your sense of who you are. For example, in some countries, if you're a man, it gives you some, you immediately have a certain superiority over the other 50% of humanity, or the women, that, I'm a man.

And then the woman is also pushed into identification with their role, and so there was, I'm a woman. And so, and you're trapped in that kind of identification. I'm not going into gender, that's a big topic these days, but is the, are you seeking some ultimate identity?

No matter what you, what gender you are, there's all these things these days, LGBTQ, et cetera, et cetera. Okay, that's fine, but are you seeking some ultimate identity in that? That's an illusion again.

Anything in form, you're seeking some kind of ultimate completion of yourself that only the essence identity can give you. It does not mean that you cannot honor your form identity. It could also be racial, what color is my skin?

Fine, you can be happy with it, or whatever, you can honor that, but not making that into your main identity, then you're trapped in the surface of life. So there's a difference between honoring your form identity and being trapped in your form identity. And also the importance is mistaking your form identity with the essence of who you are.

Mistaking that for the essence of who you are, that is a delusion. How can I free myself from my enormous desire and longing for a spiritual love relationship with a man? Although I do understand my desire for such a relationship after 25 lonely and painful

years of marriage during which I could not give myself nor my ex-husband the love and acceptance that we were both longing for, I feel at the same time that this desire is the biggest trigger of my pain body.

Even during this beautiful retreat, my pain body is sometimes active for this reason. I'm aware of that. Since a long, long time, I feel a huge attraction towards a man.

I hardly talked with him. I feel a strong attraction towards a man. I hardly talked with him because this attraction freezes me and makes me feel uncomfortable because it feels almost unspiritual to have this earthly longing.

Anyhow, these are the moments which keep me away from the now. Help needed. In brackets, ha-ha.

I'm very grateful to be with you. Thank you. That longing is in everyone.

And as I mentioned earlier, it's to do with being this incomplete, form, and this form wants to unite with the other half to complete itself. So you, as this physical form, may never be quite free of that longing. But as you go beyond identification with a physical form and the psychological form of me, that longing becomes an almost peripheral manifestation in your life.

No longer makes you unhappy if it is not fulfilled. The psychological me uses that longing as a substitute for surrender. The belief that through some relationship, I can complete myself.

That the psychological sense of self, which also is not complete, the physical is not complete because the physical is one half of the whole. The psychological is not complete because it can never be. In its essence, it exists in a state of lack, of not enough, of insufficiency, of needing to add more.

And the one thing that the self, the psychological self believes often will make me complete is the relationship with the other half. Partner, the ideal, the one. And that can keep you going.

That search can keep you going for a long time for the one human being who is going to complete me. On the physical, that pull remains. On the psychological, that longing for completeness is transcended, is gone beyond as you no longer identify with a mental image of me, as you step out of identification with the mind-made self, which is always incomplete and will project its incompleteness in many cases onto that one thing that says, if I only had a partner, I would feel saved, totally myself, complete myself through him or through her.

And if you should find a partner for a while, that may work. And then you find you cannot complete yourself through any form whatsoever. So what leaves you through surrender

to what is, and which in your case might mean the feeling of great lack, the feeling of aloneness, the longing for him, you may not know who, and there's this great lack at the center of your being, and what do you do with that?

That feeling of loneliness? If you're not vigilant, it becomes mind movements. It adds more to the story of the incomplete me who needs, and you can think about it, project, imagine, and that only strengthens that.

But if you allow what you feel to be there, let's say it's called loneliness, feel it, don't resist it. Let, you may not even label it anymore. Simply be attentive, look at it.

No analysis, just bringing presence to it. That feeling that you never wanted, that you want to get away from, that otherwise would continuously turn into thinking. Now you're saying, there it is.

And it has a certain feeling quality to it. And you give it, you can give it so much attention that you're not even labeling it anymore as loneliness. Your attention that you give that feeling is just complete.

And your acceptance of that feeling is complete because it is now. It is the form that this moment takes. So you surrender into that, say, all right, embrace it, and see if it kills you.

It won't. It's not going to kill you. It's not going to consume you, but it might consume the ego if you surrender into it.

So, and then suddenly you will see it has turned into something else. You can, I don't want to put any ideas into your head and say, this is what it's going to turn into. You surrender into that, the longing becomes intense aliveness itself.

The longing, if totally accepted, and that is even the longing for God, which says, I want God so much. On the other side of the longing, God is already hiding. It is already, it's a misinterpretation through the mind that says, you don't have it.

It's not here. And the beloved is on the other side of the loneliness. You then go, you suddenly experience a sense of completeness because you've surrendered totally into that feeling.

And then you have gone beyond the need, the psychological need for a relationship to complete you. There may still be a physical need on the level of physical body, on the level of sexuality or emotion that if you're a man wanting close to you, the female energy field, if you're a woman wanting the male energy field, this form may have that, but that is relatively minor. It's a very small movement, but deep down there's already such completion and completeness that that's a very minor surface movement of the form, doesn't make you unhappy anymore.

And then it is quite possible that you meet someone because you don't need him anymore. And then it is more likely that the relationship may work quite well because the need for this person to make you complete which no human being could ever fulfill, it's an impossible task and an impossible demand. Every human being will fail, will not make you complete.

So the need and the demands that this human being should provide that completion for you isn't there anymore. And that is why it is likely that the relationship may work quite well when the need, the psychological, deep-seated psychological need is gone. Then if it happens, you welcome the relationship.

If it doesn't happen, that's fine too, it's beautiful too. It's not everybody's destiny and that's beautiful too, to be alone. Solitude is beautiful, loneliness is not.

Solitude is to be alone and to be surrendered into that aloneness, solitude, beautiful, even sacred. Loneliness is to be alone and hate it and not wanting this. When you surrender into aloneness, it becomes solitude and solitude even becomes more than that.

It becomes the deep sense of connectedness with being itself because you'd really been looking for God through somebody else. And it's only through surrender that you can find God. So this is your spiritual practice to work with that.

Not to find him, that's not your spiritual practice. These are the moments which keep me away from the now because that sense of incompleteness and lack still tends to become mind movements. So it keeps you away from now, but it doesn't have to be like that.

The very feeling that you experience, let it bring you into the now. Now, give it attention, embrace it. No need to run away from it.

You welcome loneliness and then it turns into something else, beautiful. This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

The most important element is the human's state of consciousness, state of being with the dog. And you call that calm assertiveness. Yes.

Your work with dogs, a large part of that is actually your work with humans. You need to show humans how to be with dogs.

[Speaker 3] (3:50:12 - 3:50:14)

I train people, I rehabilitate dogs.

[Speaker 1] (3:50:14 - 3:50:14)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (3:50:19 - 3:50:20)

Nice to meet you all.

[Speaker 1] (3:50:21 - 3:50:28)

Thank you, it's all so good to meet you. I've seen you many times and admired your work so much. Thank you, sir.

[Speaker 3] (3:50:28 - 3:51:22)

There's a lot of wisdom in what you do. My grandfather passed that to me. He did?

I was very little when he said, never work against mother nature. So I was raised in Mexico on a farm, and low income kind of type, but very rich on an instinctual spiritual level. So I always say, I'm an instinctual man and man of faith.

Then I learned to be, to charge. Very good. And then I also learned a man has their own feminine side, which in Mexico is against.

Men will practice feminism. So America pretty much complete me. So the four worlds to me is the instinctual world, intellectual world, emotional world, spiritual world.

So when I came to America, I came with instincts and faith. And so America is my father. Mexico is my mother.

[Speaker 1] (3:51:23 - 3:51:24)

Wonderful, wonderful, yes.

[Speaker 3] (3:51:25 - 3:51:25)

That's me. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (3:51:27 - 3:52:07)

There's a book that by this bestselling writer, Malcolm Gladwell, and that's actually his latest book is called What the Dog Saw. What the Dog Saw, and I didn't realize until I opened it in the bookstore that that's one of the essays in the book is actually about you, What the Dog Saw. And it says a little bit about your life.

Yes. Very interesting. And there he mentions that at first you were not as good with people as you were with dogs, not as present with human beings.

And you learned that. How is that going?

[Speaker 3] (3:52:13 - 3:53:42)

I'll tell you how I learned. I'm a good follower too. I listen to my wife.

So that's the one who opened the door for my wall of distrust. Because animals never hurt me. Yes.

So I don't have a negative experience being with dogs. And I was fortunate to be around packs of dogs. So that was my family outside my family.

And so my relationship with mother nature has no anxiety, no fear, no tension, no nervousness. It's no past or future. It's just in the now.

And it's possibilities. It motivates me. It inspires me.

See, it brings a lot of great stuff about me. And so I can only feel joyful when I'm around dogs. And when I was around human before my awareness and I work on my issues, it was distrust.

So I didn't know how to communicate or integrate with my own kind. Yes. You know, and so that became my journey.

Yes. So I did a lot of introspective conversation. I surrender.

I do follow what I practice, you know. Sometimes you have to be assertive and sometimes you have to be a follower, meaning you surrender to what you need or to what is available to you. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (3:53:43 - 3:54:16)

And I know that in your work with dogs, perhaps the most important element is the human's state of consciousness, state of being with the dog. And you call that, I think one word you use is calm assertiveness. Yes.

Yeah. And that's really, that's something you have, that's your work with dogs. A large part of that is actually your work with humans.

You need to show humans how to be with dogs.

[Speaker 3] (3:54:16 - 3:54:18)

I train people, I rehabilitate dogs.

[Speaker 1] (3:54:18 - 3:55:08)

Yes. That's right. Because in the dog, perhaps with dogs, I know the same applies to humans also, but with dogs I feel, in a dog there's a core of goodness that is so obvious.

And in some dogs, of course, it becomes obscured by bad conditioning because of what happened to them when they were young. And the beautiful thing is when you heal a dog of that dysfunctional behavior, even a vicious dog, and I've seen one or two episodes on your show where you work with very vicious dogs. They were.

Grr, grr, grr, grr, grr, grr.

[Speaker 3] (3:55:08 - 3:55:09)

I remember one. A smile.

[Speaker 1] (3:55:09 - 3:55:09)

Yeah.

[Speaker 3] (3:55:09 - 3:55:12)

Grr, grr, grr, grr. You're gonna break a sunshade.

[Speaker 1] (3:55:14 - 3:55:29)

And of course, some humans are like that too. So the dog went, grr. And after a while that goes, and suddenly the core of goodness shines through.

The essential nature of the dog shines through.

[Speaker 3] (3:55:30 - 3:56:02)

Animals don't fight balance. Yes. Animals' biggest goal is to achieve balance.

Yes. My client's biggest goal is money. my client's biggest goal is to be seen as a lovable person, my client's biggest goal is to have a soul mate and that's a beautiful goals but animal lives in a present and animals follow a calm assertive or calm confident source of energy.

Yes. I haven't met a dog that say I don't want to be balanced.

[Speaker 1] (3:56:02 - 3:56:03)

No.

[Speaker 3] (3:56:03 - 3:56:40)

I don't I'd rather just chew all the walls, I'd rather just lick my nails all day long, they go for a walk and I have met a lot of people who question what's balance and what is that important to me. How does that make me happy? You know money makes me happy.

Yes. People loving me makes me happy. God loving me makes me happy.

So it becomes about me. What I love about dogs is how we how they bring we. Yes.

It's all about the pack for me.

[Speaker 1] (3:56:40 - 3:56:41)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (3:56:41 - 3:56:45)

My journey is not about the money, money is a byproduct of loving what you do.

[Speaker 1] (3:56:46 - 4:50:28)

Yes. Now also humans the many humans unfortunately they're the only the only opportunity or so they seem to believe where they can actually manifest that connectedness with another being is through their dog for some humans. They can't do it with with people because with people there's the the human mind is always in the way you can you can't sense the goodness in people very often because there's too much stuff going on in their mental emotional field.

With a dog you can sense you can I walk with my dog in the street people often stop and say ah love what's her name what's his name but for a moment there's an outflow of love and perhaps that's the only time on that particular day that they have this outflow of love towards another being. So in the dog doesn't have the the heavy conceptual human mind that in the way of this is why I call dogs guardians of being and when you just look into the eyes of a dog you can there's something that responds deep within to their being so it can it can awaken your own connectedness with being it's being with a dog and that's what why I find this so spiritual to be with them with a dog and that's there's a little book which I'm going to give you or send you a little cartoon book the guardians of being it's all about dogs and I know you feel that very deeply I can see how you can relate to that.

Of course we're not denying pleasurable anticipation there's nothing wrong with pleasurable anticipation as long as it doesn't detract from the way in which you experience the present moment but if the present moment is reduced to something of little value in your mind because your anticipation is has such gravitational pull that it completely takes you out of the present moment in your mind and you into the future and you're expecting some kind of fulfillment there then of course you say I'm looking forward to my vacation there and in the meantime I completely lose awareness of this present moment in my surroundings it's only just peripheral awareness but not really there so that's a different matter if it if the anticipation absorbs so much of your attention that you miss this and that's perhaps we use this as an entry point this meaning here now if you miss this you miss the whole thing because there's never anything but this here and now. That's, some people find that if you really grasp that not

just intellectually, intellectually you can say yeah of course it's that's all there's always now but if you really sense the importance of that what is of primary importance here now if you disregard that or always mentally somewhere else only yes sufficiently sufficiently here not to bump into furniture or run over by a car you still have some just a minimum of awareness in the present moment yes okay and but your main occupation is to do with past and future and in the meantime you live here now but you're not really here now because you're looking you're there you're here but you don't want to be here I want to be there you never want to be here and when you finally arrive there perhaps for a very brief moment it's nice I'm there but then the same mind pattern arises again because there when it becomes here turns out not to be all that fulfilling and it's there because the next thing comes up it comes there you cannot you can never deeply penetrate into the here now you are prevented by deeply ingrained mind patterns from really embracing and penetrating into the present moment with your attention and so millions of humans on the planet live almost exclusively through anticipation and memory the older you get the more you live through memory because you get more and more past behind you to remember and you can you can sense you have less and less future so the future is shrinking so you don't think when you reach a certain age maybe you don't think that much anymore you some people still do when I retire then I'll be happy I'm just looking forward to retirement or only another 15 years and then I will have and then I can really enjoy myself in 15 years I will start really living my life and then retirement comes and there you sit on a chair what do I do now who am I now without my job title I'm not important anymore weird what do you look for okay now you go into the past think about it there's a lot to think about so you miss there's always the mind pattern of this and this is the entry point into what we might call the spiritual dimension of life or the transcendent dimension of life it is the entry point into a certain state of consciousness that is quite different from the habitual prevalent egoic state of consciousness that most humans are still trapped in and the egoic state of consciousness needs us it lives through us in future it doesn't know what to do with the present moment or when it faces the present moment it interprets it according to its conditioning in other words it doesn't see it as it is because it sees it through the veil of its conditioning its judgments that has been inherited judgments over many years so the ego has been conditioned to interpret the world every experience in a certain way so when you are seemingly in the present moment because something is happening that requires your attention then of course then you come for more there's a person that says something to you it's challenging or situation is challenging and then even then you are not really in the egoic state you're not really present you are reacting according to the conditioning of your mind so if the past is still interfering even there when you seemingly are facing the present moment it's still facing it through the sometimes very dense way of the past in you so people carry all that around with them their past which becomes their personality becomes the person that makes up who you are or who you think you are so you you carry the past around with you and many elements go into that make up your personality that consists of the accumulated past in your mental emotional field the

accumulation of past experiences in your mental emotional field this accumulation is what you usually identify with as you that's me that's what people refer to when they use everybody's favorite pronoun there are all kinds of pronouns these days but everybody's favorite pronoun is I because they use it all the time I I think I know I don't like I like I want I must have I I so what is that I what is it that they refer to each person says I and the I refers to this accumulation of past experiences and past or things that you have that have happened to you things that you have done things that you've experienced acquired and that has left traces in your mind as as memory and forms of conditioning and so that it becomes the person the and that is what humans refer to when they say I now there is a there is a deeper I another I which still most humans except many of you are awakening so you know what I'm talking about there is a deeper I that is that transcends who or what you are as a person welcome and a happy new year to you I wish you success in all your endeavors in the new year do what you can but don't expect ultimate satisfaction through what you do or what you achieve through the doing it can give you temporary satisfaction a feeling of increased aliveness a stronger sense of identity of being somebody a feeling of expansion on the outer level a certain satisfaction which comes with having overcome obstacles generated inner resources that perhaps you didn't know you had until you were faced with these obstacles that's all good but the sense of satisfaction is not a lasting one as long as you know that it's fine because satisfaction ultimately true satisfaction is not arrived at through doing or whatever you achieve through the doing this satisfaction which we could also call happiness joyous aliveness whatever comes from being rather than doing so if you do and do and do but forget to be when you encounter frustrations one after the other but what do I mean when I say forget to be how can you forget to be the forgetfulness of being is to overlook continuously a dimension in you that's always there but in the case of most people never realized so our meditation here of course is all about being going into that dimension within that is formless and timeless that dimension of consciousness where you really step back from thinking because all thinking is also a kind of doing where you step back from thinking another way of putting it rise above thinking and realize beyond all the doing and the successes and failures and conditions and situations of your life and beyond your usual sense of self based on your past there is something else in you and it is that which is continuously overlooked and it's very hard to put it into words because every word is a thought that has become a sound so it's never it you can only know what I'm talking about by realizing that dimension in yourself which is by the way the most important thing in your life to realize that you can only realize it for yourself in the present moment the to know that you are I am consciously to know the beingness that you are and by no I don't mean intellectual or conceptual knowing but a direct realization you don't know the apple by talking about it or describing it or even painting it you can only know the apple by biting into it so in that sense you can only know that in the present moment the realization of beingness becoming aware aware aware of your very being make it conscious it was always there is always there but had been overlooked in all the doing which includes thinking becoming aware of your

essential beingness you cannot understand what that means conceptually but only directly so if you understand what I'm talking about then you're there I'm here to take you there so let's step back from thinking don't need it right now and when you don't remember through thinking who you are on that level of mind what is it that remains let's say at this moment if you're not thinking there's a space opens up within you and you don't remember your past because all your past consists of is thoughts and when you're thinking you don't remember your problems because really also problems are thoughts so what is left when that space opens up there is something left but what you cannot really call it anything because it seems to be a nothingness from the point of view of the thinking mind but what is beyond doubt is what's left and that is beyond doubt is that you are there is a presence there and you are that presence and that presence has no form and that's the most amazing realization is that beyond the person that you are more fundamentally you are that underlying presence and in that presence you are nobody in particular you are not something that is defined and that is the source of true satisfaction to know yourself as that which is beyond form and to some people that comes not through a spiritual teaching it can come when the forms of their lives are destroyed life does that periodically it creates and destroys forms when there's loss in your life and sometimes what's left when you lose everything is that sense of beingness of just a conscious presence and then suddenly in amazement you as the conscious presence not as a person are looking at the world and you are amazed how lovely it is when you don't look at the world through the eyes of the person which is thought and past and that is the remembrance of being there was a spiritual teacher in early the early 20th century Gurdjieff who called it self-remembering and he would sometimes interrupt his students when they were doing things talking amongst each other or engaged in this or that kind of doing and he would suddenly shout stop and everybody had to freeze and in that moment they the stop signal was meant for them to remind them of the possibility of remembering that deeper level of who they are where thought subsides and all that's left is the presence that you are it's not a question of living either in that connectedness with being or in the doing that is normal existence in this world it's not either or but both fuse merge together so that even while you do things and even while you think there's still an underlying awareness of presence of that spaciousness within and it is that which brings about the possibility of yes doing if necessary with an intensity of energy but at the same time with a detachment so you do but you are not in the grip of the doing you think but you're not in the grip of thinking you may have emotions but you are not possessed by them there is an awareness of that inner spaciousness beyond the awareness of your presence or presence we could call it it's not yours it's just how we use language there's a presence there and you are that presence and that presence is essentially what is traditionally called divine presence it is the light of the world it is the light of consciousness it is perhaps not perhaps it is not absolutely right to say this is god but it is the light of god because god is absolutely ineffable it god is beyond anything that we could say talk about so that presence is very much like the light of the sun that's why we sometimes use that expression in some sense the light of

the sun is the sun the light of the sun is still connected to the sun it's an emanation of the sun but it's not the sun that incredible seemingly inexhaustible energy that gives of itself for billions of years for millions of billions so that's we can compare that of course god is infinitely more than the sun but in our sense perceived universe the closest we can the analogy we can find for god is to call it the sun that's why in some traditional societies there has there was some worshipping of course there's far more to the sun and so then we know that's another story so there's the sun and there's the light of the sun and so the presence is the light of the one the god and you are that if a totally disastrous life brings you to a point of awakening now retrospectively suddenly it fulfilled a purpose suffering in your life if it still arises use it so that the ego gets burned up by the suffering so to speak the ego gets burned up uh in this fire of suffering now we can call this conscious suffering that's a very interesting concept conscious suffering when suffering arises become aware of it and accept that it's there in the form of fear anxiety regret you have self-pity you have unhappy sense of self complaining of your life many forms of suffering you've lost things you don't know things that you had identified with taken away from you who am i now i'm nobody i'm nobody well that's great be nobody more completely realize fully you're nobody list you're nobody mess i don't know who i am anymore i've lost everything all the things i've worked for be gone everything is so pointless or their mind is still talking it's all been for nothing it's all meaningless meaningless this is your mind talking don't believe in the things it says but it continues talking many humans in this world are suffering from what we could call nihilism i don't know if you know that word nihilism nihilism means the belief that everything is absolutely and utterly pointless that's a deep form of suffering nihilism it doesn't make what's the point of it or just this awful life of mine is put the whole world is pointless it's so awful and that's a very deep suffering the total lack of meaning everything is arbitrary random and meaninglessness is a mental disease that is afflicting millions of humans it's it's because everybody the mainstream culture still believes it's and it goes back to the 19th century it goes back to darwin darwin origin of species he said life life evolved which undoubtedly is true but he said life evolved but the evolution of life on this planet is an arbitrary random course of events molecules and atoms at random coming together and forming life forms over millions of years random the idea of randomness in the theory of evolution put forward by darwin and others the idea of randomness means it there is no purpose or intelligence behind it whatsoever it's a random process in other words it's the belief that everything that all life on this planet has no meaning it just is is a meaningless conglomeration of atoms and molecules it's ultimately meaningless that basically is the underlying assumption behind the theory of evolution that many people still believe and it has seeped into mainstream culture and even people never even heard of darwin it has seeped into their belief system that we live in a meaningless universe that's a before that happened we had certain religious beliefs so we had there was some meaning and all those a lot of that perhaps was ideological and ego-driven nevertheless in the ancient religion there is the access to the transcendent is still there here and there so there's still there were still little openings into the transcendent even

though many forms of religion developed into ideological belief systems that strengthened the ego nevertheless religion still carried on still carry the the secret of transcendence is still there hiding within the religions and that became inaccessible to many humans so now we have the pandemic of nihilism this is one of the pandemics far worse than any physical pandemic that everything the beef that everything is meaningless so and you can have a meaning in your life that is very limited like for many people have the meaning okay i want to have a career that gives you limited meaning in your personal life i'm working for a career nothing wrong with that i'm working to create a better life for myself and my family that's also wonderful and great i'm working to achieve recognition in this world etc etc that's fine too but at some point a meaning that is purely personal may begin to lose its power so that let's say you've spent two or three decades working for your career which is nothing wrong with it at some point you may arrive at a point where your career doesn't mean anything anymore or you lose it that you lose your career and your status or it is it consumes you so completely that you become ill with stress or in some other way turns into something that's not satisfying at all that actually creates suffering so something can give you limited meaning for a while for years and then suddenly turn out to be ultimately meaningless so and some people suddenly wake up and say all my life some people fall ill seriously ill and then they look back on their life and see all this was so pointless accumulating possessions why did i do that what was the point in that all the things that i was so anxious about when there's now there's let's say they're seriously ill now all the things that i was so anxious about that were created what was that was so unnecessary and pointless all the things that i've been striving for are ultimately pointless that can be an opening suddenly wow the limited personal meaning which was fine it's better than no meaning at all to have a personal meaning in your life better than no meaning at all but ultimately that that's not satisfying in the long term you have to go deeper to a deeper meaning that transcends who you are as a person and that is am i aligned with the purpose of the universe that that is the ultimate true meaning am i aligned with the purpose and what is the purpose of the universe the purpose of the universe is consciousness bringing more consciousness into this dimension that's the purpose of the universe bringing more consciousness into this dimension am i aligned with that that's and it then if that is the case if you're aligned with that you're you're a bringer of consciousness a bringer of light that is the ultimate true purpose and it could be that your personal purpose and the deeper purpose can go together that's fine so you can you can have a career and yet it's not totally ego-dominated while you are active working you bring in the light of consciousness you do things in your work that bring more consciousness into this dimension that's wonderful you can so you can have it is not necessarily a case of either having a career or being aligned with with universal purpose which is you can bring the two together that's perfectly that's that's the balance between the balance between being and doing as i sometimes call it the balance between being and bringing those two together but so the the purpose there's only one true purpose in your life and that you have to discover that and that is am i aligned with the consciousness and am i a bringer

of consciousness so that's the end of nihilism is that and it no longer matters your entire past becomes relatively unimportant when you realize the meaning of life is to be a bringer of consciousness let's say your entire past was one disaster after another it happens some people to some people's life is like unfortunately was like that let's say you've you've ended up in prison because you did one wrong and bad thing after another and but then you look back in your so-called life and say my god that was a disaster my entire life was just a disaster and okay but at this moment i realize the consciousness that i am and the i've all the suffering that i have created for myself and others all the suffering i have created for myself and others was part of the egoic dream the delusion the egoic delusion and the conditioning that i came into this world with and then you can you awaken at this moment if a totally disastrous life brings you to a point of awakening now the whole thing was great because it suddenly has a purpose retrospectively all the disasters brought you to this moment of awakening so in retrospect what was totally absurd and meaningless suddenly it fulfilled a purpose the past can suddenly be realized as having fulfilled its purpose by creating the suffering that led to your awakening so there's no regret anymore about the past it all made sense so it's the meaning arises retrospectively it only remains absurd and disastrous if the awakening doesn't happen then you or you're trapped in the dreadful dream continue to be trapped in it wow so be aligned with universal purpose that is the ultimate birth no matter what you do no matter how it expresses itself through you that doesn't matter but realize that as and if you want to look at your life in terms of failure and success as many people do is my life a failure is my life a success how do you what criterion do you use for failure or success do you allow this world to tell you whether you're a failure success to a large extent this world is insane so are you allowing an insane world to tell you whether your last life is a failure or success well no if this world cannot tell you then what is it obviously the only true criterion is whether you are conscious or not in this moment if you're conscious in this moment instead of being totally immersed in the dream of your conditioned unawareness the fictitious person if you are conscious in this moment then that is the greatest and only true success there could be in this life your entire past becomes irrelevant if it has taken you to this point in that sense it is relevant but ultimately it's irrelevant you're awake in this moment you represent the awakened state of consciousness in humanity well that sucks nothing else is success if you even want to use the term success but i would probably recommend even here not to use the term success because that would imply that there's somebody there that says i have achieved consciousness and again you would create a sense of another another conceptual identity in your mind another form of ego that says i am conscious other than these people all these people are not conscious i have achieved something i have achieved awakening that's a delusion again because the eye that claims to have achieved awakening is the ego again but that claims some kind of achievement the true meaning you can only awaken if the ego subsides and you become on in the ego becomes transparent then awakening happens but it's not an achievement there's nobody there to have achieved anything it's something that happened through you the

ego in some way created it in a negative sense because the ego created the suffering that led to the awakening in that sense perhaps the ego did achieve it but ultimately to claim i have achieved awakening is a delusion it's an ego delusion so nihilism then is something it's a disease that again a form of suffering that can lead to an awakening it can also lead to suicide it can lead to despair until you die in many cases it does it can lead to bitterness and resentment can lead to drug consume drug to desensitize yourself against the suffering of meaninglessness you take drugs you become addicted and this is an epidemic of drug addiction around these days um there's a desperate very urgent need for the awakening of humanity the awakening of humans there's a great urgency now because we're moving into a critical collectively critical situation on this planet and that is absolutely necessary for awakening nobody awakens in their comfort zone nobody awakens when the conditions are when the your mind might say these are the optimum conditions for awakening nobody disturbs me i get peace and quiet all around me no particular worldly challenges to distract me from my meditation periods excellent food everything pure and clean two massages every day and getting rubbed with essential oils fantastic conditions for spiritual awakening that you're saying in this spa where you pay two thousand dollars per day for to create let's say you've won the lottery so you go to the spa optimum fantastic conditions for awakening and would you awaken there you could become very peaceful it would be just very pleasant very pleasant and and you would be very much like a like a plant that grows from seed in a protected environment like a greenhouse just the right temperature and the plant grows very quickly and blossoms but it's very weak the moment the greenhouse let's say the plant is then put outside immediately it would shrink and collapse it hasn't developed the inner strength to to exist in the real world so for awakening the challenges that you experience in your daily life now are actually your best the optimum way of awakening is to use the challenges you're facing in your daily life instead of believing if i could only find an ideal situation then i would easily awaken spiritually no you wouldn't you would actually after some initial very pleasant experiences in this imaginary spa you would actually your level of consciousness would go down you would gradually go back to you go to sleep it's so pleasant

[Speaker 14] (4:50:35 - 4:50:42)

presence presence only arises when it's necessary when it's necessary

[Speaker 1] (4:50:44 - 5:26:17)

nothing comes unless it's needed it needs there needs to be a call for it uh in other words it there needs to be a gap between the current situation and what is needed to remedy the current situation things need to be difficult otherwise change doesn't happen that forest trail that leads up to this building that would be enough all you need walk it consciously four times a day what else do you need enough walking it consciously means one step at a time it means perceiving without labeling beauty even without labeling it

beauty the depths you're walking the depths in which the perception happens and the step you're taking at this moment is not a means to an end if you're walking along the forest trail in order to get here this could happen every step that you take is a means to an end and that's not conscious the end is mind mind projected future i need to get there so it could happen especially if you're late he may be hurrying maybe he started speaking already and i'm missing something important but you're missing that step which definitely is more important than what the speaker is saying at that moment the amazing thing is you can actually walk fast also you don't you're not reduced to walking slowly always now to walk consciously you could even hurry to get somewhere and you're really maybe there is little time you maybe you need to catch a train or whatever it may be and maybe you need to very quickly now you have five minutes to pack your suitcase and that can be very beautiful to still be present even when there's fast movement and enjoy every movement of that the energy movement of it it's an energy dance and there you are going through your drawers picking this and that and not even without when you're present you don't thought is just an interference because all you do in the state of presence is you see you look and in that perception the looking reveals to you what is needed without going through the complicated and complicating process of thinking certain things yes thought may be required but you may be surprised for how many things thought is actually more of a hindrance than a help the ability to just look in that clarity of clear the clear space of awareness you look at any situation in that looking again it's the same kind of looking that we are pointing to here when we speak of looking at a tree looking at a flower but if there's pressure on you due to some external challenge it could be something as simple as needing to get ready it's late or more of a pressure some situation then you may find that the alertness that is there as you look intensifies so facing an imminent danger coming towards you that looking would intensify and out of that action then comes so it could be a simple thing like needing to see what is it that i need to pack i only have five minutes and then see simply look and you take what you know beyond thought what is needed and you take very effective way of handling things if you started to think you would become stressed i only have five minutes and i have to work out what i'm going to pack and you're projecting yourself to the end of the five minutes when you need to be ready it's so much pressure produced but there's only this movement now so any situation clear looking at any situation that may appear complex reveals to you what is needed if anything is needed if any action is needed you will find yourself doing it or you will find yourself not doing anything there are situations that are better left alone in one's life and knowing what situation requires action and what situation is better left alone you could agonize over that if you start thinking for a long time should i or shouldn't i if i do on the other hand but so the ability to come to a situation and simply see that is that there is a space of awareness it is intelligence operating but it is not intelligence as most humans know it it is not the intelligence that does the crossword puzzles the intelligence that is good at solving iq tests although it may come in even there i don't know it hasn't in my case it is an intelligence that works not analytically it doesn't break things down into bits of

information because the human mind has certain similarities with a computer it analyzes breaks it down the thinking mind but then there's another there's a depth there also there's a greater intelligence than the personal mind and that is there when awareness arises and becomes part of the perception that is silent intelligence operating unconditioned consciousness operating in your life things get much easier then needing to work things out a lot of that falls away so how it's so important we started with such a simple thing like looking at a tree and allow the perception to arise in this place of awareness and then situations you're not always in such peaceful surroundings as here some people would say it is easier to be present here because you're not being challenged that may be true for some quite a few for others it is true that they become more present when they are challenged some people are drawn into unconsciousness the moment the first talent comes into their lives which could be leaving here and stepping onto the ferry or missing the ferry and so they could be at this peaceful four days five whatever it is here and suddenly a little thing goes not the way it's supposed to go and the reactivity it comes back could do oh my god or it could be that the first challenge comes whatever it may be and you go oh you recognize immediately the isness of that it it's the suchness of that missed the ferry and that moment is good your retreat can last a little longer cooperate with the movement of life internally always great power lies in that behind anything that goes wrong if you cooperate with that movement that the mind calls wrong cooperate internally with that movement that the mind has labeled bad you can be sure that it turns around or something reveals itself that is of a greater good than the good that you seem to have lost in that situation that you call bad there's always hiding something underneath that which the mind had labeled bad when you continue to be trapped in that labeling mind you don't even see that it can't it doesn't reveal most of the time it can then not reveal itself to you you wouldn't even see it because you've already decided that this situation is bad and then the good that's hiding more often than not you would not even see or it cannot even come through so we are going back now to the forest trail where it all starts where you take one step at a time there's such beauty in walking not surprisingly buddhists have developed walking meditation to simply bring awareness into something that otherwise would be reduced to something meaningless a means to an end automatic anything you can bring awareness to that otherwise that is often with you are always with you but usually you wouldn't even know it because it's always there or it's usually an unconscious movement and those are beautiful meditations there's no real technique here you're simply bringing consciousness to what's already there so i recommend for the rest of the time that particularly when you walk here between your room and the beach or on the beach or between here along the trail to be conscious of walking of each step you don't need to change the way you walk when buddhists learn walking meditation it's fine they do it their way you do it very kind of every walk is a kind of very careful movement of the foot the heel goes down the rest of the foot goes down and the heel goes up and then the foot lifts up let's keep it more simple to simply watch that's the way the walking that's taking place now the other one is fine too but here let's just

do the normal walk and be conscious of each step the simplicity of each step and the beauty that's in there where does that beauty come from is it in that step well to some extent but it really arises out of the awareness that sense of aliveness that sense of beingness of presence that is there with every step it's not the step in itself it is because awareness arises and the step happens within that spaciousness of awareness and that awareness is beauty beyond form that awareness is sacred then every step is sacred that you take there is a there's something that you cannot describe that is there in there is a quality in every step an aliveness and that's only walking and of course as you walk you also perceive there's that and you watch it's the end of believing that all you are is a person an exclusively personalized sense of self a walking to use the expression of that writer one could almost say you're just a walking narrative a story with your memories and heavy and so you're walking as consciousness a field of consciousness perceiving you are a field of consciousness it is a lessening this is why we are here as you spend time here there's a lessening of the personal dimension of your life not that you lose it completely if you lost it completely all at once it would be very disconcerting so that doesn't usually happen it happened to some people but probably not to you and it's not necessary there is a lessening of deriving your sense of self from your personal life and having to carry that around with you and remember it all the time me and my story and it hasn't worked out yet it hasn't quite completed yet so the future constantly hanging over your head is a threat oh god what is going to happen to me if you walk around like that it's a burden just to be alive and you could you can walk in the forest with a threat over your head of your future of course it can come in when you fall back into mind you realize the future is uncertain oh my god maybe i'm not going to get what i need to complete my life or maybe what i have now might be lost and so on so the that exclusively personal me there's a becomes transparent as awareness arises and more and more you go through life and you go into situations not just when everything is fine you will find it arising arising also in when situations are difficult and you may find that whereas before any challenge or difficulty in your life and the world is full of that you go back into the world and before you know it it will face you in one day with five challenges ten challenges often in the form of people occasionally it's some missed some missed ferry but it's in the form of people more often than not and the challenges come and you may find what before you the challenge pulled you back into reactivity and the miracle is when a certain level of presence has been reached within yourself there comes a point when it is less likely that a challenge will pull you back into unconscious reactivity then you you complain you are a personal self complaining that the the world is not complying with your wants and desires complaining in your head or out aloud the world is not doing what you want it to do basically that's the challenges are it's not going the way it's supposed to go and so there's the complaining and that's the reactivity of the egoic sense of self and fear and when a certain level of presence has been reached which may be the case with most of you you will find a change happening and that change is that the challenge could still pull you into yes occasionally it still pulls you into unconsciousness but there's a different tendency now and that is for the challenge to

intensify the alertness that is that state of spacious presence that is the non-reactive state and so there now there's the ability to look at the challenge of the situation in that clarity of awareness and you have accessed an intelligence that is greater than the accumulated intelligence and that intelligence is not confined to your head that intelligence is connected to the totality so it can even operate and seemingly come in as an external factor once you have accessed it it not just operates from within you that intelligence it also operates from without and that often happens as just the right thing happening for that situation such as is the case in synchronistic events and so on or just simply at the right moment what is needed is suddenly suddenly it appears and sometimes almost it won't fall down from the sky but it's sometimes you see how could that have happened so just where did that come from and the intelligence operates both ways this is the the beauty of that intelligence you have accessed the totality you are no longer cutting yourself off by tying yourself into a little knot within the web of the whole the little knot claiming an independent existence for itself and it's called me and the rest of the web of the interconnectedness of all things that's the world the rest of the world welcome to our live meditation i'm in sao paulo brazil at the moment i gave a talk here last night it's seven o'clock in the evening here and the sun is going to set maybe quite soon you may have heard the story about that somebody coming to a zen master and asking him to explain what zen is all about and the zen master said come and have a cup of tea and he prepared the cup of tea and poured the hot water in the pot and then he served tea to his guest who wanted to know about zen and he poured the tea into his cup and he didn't stop pouring until the cup was overflowing and the guest thought that the zen master might have been absent-minded and said stop stop the cup is overflowing can't you see and the zen master said like this cup your mind is full of ideas viewpoints knowledge and all kinds of stuff it's overflowing with stuff how can i teach you zen or how can i show you zen unless you first empty your cup now of course that means having an open mind one could say but how do you have an open mind your mind is already cluttered with knowledge real knowledge pseudo knowledge most knowledge is perspectives but how can you empty your mind of all knowledge is that even a good thing well all that's needed is in this present moment to become so aligned with this moment and accept it the way it is so deeply that the mind comes to a stop cessation of thinking doesn't mean you lost your knowledge it's still somewhere you haven't lost your memory and yet you have all the space that contains all that memory you've become aware of the space which is consciousness itself so when you become aware of stillness you can become aware of the space of consciousness the space of consciousness becomes aware of itself and that's the deeper meaning of the now first people think that the now is what happens in the now but the true meaning is that the now is the space in which it happens that's why the now itself cannot change its consciousness itself and you are that and of course space is just a word there isn't really a word that can adequately adequately describe that they're just pointers pointer to the city that way says that way it is it's not the city or as the buddhists say the pointer to the finger pointing to the moon is not the moon we use space which isn't something that we seem

to perceive in the external world to describe an inner something inner so if you were a room and somebody asked you who are you it's a strange analogy i know but so if you were if you were this room or that if the room were had consciousness the room would talk about itself who are you well well i'm this is the wall and the ceiling and the floor and the furniture in the room that seems to me what the room is it's so easy to forget what the essence of the room is and that is the space so we can use that analogy to point to something within you you are also filled with furniture the ceiling the floor the walls maybe that could be your physical body and all the your mental content would be the furniture in the room and most people people's mind is cluttered so it's a room that's full of clutter some useful things and many useless things you may also notice if you are that room that sight time comes when little cracks appear in the wall and ceiling as the room gets older

[Speaker 4] (5:26:17 - 5:29:17)

um hello um i would like to ask about um physical pain um your expression of ease of being it really speaks to me and um relaxed awareness but i feel something that always pushes me out of that is the physical pain i find inside just too much most of the time what are you what do you experience what kind of physical pain are you experiencing um stomach pain bubbles and a lot of time a lot of the time just my whole body your whole body aches yes and while i'm here um there is an immense inner body feeling it's like like eckhart says having the socket just put in is that painful it's so intense that it's sometimes too much but i can still rest in it but then the physical pain is so strong at the same time are you in pain right now in this moment when i'm speaking a little bit when i'm sitting down much more um i've tried to shake it out it seems to help a little bit but i wonder are there things i can do or just being with it i see there is a lot of resistance too and then watching the resistance makes the resistance just stronger i stiffen up and you stiffen up when the pain happens you mean no the pain is there before but trying to watch the pain makes it worse and watching the pain makes it worse yes is that what you said yeah and the tensing up of the whole body gets worse and yeah um because you don't want to feel it right yeah there's it remains you want it gone right i want it to be over i'm aware of that but i just can't avoid the thought of wanting to be it to be way it's it's just a circle and the whole body goes into a stress reaction and yeah yeah how to be with that i mean i know there is resistance i see it but i can't stop it either it's okay so if you can't stop the resistance

[Speaker 2] (5:29:17 - 5:33:19)

can you accept resistance sometimes a split second okay no can you stop resistance again accept it i mean if the resistance is there then you got to accept resistance if you can't surrender to the pain surrender to the sensations if we drop the label pain see immediately when we feel a sensation in our body and it's painful our minds goes pain no i don't want it and then we contract more and then the pain is even greater if we let

go of the label pain and just accept and feel the sensation because all it is it's sensation the moment we label it it's almost like we make it a solid form does that make sense does that make sense it's like when you are looking at some flowers and you go that's a rose well it isn't a rose it's a concept rose it's a name we call it rose but it's not a rose it's like we we stop the flow the natural flow and the connection of this beauty right here so the pain that's happening inside of you and my guess is you know how our emotions are so connected to our body and our thoughts are so connected to our body there's probably something in your conditioned self and habit forming of thoughts maybe some negativity as well and that accumulates the energy stays stuck in the body and eventually does lead to pain and maybe eventually it leads to some sort of illness so accepting what accepting means you accept the present moment you accept the form of the present moment as if it would last for eternity that's accepting the sensation of pain the pain that you have or anything that you have true acceptance means that you are willing to feel this emotion this pain in your body forever the new earth this i'm writing

[Speaker 1] (5:33:19 - 5:35:51)

a little bit more these days and that may turn into a book it seems the provisional title is a new earth but it's only a provisional title a new earth of course the words come from the bible they appear in the book of revelations which also called the apocalypse which tells you about everything collapsing the whole man-made order of things collapsing that's what it is about symbolically and then when it's all collapsed the writer says and i saw a new heaven and a new earth out of the collapsed world rises a new world so that's in a way where the title comes from a new earth and i saw a new heaven and a new earth that's what it says and the way i see that is a new heaven is a new consciousness that is arising this is causal in humans it's the transformation of human consciousness it's the inner heaven is the inner world the new earth is the outer manifestation of the transformed consciousness so the question and what of the new earth the answer to that is we don't need to be concerned about the new earth all we need to be concerned about is the new heaven and that's why we are here because heaven is the inner the inner transformation of consciousness the outer the externalization of that as a different world that humans create once the shift has happened that is obvious that politically economically socially in every respect the structures the man-made structures and even the buildings and the cities and so on will be very different from that which the egoic consciousness creates so our gathering here is the arising of a new heaven the inner the rest comes automatically

[Speaker 9] (5:36:05 - 5:36:39)

um i'm wondering if you can talk about um how to tell um the difference between limitations that we're perceiving with our mind and limitations that life is presenting to us and um um and also about um discerning needs needs that we're imagining and needs that are

[Speaker 1] (5:36:40 - 5:40:14)

really being called for real needs or imaginary needs and uh limitations that we are creating with our minds or real meditation uh limitations yes like um where surrender may be yeah yeah well the needs are really the true needs are not that many the true needs are for survival of the body air light some food shelter clothing um some heat in depending what climate you live in uh heating water uh those are true needs what goes beyond that is probably not a true need not a need but something else let's just briefly look at limitations if i if i say i'm going to train for the next olympics because i want to get a gold medal in 100 meters am i it and my mind says no you're wrong is that a true limitation or am i imagining it it's it is of course a true limitation some extreme new age people might say if you really wanted it you could do it but i'm telling you no so there are certainly real limitations in your life and the example i just gave it's relatively easy to see the difference between what to recognize a true limitation in other cases it may not be so easy to see whether it's a limitation that you just believe in i can't do it because you've been conditioned not to believe in yourself or your power the power that can come through you that you need to look carefully into your life to see which one applies now the answer always becomes more interesting when there's a the question if you can perhaps explain if whether this or in what way the question might apply to your life in a concrete way

[Speaker 9] (5:40:16 - 5:40:55)

um well i have had some challenges with illness yes and i'm starting to understand that there's a story underlying that yes so um sometimes i get a little bit confused about whether i'm just perceiving what's arising and um giving an energy or um if it's actually real uh so there's a physical an illness or um i've had some challenges like neurological and

[Speaker 1] (5:40:56 - 5:41:01)

and and you discovered something in your mind that may be connected to that

[Speaker 9] (5:41:03 - 5:41:38)

um i think so like um there's definitely intensity that happens when i start thinking about it seems to generate um a lot more constriction yes it makes it worse yes whatever i'm perceiving um but sometimes i i'll sort of observe that i'm thinking about it and then react to that with a kind of a like it'll be a harsh reaction don't think that which doesn't help

[Speaker 1] (5:41:43 - 5:44:50)

well with illness then uh the most helpful approach is to accept whatever it is that you experience at this moment it's always this moment by the way you might have noticed

to accept whatever you experience at this moment which some people believe means to accept your illness no because illness is already is a concept in the mind the reality of the illness is only whatever you experience at this moment that's the reality the term illness is already a mind-created concept if you focus on that that mind-created concept proliferates and grows and then the the mental image of illness or i am ill or i am a sufferer of this illness grows the more you focus on that so when i say accept what is some people misinterpret it and they believe that they need to accept their illness that's not the case you don't need to accept your illness because the very idea of illness is an idea in the mind because there is no illness there's only there's what you experience at this moment is the reality of the illness even if the doctor tells you it's this or it's called this or that and it doesn't look good it's still the case that the reality of it is this moment and that's what you accept internally that's what is and that can always be reduced to discomfort or pain or some form of disability that's about your weakness that's that's what that's what and that's what you stay with and then you can go from there treatment is a different matter you may seek conventional treatment you may seek alternative treatment or if you're a christian scientist you will seek a totally different kind of treatment that's not there at all but i'm not recommending anything that's all up to you i'm not saying this is wrong or this is right the important thing is not to create a mental image of illness to relinquish that as much as possible so that you don't focus on that stay with the present moment stay with what is and stay with the presence with the the attention the the field of presence that is who you are beyond the person so and then allow the challenge of the illness to push you into the present moment more

[Speaker 8] (5:45:22 - 5:45:45)

when i had been in my darkest moment i happened to read the power of now what eckhart tolle had to say about happiness had been the impetus to go on this journey i was in vancouver to meet him so you were there on a park bench for two years and you you slept on the park bench

[Speaker 1] (5:45:46 - 5:48:33)

rarely but i did spend most of the days on park benches in parks different parks in london did you eat three meals a day no no one meal a day if i was lucky oh as you sit here is it possible for you to simply watch what's happening around you without adding any interpretation to it to just be present with what is and you get a taste of what it's like to be on a park bench and with nothing further needing to be added to this moment the sounds sights people sound of the water the light just allow it to be as it is with that comes peace you don't get continuously drawn into events and thoughts and emotions and reactions you're the wider space in which all these things happen you're the awareness behind it without which none of this would be here to just be atoms and molecules in space you are the awareness that enables this entire world to be and so knowing that that is who you truly are not through a concept but through the actual

realization of stepping back and allowing the phenomenal world to be as it is at this moment allowing this moment to be as it is that takes you deeper into yourself and you may not be notice there's a certain peace in the background that happens an alertness is required for this you need to stay alert to what is to sense perceptions and the energy behind sense perceptions which is the consciousness the alertness it's there without the alertness you will drift off into thinking and then you think about the next what's going to happen to me tomorrow there is a place for making plans but not right here on the park bench this isn't the place for thinking about tomorrow because you miss all this beauty and aliveness around you

[Speaker 2] (5:48:36 - 5:48:42)

and then you're cold not even think about it as a cold no it just is the sensation of it

[Speaker 1] (5:48:42 - 5:54:38)

you don't even need to call it cold and then that's okay too it's okay there's no the reactivity goes out of life against always against something of wanting to clutch at something what about the search for meaning now you notice that just a moment ago you were in that state of alert presence and it never takes long for another thought to come in and ask a question because thought cannot tolerate the state of presence so it will always come in and say yeah but what about i don't quite understand yet can you tell me what does it all mean oh so it wants to add something it wants to control in some way by understanding what this all means now if you can let go just for a moment not for the rest of your life just for this moment let go of the need to understand anything so that you're truly present in this moment so you don't need to do it for the next hour or the next 10 minutes just right now just what is but don't forget yourself because you are the consciousness behind it you are the space the presence can you feel that your body is alive yeah so stay with that feeling and then perceive it's easier to perceive without interpretation when you can feel that your body is alive you feel the inner aliveness throughout your body so some attention some of your attention is there the rest is on the outside world that roots you in the present moment it anchors you in the present moment and if a thought comes into your mind you can watch that also just the same way as you watch a dog walking past you can watch a thought arising in your mind and you don't have to follow it to where it wants to go so you simply watch the thought that arises in your mind and let it go in the same way that the dog walks past you or if you choose to you can follow the thought and then you can say i just thought of another question can that do that too but you see the possibility that also in the same way that you observe the outer world here as you sit on the bench you can also observe the inner world the world of thoughts and emotions thoughts want to arise continuously and that's fine that's what they do but there's no need to get drawn into each thought that arises and immediately go with it to where it wants to go otherwise you're just you're always following every thought like like a dog following the scent does it matter which no it

doesn't matter you can experiment you can experiment with thought you can follow some thoughts and you can watch other thoughts you find out for yourself you can play you can see that you are bigger than your thoughts you don't have to be dominated by your thoughts because thoughts create a lot of lots of problems too unnecessary problems and they can obscure the aliveness of life at this moment there are many people walking around here who are thinking about other things they're thinking about the next one they're thinking about tomorrow but this is not the place for that there is a place for planning and thinking about tomorrow but why spoil the beauty of this and the aliveness of this we're thinking about the next moment is that going to be better than this one what this is it it's not going to get that much better this is what could could be more beautiful than this it's the awakening of something within you that is deeper than thought that's really the main thing and that's already there you just didn't know it why didn't i know this it's a deep-seated habit of being totally identified with thinking it's the human condition which could be described as lost in thought because up to now evolution has been unconscious it was automatic but now evolution is consciously chosen by a species and that's a revolutionary thing and you are part of that

[Speaker 8] (5:54:47 - 5:54:51)

which i can still make movies i can still have a girlfriend oh yes even if i'm

[Speaker 1] (5:54:51 - 5:55:05)

yes it's beautiful it's a playground you play around with the world you can you can you take action you relate but you're not lost in it most humans are

[Speaker 8] (5:55:05 - 5:55:16)

lost in it what about pain i mean physical pain or emotional pain of losing someone most of the

[Speaker 1] (5:55:16 - 6:03:20)

human pain is psychologically created there's an enormous amount of psychological pain suffering i call that when suffering goes and there's a possibility for humans now to live without suffering that is the possibility there may still be some physical pain it may be that you get tooth or bodily pains from time to time suffering is another level that lies on top of the pain suffering implies a story a little me that is unhappy a mentally constructed entity a little me that has an unhappy story that is its identity and that creates an enormous amount of suffering not only do you make yourself suffer you make people around you suffer to be at one with life is to be at one with the present moment because that's the only place where life can be found you cannot leave the space of now that stays with you whatever you're doing wherever you go your life has never been not now and will never be not now are you making the present moment into an enemy some

way internally through thinking about some something which is nothing nothing to do with now i need to figure something out well first of all be here fully and then whatever is needed in your life comes it comes out of the power that dwells in the present moment that most people overlook there's an enormous power here which is the power of life itself and most people look for something and ignore this and the power of life itself is inseparable from who you are in the depth of your being many times you will forget but the moment you realize that you forgot there's a possibility of saying ah yes i lost the present moment and there's a possibility of choosing to re-enter the present moment the first thing that happens when you re-enter the present moment you become more aware of sense perceptions you suddenly there's a greater alertness and then you become more aware of the aliveness in your body you feel the life within it's like the entire vibrational frequency of your body shifts when you become present it's a different state of consciousness more alert more alive and many times you will lose it and then you remember and that's good enough now they don't believe the mind when it tells you oh you can't do it now you've got too much on your mind you can't be bothered with the present moment those are just thoughts there's no need for you to follow those thoughts just watch them they are thoughts that the mind throws up you don't need to believe in them because they're not true when the mind tells you you can't be present now because you've got too much on your mind then okay you can say okay let's see if that's true then you feel there's an aliveness in my hand there's an aliveness in my body there's beauty all around and you become present again alertness the alertness returns and when when there is time to think then you think then you sit down and say okay let's think uh what plane am i going to catch tomorrow what time do i have to go to the airport what do i have to do now pick up the phone make a phone call fine that's beautiful you're not losing yourself in future it's practical matters and once you've done the practical matters you've thought about you've planned your next week then you come back to the now the inner transformation is not really about finding lots of answers to your questions but finding a new relationship to thought where not every thought so seduces you anymore and if a beautiful girl runs past and you find yourself following her you don't have to think oh i shouldn't be watching this girl because i'm spiritual now no if you can let go just for a of your life just for this moment let go of the need to understand anything so that you're truly present in this moment it's just right now just what is but don't forget yourself because you are the consciousness behind it you are the space the presence life wants to support you but first you need to be open to life so you've probably come here with lots of questions but let's start off with me asking you just one question and then you can ask yours okay you may ask how old you are yes i'm 24 and if not that it matters just so 24 means you've already had quite a few life experiences you've been to school you've fallen in love i think so fallen out of love i think so and have had all kinds of experiences perhaps in different places meeting different people different circumstances the body probably has been well most of the time but you've also experienced maybe one or two illnesses now is there in all those things that you have experienced so far which is a constant continuously changing flux of things is there

any ingredient in there that was always not the same that didn't change i'd just like to ask you to see if you can find any ingredient in all the things that you have experienced so far that's always been the same let's we could start perhaps by asking could it be the things around you obviously not because the things around you change continuously could it be your thoughts no because the thoughts that go through your mind also change continuously could it be your feelings or your emotions no you pro as you know they also change all the time so what is it if anything that hasn't changed it doesn't change is there one ingredient in all your experiences good or bad up or down that's always been there

[Speaker 8] (6:03:24 - 6:03:32)

well i think i've been in in here i've been inside now when you say i what does that mean

[Speaker 1] (6:03:32 - 6:04:14)

what what is that i now because we've already seen it can't be your thoughts because they change all the time your feelings or emotions they change all the time your sense experiences things that you perceive around you change all the time so wherever we look there's change so when you say i and point to the eye as that which doesn't change it cannot be what happens to you it cannot be the thoughts that go through your mind it cannot be the emotions the feelings that you experience so what is the nature of that i what does that word mean or point to

[Speaker 8] (6:04:16 - 6:04:23)

so listening that's what here is what's behind

[Speaker 1] (6:04:23 - 6:39:30)

and what's behind the thoughts what's behind the sense perceptions what's behind all the experiences and the feelings and so on so the question that i'm asking does not really require an abstract answer but i want you to actually feel or sense inside yourself that which doesn't change no matter where you go no matter what you do or who you're with or whether the body is well or unwell when i ask you said it's i and i've asked what's the nature of that i and now you may be stuck for words but you said one word and that was listening now in when you're truly listening there is a certain alert spaciousness because otherwise you're not truly listening and so if that had to be expressed through a gesture it could be you could raise a finger gently and say listen so i say i say to you listen and you listen there's a moment of spacious awareness and there's no thought in it so when you said listening you are actually getting very close to the nature of who you truly are underneath all the circumstances of your life and circumstances includes thoughts and emotions if you don't find that who or what you are underneath all the circumstances no matter how many questions you ask and how many good answers you

get won't help you very much and there will be no end to the questioning because every answer generates further questions so we are talking about yeah becoming familiar with a different state of consciousness not that that has never been there it's always been there because it's the eye but it's always been overlooked because the circumstances things that happen to you and your thinking and your emotions have such overwhelming pulling force that they always pull your attention in completely and so attention is that which is there when you're truly listening and in the moment of attention there's no thinking but there is an aware presence so the answer that you gave is absolutely right not everybody would have put it this way but listening points to who you truly are underneath all the things that continuously change now i'd like you to as we speak this is not an intellectual discussion because if if this were intellectual you should have gone to a professor of philosophy or some intellectual at a university and ultimately you get many answers but all those answers will always make you end up with more questions because they don't get you to the core of who you are so let's start off with that and what we are pointing to is a sense of i of beingness that is deeper than anything that happens in your life that's always there has always been there right now and that is closely related to the state of attentive listening to get in touch with that to sense it underneath it all there is a timeless presence even in 50 years time in 60 years time when this body is getting old and this body the cells it won't be the same body the cells of the body will have been renewed many times there's not there won't be a single cell materially there won't be a single thing that's left in 50 years even though you may still be alive there won't be a single thing that's left materially that's here now every cell will have been renewed and so the body will have grown older and yet something timeless deep within will still be exactly the same as it is now untouched by time i i before it becomes this or that because the moment you say i am american i am this or that i am a professional or i am a jobless person or i am a millionaire or i'm a homeless person those all form identifications with changing circumstances and so people look for something there to provide permanency in their lives they want to identify with something that they finally can say there that's it i found it what they really want to say is i found myself finally so they look for themselves through external possessions through acquired knowledge through an accumulation of experiences or sexual encounters some people derive their sense of self from that the more women you can conquer or seduce or have sex with the more you feel i'm i'm getting somewhere of course after a few years you realize it's not getting you anywhere not if you are nothing will get you anywhere which is means to yourself if you're looking for yourself in any experience and that's the fallacy of most people they look for themselves in changing circumstances they look for themselves in their thought processes they identified with their thoughts and opinions and their judgments and this and that and it changes your opinions may change you may be a democrat now and in 50 years time when you become a solid citizen you may become a republican you have totally completely different set of opinions it's just different set of opinions and then you feel the thoughts have changed but the the underlying i hasn't changed so can you go through life being in touch with that being in

touch with that in different situations different circumstances different places so that you're not completely lost in the things i sometimes call it the thingness of life one thing after another there's nothing wrong with that but if you haven't found yourself yet you have don't know what that i is then you're looking for the i in things and things include your thinking because every thought is also a formation it's a it has a certain form a thought form it comes and then it goes every emotion it comes it's an energy field inside you it comes has a certain lifespan and then it subsides and then another one comes that's all the thingness of life it's forms that come and go all the time the only thing that doesn't come and go is i that which underlies all that and that's not an intellectual thing that i'm trying to convince you of because that would not be helpful the question is at this moment can i sense the presence that i am that is prior to anything that happens to me or has ever happened or can ever happen can i sense that right now yes you can because if you couldn't you wouldn't have said listening because listening you already knew it came from that deeper place of alert attention that in itself has no content the content comes when things happen but in itself the i that you are one could describe it as space it's not lifeless it's full of life all of life comes out of that but in itself it it is spacious buddha called it emptiness and is completely misunderstood by people because the university professors look at the word emptiness and then say the buddha was buddhist teachings us life denying the total opposite is true because jesus called the same space the fullness of life because at the same time it is life in its fullness to be able to sense that at first it's very subtle in the background but as you become familiar with that dimension it's always there somewhere no matter what you do even when you meet a beautiful girl and you're talking to her and you can from from there you can you can listen to yourself talking and it's fine you're not totally lost in your experiences there's always an a sense of aliveness and peace in the background and that influences how you live your life that sense the i the timeless i because on the surface you have the the time-bound i that that grows older it's identified with thinking and emotions and things happen to it and so on but underneath it is the timeless i now the word i is probably the most frequently used word in the language whenever you listen to people say how what's the most the words they use most frequently when you listen to a probably you'll find it's the word i now what they refer to is not the timeless because they haven't found that they refer to a superficial sense of i identification with things with thinking with emotions i am angry i am american i am this i am that identification with something so that i is the greatest delusion because there's no substance there nothing permanent so if i'm not something am i nothing yes i would pronounce that differently though i would say you are no thing now there's a difference between no thing and nothing nothing is simply denial but no thing means there is a presence there but it has no form nothing that you can grasp it has no shape and no form and no name the ancient chinese call it the dao which cannot be named there's a beautiful it's three thousand years old chinese book of wisdom the dao de jing i recommend it to everybody and the first line in it is the dao that can be named or spoken of is not the true dao and so that there is the presence that you sense a presence that has no form in ancient language christian hebrew there's

the word spirit but i don't use that word because it's been used for hundreds of years and misunderstood so if i used spirit people would immediately have some image of what it is some form or call it the holy spirit and there's hundreds of years of misconceptions of what spirit is so we forget about the word spirit but in its original true meaning that's what spirit points to the essence of who you are is formless now we could use the word consciousness is the essence of who you are and you can sense it but you can never grasp it and you cannot really know it you can only know something that is not you an object anything that becomes an object of consciousness i look at this plant and i know it by looking at it and by having a thought for a name for it i say i know this plant this plant is an object that arises in consciousness and i look at you i see a shape and a form and obviously what i see nobody knows whether what you see out there is actually there because the image that you have in your mind of your surrounding environment is there's an optical the eye are like a camera lens they send a picture to the into the brain that the the picture is translating to nerve impulses and chemicals that reach the brain and the brain decodes what i see and then reassembles a picture and then suddenly i see you nobody knows what's actually out there but let's just leave it here we have looking at you this is an object that arises in consciousness in the space that i am then i look away and another object arises in the space that i am or i listen to something that arises in the space that i am a thought comes that arises in the space that i am the presence that i am but the presence itself you can't know it in the way that you know a plant or you know a person or you know a sound or you know a thought because it has to it would have to reflect back on itself you cannot make it into an object so you cannot make yourself into an object of knowledge you can only be that presence but you can't know it because you would externalize it and this is the mistake that humans have made over thousands of years they made themselves into an object and they talk about me and my story i'm sure you have one the story of me and so when you make yourself into an object you live with yourself some people love themselves one day and they hate themselves the next day and the following day they're not quite sure and then you have some other and then you have feeling guilty people have relationships with an image that they have in their mind of themselves me people talk to themselves in their mind well that wasn't very good you didn't do a good thing shouldn't have done that who is talking to whom there's a voice in the head that talks to yourself the mind has split itself in two and is talking to itself and out of that continuous talking comes the story of me and identification with that and the questions that you are going to ask probably have a lot to do with the story of me to find out more about it about my life because after all that's what everybody is most interested in you are here because you are the main character in the story of yourself and the main character in that story has quite a few things that it feels he feels puzzled about and doesn't understand and wants questions and the story in some ways it's worked and in other ways it hasn't worked and so the character in the story has come here and wants to know how to make the story work better isn't that so yes now whatever answers anybody can give you of how to make the story work better there are things you can make the story work better but all that

doesn't really help unless you get to the bottom behind the story the eye behind the story then if you are in touch with that throughout your life the story will unfold with much greater ease because there is a deeper dimension that is there but if there's only the story nothing will ever satisfy the main character in that story you if the main character in that story you has never known the deeper eye the timeless presence that is the consciousness that you are the attentive spacious can you feel that your body is alive because when you feel the aliveness inside your body i call it inner body the usually hyperactive mind slows down now the hyperactive mind is extremely repetitive you might have noticed that 90 probably 99 percent of your thoughts you've had them before they are repetitive so new thoughts are relatively rare when there's only the hyperactive mind it's just the old same old things going through your mind again and again the moment you feel the inner body in order to be able to feel the aliveness here some of your attention has to go from the head within into the body so you're removing some attention away from thinking it doesn't necessarily mean that thinking stops totally but it subsides slows down there may even be little spaces in between one thought and the next thought so thinking slows down because part of your attention is in the inner energy field the aliveness that most people never feel because they're so absorbed in their thoughts they cannot they don't even feel that they are alive anymore so thinking subsides and then or even little spaces in between thoughts and then it's much more likely that thoughts that come then are new thoughts sometimes they are insights there are new ways of looking at things sudden realizations they can only come if you are able to calm the mind but not as something that you feel i need to calm my mind but simply by diverting attention away from it not by making some effort to calm your mind all you do is you take attention away from it and so then there is more spaciousness not just one thought after another and then your thinking actually improves which means it's more life more original you have it's more powerful you have better ideas and the way in which you interact with people has more is more real because the real comes not from the accumulated stuff in your mind that's all the roles that you play not just you everybody everybody plays their roles then they've been conditioned to play certain roles you have an image of who you are when you meet a beautiful woman you play a certain role you want to have the best possible image you present present the best possible image and she does the same you can observe it when two young people are attracted to each other they meet the first few days and weeks there they look different from the way they usually look because they present an image like that wants to attract the other and it's unconscious it's a role that they play it's only after the honeymoon when everyday life begins that gradually the image and you believe that that image that you see in her is who she is and she believes that you don't know that you're both playing roles and but you cannot keep up the roles indefinitely so after the honeymoon gradually they wear down the roles and then that comes becomes um some discontent arises and suddenly the mask slips the role is you can't play your continuously the role of me the attractive one so that's to get out of the role playing that otherwise you're stuck with for the rest of your life you have a certain role for your partner for a while you have

another role for your work situation you have another role for wherever you go you slip into the subtle differences in the way in which you behave when you talk to the chairman of the board or the Dalai Lama you will you will behave in a certain way and then you might notice when you talk to the plumber there will be subtle differences in the way in which you talk you play a different role you think oh this is not appropriate here right it's only when you stop playing roles when you observe the Dalai Lama how he behaves now you might have thought well the Dalai Lama probably plays the role of the Dalai Lama but he doesn't there's such simplicity openness and genuineness in him he talks the same way to everybody whether he meets the plumber or the pope makes no difference because he doesn't play conditioned roles anymore and that is only possible when you access a dimension within yourself that is deeper than the mind and we just did it or we are still doing it simply by taking attention away from thought and direct it into the aliveness of the body that means suddenly there's some space between thoughts and then you can relate to other human beings more genuinely and you don't need to prepare things that you're going to say next you don't say things in order to manipulate that person you don't say things in order to create an effect they simply spontaneity comes out of that place the spontaneity doesn't come out of the accumulated stuff in your mind the spontaneity comes only to the extent that you can access the dimension that is deeper than mind which we may call the the deeper eye which we may call alert stillness that is always there alert spaciousness access that so mind subsides then you live differently the more you access now at the moment these are only glimpses for you but that's good enough a glimpse later becomes a wider space of that so that is something to remember not as a memory but to remember to do in your daily life as much as possible wherever you are whatever you're doing whoever you are talking to or even when you're alone go within sometimes and feel that the body is alive there's life in my hands you're not imagining anything you actually feel that there is an aliveness here and then once you can feel the hands you can feel the arms the feet the legs you are inhabiting the body and the body loves that it loves your attention if most people don't give their body attention even if they look after the body extreme like you go to a gym every day or you use all kinds of stuff to put on your body you might think that these people are looking after their body but all they're looking after is the the external of the body they are not necessarily present within they cannot feel the aliveness some maybe they can but most not they're only concerned with the external body here we are concerned with the inner so it and it doesn't matter the inner body has nothing to do with the what the external body looks like whether you're 80 years old or 20 years old whether you have a young body or an old body the sensation of the inner body is always the same it's alive and the body loves your attention it's a bit like a when you don't give enough attention to a child after a while the child cries because it wants to attract your attention the baby does it and then finally you give because attention is an is energy it's enormous energy now most attention attention is consciousness most attention for for most people is continuously absorbed by thinking so you can see it when you talk to them they're not there really they're thinking they're looking at you but

they're thinking about the next thought they're going to ask as you sit there maybe you're thinking about okay i have what's my next question yeah and that's normal it's not a personal fault of yours it's normal to lose yourself and then you lose that means you're not really present when you're thinking about the next thing so it's normal so you don't have to beat yourself up for that it's normal but there is another way to live and that's the way of to be present to give attention not just to your thoughts to give attention to your body if you don't give enough attention to a child of course a child can also become addicted to attention but that's a different matter there needs to be a balance but a child does need attention from it's vital not an excessive amount but enough because attention is energy and the body loves it as much as a child it wants to be noticed it wants your attention and if it doesn't it cries it might become ill that's a crying of the body you're neglecting it the infant you're not you're not you're not inhabiting it you're inhabiting the uppermost loft in your house you're in a big house and you live always in the under the roof you never go downstairs there are lots of floors you have no idea what's going on there so that's a vital thing and it is a way of also accessing the space within that is the the eye that has no form that is the consciousness that is also intelligence we think of intelligence as the mind's ability to accumulate knowledge and to solve problems that's probably what we consider in to be intelligence but that's an extremely narrow view of what intelligence is what people can measure in iq tests is an extremely narrow view of intelligence i cannot solve the most the simplest of iq tests so i've never done a total test but i'm sure my iq would be extremely low because that is not how this mind works solving little puzzles i've never been able to do that but intelligence is a much vaster thing than the ability to accumulate information and so and then regurgitate it or analyze it or cut it into smaller and smaller pieces what they do at universities research projects the pieces are getting smaller and smaller and smaller the phd subjects are getting more and more and more specialized because you so many people are working on things and then you have to brought your tiny piece that okay i take this piece in my phd about that you can cut that up a hundred times and then once you've written your phd somebody else comes and takes a tiny piece out of that and says i can cut this up even further and that's considered intelligence but true intelligence the true intelligence resides in that dimension of alert stillness if you have access to that that's where the original intelligence resides so anybody who is creative and there are not that many human beings in this world who are truly creative anybody who's created has some access perhaps only in the little area of their field of expertise where they have some access to that dimension this the stillness einstein had it he was very slow he was not considered intelligent at school because he was too slow they said not suitable to for mathematics they said and physics because his thinking was very slow now what does it mean it means there were lots of spaces in between the thoughts he didn't he wasn't at school like one of the the so-called intelligent children who always when the teacher asks a question the hand goes up immediately i know i know that's very superficial occasionally that may be okay but there are some children and that is not recognized by our society who are very deeply intelligent but not in the way that we

consider what we consider intelligence and they tend to be slower they don't immediately have an answer because they know it's superficial to have a true answer you have to go deeper within but if you allowed those children to go deeper then you would see how original their thinking actually is so when we just went into the you went into the body already you noticed some new thoughts came not the old thoughts it only requires a tiny space for something new to arise not that you're doing it in order to have new thoughts you're doing it because it feels good to feel the aliveness within you and the more familiar you become with that with inhabiting your body the more strongly you can feel that aliveness it's almost as if you could feel every cell of the body vibrating slightly so and it's a beautiful feeling just an aliveness there and that is an enormously healing thing to do for the body i really want to know about

[Speaker 8] (6:39:33 - 6:40:02)

guilt i feel guilty you know all the time for little things i'm doing or that i'm not doing and there are things that i know i did that were mistakes to other people so i know that you're supposed to be free and liberated in the now but shouldn't i feel bad about this stuff i mean and what's going to keep me if i'm free and liberated in the now from like doing bad things to people

[Speaker 1] (6:40:02 - 6:53:11)

so human beings act out of their conditioning so every human being is conditioned by their upbringing by the surrounding culture by many factors conditioned to think and feel and behave in certain ways and so people do all kinds of things to other people and even to themselves without knowing what they are doing they're simply acting out the conditioning of their mind and jesus knew that because he said on the cross forgive them for they know not what they do so humans create an enormous amount of suffering for themselves and others but they don't know that this is what they are doing people act out of conditioning so when you suddenly see that something that you did in the past created suffering for yourself or others or both when you see that that's the seeing of it it does not come out of the conditioning of your mind when you when you become aware of certain behavior or thought patterns in you the awareness the presence the deeper presence that you are has come in and from there you can see what you did was very limited it created suffering for yourself or somebody else or other people and you didn't even know it so what was acting at that time if you say that was me and therefore i must be bad you are equating the conditioned mind your conditioned mind the conditioning of your mind with who you are if you say i did that therefore i'm bad or and continuously think about it you're equating who you are with what we could call unconsciousness unconsciousness means to be totally identified with the conditioning of the mind so you just have to act it out now there's still millions of humans on the planet who live in that way because the dimension of awareness hasn't arisen yet so they never know what they are doing they continue to inflict suffering on themselves and others to act

unconsciously but they don't know that this is what they're doing they cannot do otherwise so the moment you realize this is what i did who you are is the awareness that sees that who you are is not what you did what you did was the conditioning of your mind playing itself out so you you become you trap yourself in an illusory identity if you feel that i did that no who i who is speaking who is i are you the condition patterns of your mind or are you the awareness that sees that's the spaciousness within the deeper eye that sees what the mind is doing it sees what the mind created in the past it even sees what the mind is creating at this very moment if you are aware of the things these thoughts that go through your head how you speak to another human being you may be acting out a role and suddenly there's an awareness that you know that you are acting out a role and then there comes the possibility of instead of being the role being the awareness and then act in a truly genuine way with enhanced intelligence so the unconscious action was unintelligent action because it was action created by the conditioning of your mind which has nothing to do with who you are so there's a tendency for the mind to personalize the conditioning and say i did that and that creates guilt and that keeps you trapped in a very narrow sense of self because you have equated who you consider to be yourself with conditioned patterns that you acted out at the time it wasn't you it was unconscious human unconsciousness no more and now you see it so you see it and at this moment you would not act in this way because the awareness is there maybe the awareness will stay and this will never happen again it is also possible that the awareness becomes obscured again and the same behavior pattern happens again and you don't know it except afterwards when the awareness comes again oh i did it again and this is happened can happen quite frequently so it's important it's good to be aware afterwards if you do not misuse the mind don't allow the mind to misuse the awareness and make some identity manufacture some identity out of that for yourself and say that was me it wasn't me that's the main thing who are you you are the awareness anything else is forms that arise thought forms emotional forms behavior patterns so your destiny and your purpose in life is to increasingly be the awareness rather than the conditioned pattern but as long as the conditioned pattern is there it's there it's good if you if the moment the the moment of transformation comes if the awareness is there while the pattern plays itself out that's the beginning of the end of the conditioned pattern so if it's if it's a certain kind of behavior perhaps with women you do this essentially the same kind of thing um and it happens again and again and the awareness comes afterwards and one day the awareness comes in the middle of doing it in the middle of it you you see what you're doing there's a seeing of it and that's the beginning of the end of the pattern then it may just one or two more times the pattern may come up in a weaker form and it will then collapse so in other words you are making what was unconscious conscious and that changes it so you do not have to manipulate yourself and try to engineer inner change i have to make myself into a better person that doesn't usually work that just creates conflict because you have one image of yourself as the the the good person that you want to be or that you would like to think of yourself as that or you'd like others to think of you as a good person and then you

have unconscious behavior patterns that completely contradict that image of a good person and then for the rest of your life you live in that conflict you have and you the good person can talk to the bad one in your head it's just two thought patterns so that doesn't work what works is to be the awareness to see it to be awake enough alert enough and that where the present moment comes in to see are you present in this moment to what happens in this moment not only externally but internally also and are you allowing it don't reject anything if you feel a thought comes in an emotion comes in and maybe it's not a good thought maybe your mind says after the thought has come in your mind says oh that wasn't a good thought i shouldn't have thought that but they are both just thoughts the so-called bad thought was just a thought and the next thought that said that wasn't a good thought was just another thought now it's possible that the bad thought made you do something bad that's possible but the good thought cannot prevent that well the only thing that can prevent that is to be conscious so that the thought does not control you the conditioned mind doesn't control you be there as the witness to your thoughts just don't reject anything so don't go wrong there i know you're concerned about your mind and certain thoughts that go through your mind and you would rather be a good person and have good thoughts all the time but it's not happening and i can assure you it's not happening to anybody somebody is just having good thoughts because the human mind is the human mind it has polarities of good and bad and high and low so don't try to bring about on that level the perfect me it doesn't exist allow yourself the imperfections allow your thoughts to be there they come if you fight them you make them stronger people have the worst problems with thoughts are people who are spiritual so to speak they see themselves or are seen by others as spiritual they have to live the role for example the vicar the priest they have to live the role of a spiritual person and they cannot admit to themselves that they have bad thoughts so they suppress and they have may have bad emotions anger resentment and they and they say no i'm not having bad emotions i'm a good christian they can't even admit to themselves and that makes it even worse and then suddenly very bad behavior comes out of them and they don't know where it came from so on all you have to with thought all you need to be concerned about is to be the awareness allow the thoughts then they actually have less power over you because you are not don't look for yourself in any thought that comes into your head it's not who you are they're just thoughts it's not who you are if you have bad thoughts for two hours it doesn't make you into a bad person it just means that so-called bad thoughts are going through your head and then you watch it and as you allow them there is a deeper space the eye from there you watch thoughts are like clouds passing you don't have to follow every thought and then thoughts can become very tedious they can think you can have one repetitive thought pattern going on in your mind for hours or even days you don't have to follow every thought when you're aware you watch the thought there it comes what you're going to do this to this obnoxious person i'm going to kill this obnoxious person comes the thought and then the thought drifts out of and the awareness remains and then it's lost power already it's nothing so you find a spacious relationship with your thoughts that's

you are not you are nothing that arises in that beautiful space of who you are the consciousness that you are which is spacious intelligence none of that is who you they are forms they come and go so thought is not a problem be there as the witness to what goes on inside you then change happens by itself the mind will always have good and bad up and down it has polarities but that's not who you are and you don't have to act on it increasingly you act from the state of aware presence action can come from the limited mind and it's not usually skillful action or action can arise out of the state of aware presence so that's the end of guilt

[Speaker 8] (6:53:14 - 6:53:23)

what's the test i mean how do you know how do you know that this is out of the awareness after the fact if you could go back and look at your actions going yeah that was out of awareness

[Speaker 1] (6:53:23 - 6:56:35)

no but that wasn't how would you know well you know awareness doesn't create suffering for yourself or others when it comes out of awareness so you know when you look at action it has a totally different quality to it it's not self-serving the action did not happen because you needed something from that person awareness is not needy when action arises out of awareness you do not need to use the other human being for some purpose ulterior motive but when you act out of the conditioned mind the egoic mind you're always trying to not you're not only trying to use the present moment because you're hoping to get to some better moment you make the present moment into a means to an end you also make other human beings into a means to an end because you want something through them so that's where the you want to be with a beautiful this beautiful woman you because you want to be seen with her or you want to conquer her and so enhance your self-image or you want sexual pleasure from her but you want something if you if you're acting out of awareness it's not the acting is not under the law of wanting it's not that you want anything and that's also where loving action can only arise out of that because love does not want anything true love does not want anything so that's where it's it's totally selfless action and when you look back on it you can see very clearly whether there was self in the action you wanted something for yourself to enhance yourself or whether that was truly action totally free of self and that's the most effective and the most powerful action is when the self the image of me the thought structure of me comes goes out of the action and action arises that is totally selfless that action doesn't create problems such the buddhist monk said when he was asked what's the meaning of zen zen buddhism what's the meaning of zen and the monk said oh that's easy no self no problem that's it so you begin to live and act without a mentally constructed self you live from the aware presence but for a while the two are there and the awareness often comes in after something has happened that was unconscious and you see it don't beat yourself up it's only the human condition but whenever you see

unconsciousness has just happened or happened the other day and now you see it or you see it in the middle of it it's good to see it the more you see it the more awake you become don't personalize it it's nothing it's not who you are that's the

[Speaker 8] (6:56:35 - 6:56:47)

main thing so can the now make me rich powerful free happy smarter more loving more loved

[Speaker 1] (6:56:47 - 7:08:36)

yes all of those things rich yes let's start with rich and then we'll look at the next one can the now make me rich yes now what does it mean to be rich rich means it's not what people think it is it's not to have lots of possessions that may be one aspect of being rich but rich means to be in touch with the fullness of life and the only place where you can find the fullness of life the intense aliveness that you sense when you are present to now is here when you are open to the present moment what comes in is a gratitude for what is no matter what it's a little plant the air you're breathing the light that's coming through the window the sound of the bird whatever is there's a goodness to it and even if it looks bad even if it's a dead animal or dead human when you're totally aligned with the present moment there's a peace that comes into your perceptions and with that peace comes a gratitude that is very deep and so you're experiencing really life for the first time when you become present and so to be in a state of gratitude for what is is really what being wealthy means the present moment is always enough and so the definition of wealthy real is to be to have enough to feel already the fullness of life an expression that jesus used he said i want you to have the fullness of life and people didn't quite understand what he meant was jesus talking about shopping malls that you have hundred five hundred shops in one huge shopping mall and you have thousands of things to choose from was he predicting the arrival of shopping malls is that the fullness of life you can walk around and buy and have lots of money and credit cards and you can buy anything you like now there are people who can do that they are not happy so then he's not talking about many many things when he talks about the fullness of life it's not he's talking about the one thing it's to feel the intensity of being alive and you can only feel that intensity of aliveness when you're in the present moment with your attention one way of being in the present moment as you know is to feel the inner aliveness of the body to feel the aliveness that is in every cell of the body it's alive and the more you go there the stronger that feeling becomes and once you are connected with that you feel that the world around you is intensely alive too it was alive before but you didn't see it because there was too much thought stuff going through your mind continuously the world became dead because everything was immediately labeled mentally that's a tree that's a dog the moment you label it and you don't look anymore it's not alive anymore everything gets dead and through mental abstraction when you go around the voice in your head immediately calling things calling things names giving things names so when

you become more present there's this alert attention with which you meet your surroundings once you know the fullness of life that is already here now and then gratitude arises for what is no matter what it is then living in this way eventually that fullness that in essence is an inner realization rather than outer that's so that's the foundation for wealth is to feel the fullness of life within and then if you live in that way in connectedness with that eventually the fullness of life will also manifest for you externally in various ways meaningful activity is a form of wealth to know that what you're doing is helping other human beings brings an external fullness also into your life which is a form of wealth and wealth may also come in the form of things coming to you more conventional things home or car or whatever it may be those things also come much more easily when basically you already feel the fullness even long before it comes externally so basically you feel already wealthy when you live fully in the present moment you never feel really poor i perhaps spent 10 years of my life at least living what people would say below the poverty line and i never felt poor i always felt rich although for a long time i had nothing no external possessions but life was it was so fulfilling to live every moment fully present to the moment that life it felt i felt wealthy abundant and much much later did actually external abundance come into my life to some extent and that didn't make me feel better i feel just when now i have a car during those years i used a bicycle mostly or the bus and i don't feel better now because i have a nice car i feel exactly the same but just i it's nice to have a nice comfortable car with air conditioning in the summer and so but it makes the fullness hasn't changed it hasn't done anything to change that so to already the foundation is to be fully alive in the present moment and then it is much more likely that external wealth will also come to you as an outer manifestation of an inner reality if you feel wealthy already but if you feel poor and feel that you really you need to make money now even if you achieve it you'll be unhappy with your wealth because it comes out of the unhappiness so there are many people who are creating wealth these days they build up a big business on enterprise but it comes out of a deep dissatisfaction with what is it comes out of an enormous neediness to show to the world that you are somebody or to prove to yourself or the world how good you are and that that is not conducive to true happiness the wealth there are many wealthy people who are unhappy in their wealth so that's and they're not really wealthy and they they are basically still deprived they are deprived of the fullness of life and they have perhaps five or ten houses in different places cars yacht and yet they're deprived of the fullness and so they need more and more and it doesn't help so here we have living in the present moment brings you into the fullness of life now and then eventually it will also manifest in different ways externally for you power was the other thing will it bring me power yes but not power to the ego it will make your life more empowered than what you do much greater power flows into what you do because because what you are doing the action that you are performing whatever it is in the present moment the only place where you can do anything the action that you are performing in the present moment is not a means to an end for most people they are active but we are active because they want to get there to that point in

the future they want to the end result their eyes are on the end result so they may be busy building up a business because they want to become wealthy but they reduce the quality and aliveness of the present moment because here they are reducing the present moment to a means to an end they give it inferior inferior status in their minds the future is more important because that's where they're going to be wealthy but then the pattern remains inside them and even when they have the money they still have the same basic psychological pattern which means they need the next moment and always they reduce the present moment to a means to an end so the action is not of high quality it does not contribute to happiness they don't make themselves happy and they don't make others happy with what they do so that's not truly empowered and it is low quality action high quality action comes when you don't reduce the present moment to a means to an end that's truly empowered action and only when you no longer reduce this moment to a means to an end can you give your full attention to whatever it is that you are doing now some great artists do it sportsmen do it when they perform they are totally present it's not a means to an end they're totally in the now and so high quality action comes out of that and this is empowered action so living in the now brings power into your life true power not the pseudo power of the ego and then whatever comes out of it out of that action will be good in one way or another it will not be one could say i call it it's not karmic action which means karmic action it's an eastern term karma karmic action creates more unhappiness it comes out of unhappiness and creates more unhappiness for yourself and others but out of presence alignment with now comes non-karmic action it does not create more suffering on the planet because so many people are very very active but a lot of that activity ultimately creates more suffering on the planet so that's the power what's the next thing that the now will bring you

[Speaker 8] (7:08:36 - 7:09:16)

what was the question i really want to know about um guilt um i feel guilty you know all the time for little things i'm doing or that i'm not doing and there are things that i know i did that were mistakes to other people so i know that you're supposed to be free and liberated in the now but shouldn't i feel bad about this stuff i mean and what's going to keep me if i'm free and liberated in the now from like doing bad things to people because i'm that's a fear i think

[Speaker 1] (7:09:17 - 7:24:13)

the only place where you can be free of the conditioning of your mind because freedom is not an external thing it's an internal thing you can be in prison and you can be free people have written to me from prison and they've read the power of now and they said they now feel free what does that mean true freedom is freedom from your mind from the conditioned all the conditioned thoughts and emotions that otherwise otherwise control you freedom is the freedom to step back from the conditioning into the deeper i the awareness that you are it's freedom from thought ultimately so that not every

thought controls you so that's it's the freedom from conditioning and basically it's the freedom from the past so you're no longer determined your behavior and your thinking is no longer determined by your past it's also freedom from future because most people have a desperate need for the next moment it's i call it psychological future they need the fulfillment that they think the future will bring them it won't so this is something for you to be aware enough because i know that pattern also still operates in you believing that something in the future will bring you greater fulfillment than you have now but it won't if you don't have it now you won't have it then you have to access the power of now regardless of your external circumstances you can have that now you can't wait for the future because once you're in the waiting mode you'll always be waiting for the next moment even when you become a famous actor it won't feel quite right maybe you're already famous i don't know but it won't feel quite right and and you will there will be many things when you're very famous i've met one or two famous actors and they come to this teaching why do they come what don't they have everything no they've realized they don't have what really matters and suddenly they discover the spiritual dimension because they've achieved everything else on the worldly dimension so go deeply into the present moment become deeply aligned and at one with the only thing there ever is in your life the present moment and that is that is where true power resides and that is the only place where you can be truly free what's the next thing that you want happiness can happiness come in the future when i achieve this or that then i'll be happy when i make it but every situation that you go into will have a downside there is not if you're expecting circumstances to make you happy they can do that for a while and then you find oh it's not quite what i expected and there's always another side to it and very often the very thing that makes you happy if you have an external thing that makes you happy that very thing will also make you unhappy an example a woman comes into your life who makes you happy one two three years later the same woman makes you unhappy the same thing or you're a job a great job is offered to you and it creates so much stress that you make yourself ill it makes you happy first and it makes you unhappy you become famous and then you see the downside of fame you can't go out in the street alone anymore there's a riot the moment people see you you're a prisoner of your house you can't go out without two or three bodyguards is that freedom and you thought you would be free when you become famous i've met one or two famous people who they can't go out alone it's too dangerous and and people stop them all the time and they gather around them they have to stay inside everything has to be organized they have to jump in the car with tinted windows and bodyguards is that freedom are they happy because of their fame no they have experienced the downside of fame it doesn't mean that you should not pursue goals there's nothing wrong with being famous but don't expect it to make you happy the true happiness has to be found it comes from being aligned with life internally and where is that now here a complete openness and yes to the present moment that takes you deep into the present moment that is true happiness comes out of that and then you can go on and do things and see if you can become famous why not experience that experience as much as you can without hoping that

some experience or when you have accumulated enough experiences you will finally feel fulfilled and fully yourself that won't happen there's no end to accumulating experiences and achieving this or that you cannot find yourself there you can only find yourself in the present moment the only for everything else you need time to achieve success in your career to learn to play the piano to learn a foreign language even to if you want to meet a woman it takes time you have to walk somewhere where the beautiful women hang out and then you have to it takes time everything takes time and so the mind thinks okay finding myself who i truly am will also take time it thinks when i've added enough to who i think i am maybe recognition from other people fame possessions put all these things in the back my back and when i have enough things accumulated then i will be full and that moment will come at some point in the future it doesn't because the back no matter how much you put in it'll never feel full besides from the fact that also often things fall out of the back you put something in here and then something else falls out you suddenly get wells and then you're unhappy in your marriage or you're happy in your marriage and suddenly the job doesn't work anymore or you're it's always there's nothing stability isn't to be found in the external world it's in constant flux this universe is not stable people have this absurd illusion that they're living in a stable universe and that they can achieve some kind of stability in their lives they are shocked when suddenly big disasters happen and you realize how unstable really everything is so if you looked and that doesn't mean it's to be rejected play in the world and enjoy the play play as much as you can but don't expect anything out there to truly make you happy or fulfill you happiness is to be found directly within yourself it comes from being connected with who you are to this comes as brings us back to where we started to be in touch to feel the deeper I and there's enormous joy in simply feeling the beingness that you are to feel the I am that is deeper than this or that I am the very life that you are to feel that to feel alive that's out of that comes true happiness and then you can play around in the world and you acquire things and then you lose things and you acquire some more and then you lose some more and then you in the end you lose everything that everybody does you lose the body in the end it's form dissolves sooner or later but it's finding something that is deeper than any form inside yourself that's true happiness love also come true love comes only out of the true I true love cannot cannot come out of the pseudo I that says I the actor I the good-looking actor I the famous actor I the American I the poor one or I the wealthy one or I who is good with women the true love doesn't come out of that I that's a pseudo I that's what most people refer to when they use that word that's so common I but the true love comes out when you're connected with the deeper I the I that has no form the one thing that never leaves you the one ingredient that's always there no matter where you are what you do what you experience that never changes the I the consciousness that you are when you live in connectedness with that aligned with that that's where true love comes because when you meet another human being you can sense in them also there's the depths of the same I that is your identity you recognize yourself in the other and the other as yourself and you feel a deep connectedness much deeper than anything that you can say or think with the other

human being and that's true love love is to feel that you're ultimately not separate you're one that can only come out of the spaciousness that is part of the now the now is space what happens in the now is form don't confuse the two the reason why people think there are many many moments in every day in every in your lifetime in every hour because what happens changes continuously the forms around you change continuously the thoughts that go through your head change the emotions that you feel change the people around you change so people think every time it's a new moment this moment and another moment and another moment if you look more deeply you see it's not another moment it's always now but the form that appears in the now changes continuously but it's always now and ultimately now is who you are the space of now is the space of I and then things happen in it and they change continuously so there are two ways of saying when they ask you what is it that never changes what is it that's always there in your life no matter where you go and what you do you can say it's always I the deepest I not the superficial I that changes the thoughts the emotions who you are in the world but the deeper I is always that's always the same and so another way of looking at it is to say it's always now the now never changes and then you find the miraculous thing they are actually one the space of now and who you are in the depth of your being is consciousness itself before it becomes something the very foundation out of which all life comes you could say god god dwells in the depth of your being not as some entity but as the formless one life itself that is the deepest meaning of what now is and that's why the now can never leave you so I am the now in essence I am not what happens I am the space in which everything happens that's your true identity and when you live one with that knowing that your life will be fruitful and a great and wonderful adventure when you don't know who you are then no matter what you do what you achieve where you go who you meet it won't satisfy you that's how simple it is so the purpose of the work I do is to address the root cause of human suffering which is in the human mind whenever a human being is confronted with a huge challenge it is also a huge potentially a huge opening into the spiritual dimension yes yes Eckhart let me interrupt here

[Speaker 5] (7:24:13 - 7:24:26)

because one of the greatest lessons I learned and I think I learned this in a new earth is that stress is wanting the present moment to be something that it's not and all suffering

[Speaker 1] (7:24:26 - 7:24:40)

comes from that I would recommend that you ask yourself the question how would I experience this moment if I did not add these thoughts to it a few months ago after

[Speaker 7] (7:24:40 - 7:24:51)

knowing Eckhart Tolle for a while and studying the books I woke up and I suddenly got it

[Speaker 13] (7:24:55 - 7:25:37)

the Eckhart Tolle foundation is dedicated to accelerating the awakening of human consciousness to create a more peaceful and harmonious world the foundation focuses primarily on awakening human consciousness as well as alleviating and ultimately ending the suffering created by the dysfunction of the egoic human mind we accomplish this through making Eckhart Tolle's teachings available to communities in need and by funding and collaborating with like-minded organizations especially those who work with youth and students incarcerated people hospice patients the elderly and animals

[Speaker 14] (7:25:39 - 7:25:48)

well first I just think you guys are making an incredible impact and I think you know the thing that you are showing that you guys are doing really well is inviting other people into the

[Speaker 3] (7:25:48 - 7:26:18)

conversation it's been my lifelong passion to help not only myself but other people understand that we all have the power inside of ourselves to find our own love and our own connection to wisdom and nobody personifies that quite like Eckhart does yes this we are all together in the same boat now to try to build together a better world so I'm very grateful for the foundation's work in that area and I hope that you will be able to reach as many people as possible

[Speaker 2] (7:26:21 - 7:26:36)

ultimate vision one day there will be no need to have this kind of foundation to help awaken human beings the consciousness on this planet because we will be awakened

[Speaker 9] (7:26:42 - 7:27:02)

it wasn't until I started reading the books and thinking about the concepts and then applying them to my own life did I realize how life-changing and extraordinary his teachings are and and that really made me passionate about sharing them with people around me and then hopefully people even beyond that I'm so glad to be part of this

[Speaker 8] (7:27:02 - 7:27:09)

Eckhart Tolle foundation because right now is the time that the world most needs awakening

[Speaker 1] (7:27:09 - 7:27:36)

and presence the main focus of the foundation is to change the consciousness to bring about the awakening my hope is that the foundation will be able to get the message and

the teaching into those places where it's needed the most and where the potential is often greater for

[Speaker 13] (7:27:36 - 7:27:43)

spiritual awakening on behalf of the Eckhart Tolle foundation we are so grateful for your support

[Speaker 1] (7:27:44 - 7:33:37)

together we can change the world from within so there's something that is much more important than anything in your life situation and that's the ability to be still that's one way of putting it hmm and in that you realize that the depth is a depth to who you are a presence that shows to you without any doubt that whatever happens in your life situation out there is of secondary importance and when things are not satisfying in your life situation whether it's to do with money work relationships living situation health it is often precisely at those moments when things don't work in one or one or several of these areas that there's an opportunity for you to go deeper within yourself and find that realm of stillness or spaciousness or presence whatever you want to call it so you become to some extent free from external conditions because the conditions of your life including the physical body even that's still external no longer have the ability to make you really unhappy really upset and frustrated and fearful and anxious on the other side this may sound like bad news but it's not all these external things also lose their ability to make you really happy wow yeah god no no you can still feel enthusiastic and enjoy life tremendously whatever life gives you in the world of form but there's always something there's something transcendent in you from where you observe and enjoy the beautiful things that come into your life there is an enjoyment there but you don't give them an importance that they don't have you don't attach yourself to them you allow them to be maybe a possession that comes to you and it's lovely you look after it whatever it is a house an object you appreciate it it's lovely you look after it without that strong sense of attachment of mine um and when things come into your life that are not pleasant perhaps physically not pleasant you get stranded out in the cold or whatever it is

[Speaker 12] (7:33:38 - 7:33:39)

again

[Speaker 1] (7:33:44 - 8:05:23)

we can't say that you particularly like that that you enjoy that but you're in touch with the transcendent dimension so your aversion to whatever arises does not consume you it just is there on the surface you know you have some action you need to take some action to get out of the situation and then you do it so you just take a very simple

example the weather of course you enjoy a beautiful sunny day and then the next day is gray and rainy as it is here today and yet there's a transcendent dimension in you where that makes absolutely no difference so when it's rainy say oh it's rainy and perhaps the mindset would have been nice if it had been sunny today we could have gone out for a long walk gone to the beach walk in the forest they had a picnic whatever and yet at a deeper level does it really matter whether you have a picnic or not today or go to the beach or stay in the source of real enjoyment is never really in out there what happens out there it's it arises out of the stillness within you conditions do not need to be any particular in a way for you to be connected with the stillness to be the stillness did you hear that it was a news flash on an ipad what's happening have to look so we are um speaking of and hopefully realize experientially what we could call a transcendent dimension to who you are where there may still be on the surface of your life some happiness and unhappiness if you even want to call it that and yet those things no longer touch the deeper the dimension of who you are there's a transcendent dimension that's not you can't really call it i know some spiritual teachers talk of happiness but like ramana maharshi but what he really means is is the transcendent state so i don't use those words because the way i use happiness and unhappiness they refer to surface reality and surface experiences the experience of being unhappy or happy there is a transcendent state of presence on inner peace that is beyond happiness or unhappiness and but it's very alive you don't become dead inside in the absence of this ability to become still to be connected with the stillness to be the stillness if you don't have that then it's better to experience happiness and unhappiness rather than deaden yourself completely and say i don't want to feel anything anymore but who wants to be trapped in that continuous ups and downs of your life almost and the downs for many people are more frequent than the ups and react to everything that every little thing that doesn't go as it's supposed to go this this reactive me to dreadful way to live so stillness your best friend always there for you don't get attached to those words of course it's much deeper than your friend because stillness essentially is one with who you are but as we approach it i might occasionally use words just as temporary pointers and as you begin to have glimpses of stillness for a little while it may be helpful to regard it as your best friend and then you let go of that and please don't believe that stillness needs to be outside of you in so that you can become still inside in the midst of noise you can be still external noise and as you probably know the quickest way to become still in the midst of things noisy things surrounding you is to accept the present moment completely as it is just this moment it already is people are screaming around you whatever they do this is what is traffic building up okay whatever whatever situation this moment already is as it is so by completely accepting that this is what is right now which doesn't prevent you from taking action action needs to be taken but what is is and by completely accepting what is even if it's noisy or whatever it opens you up to the stillness so when you if you if you do meditate and you sit down and you close your eyes and maybe you have a technique or you don't have a technique anymore and you just sit and be still and if then a disturbing noise happens somewhere around you um sometimes you say oh i can't

meditate with noise like that of course that's a thought that arises you don't need to believe that thought don't believe every thought that comes into your head i can't meditate now what's true it's precisely at that moment if you can completely accept whatever arises at this moment and it sometimes can be a great opportunity to go deep enough where the stillness is when something outside does not seem to be conducive to stillness and yet you completely accept this present moment and oh there it is despite the noise that is so spiritual awakening more often comes in spite of something seemingly that did not look conducive to spiritual awakening it more often comes that way than because of something because of would be a beautiful experience and you would think oh and these i have nothing to worry about i have security lovely surroundings now i have time for spiritual awakening do you maybe could be but more likely not so here you are let's say one day you are in a beautiful spa in a warm climate it's sunny you're getting massage with lovely oils exquisite food gentle music or sound of water in the background everything is absolutely perfect a few weeks later you get home somebody falsely accuses you of something you get put in prison and there you are extremely unpleasant noisy surroundings bad food bad company which situation is more likely to bring about spiritual awakening which means takes you to a deeper level within yourself to the stillness i'm not going to answer that i'll leave you with those two situations be still be at peace be at one with the present moment it rains one day and they go oh what a miserable day next day it's sunny oh it's sunny that means you are under the situation you're not above the situation you're under it the situation controls you and i've given them the simplest possible example but even that happens very commonly so especially if you live in london or seattle or vancouver where it rains quite a lot then if you are dependent to some extent even on the weather for feeling good or not good then that's what happens but you will notice when you look out of the window the real pain comes with saying what a miserable day it's the rain is nothing in itself it just is but you call it something and it's not just a middle but it's another miserable day and the moment you have used about the thought miserable it connects to other things in your life that you can also call miserable and there we go that's the beginning of a day and that's the beginning of a story line in your head so for 46 years i've been constantly criticized capitals letters by my mother for everything i always felt fear in her presence trying to fulfill her expectations i couldn't handle her criticism anymore and three years ago i decided to stop any contact but i suffer painful fear guilt and hatred i'm exhausted please help yes so you've gone from one unpleasantness into another kind of unpleasantness um if you see that your mother what whatever your mother says is totally conditioned by her mind she's playing the same old record cd it's not records anymore but nowadays what do you play the old download what yeah so to realize whatever comes out of her mouth is her mind regurgitating the conditioning throughout her lifetime and perhaps being conditioned by her mother and so on in that way so perhaps you've been thinking all those 46 years or whatever it was that there was some meaning or significance to what your mother said but basically it was just the noise of her mind and she believed in it she believed that whatever her mind repeated and

repeated was the truth there were certain patterns she could never get beyond being the mother she knew better of course when you were four or five but she didn't couldn't let go of the belief that she knew better when you grew up she couldn't let go of the role of mother it continues to play in her and so can you see that what she is doing is simply a replay of her mind without believing that it has any significance and so approach her in a state of compassion because she's completely at the mercy of her conditioned mind and you don't have to buy into what she says because of course many people think i really i need my parents to understand me i want my mother to understand me and they feel very unhappy if they're not being understood and it may be beyond the capability of your mother to understand you and and it certainly is beyond the present capability of your mother to understand you so she is limited you have to recognize her limitations in this lifetime maybe before she dies she will go beyond before death is possible but for the time being she is very limited in her state of consciousness and that is not to look down upon her but to see it with compassion that what she does is extremely repetitive and not to believe your own mind when it tells you that she needs to understand you i need my mother to understand me do you yes okay what happens if your mother's understood you the mother says now i really understand you how you live oh thank you and now what it's just another same present moment or before the mother says what you do is all wrong you shouldn't have done this why didn't you do that okay same thing it really makes no difference she understands you doesn't understand except that your mind is telling you that it does make a difference you visit your mother you have a cup of tea with her she understands you you go off and you look at the sky and you take a breath and it's the present moment and then you remember oh my mother understands me or you go and have a cup of tea with her and she continues with her old patterns and say goodbye and go off and you look at the sky and take a breath and you say oh she's still in her old patterns well that's how it is makes no difference unless you believe your mind when it tells you that it's dreadfully important that your mother should understand you and that happens when you believe every thought that comes into your head and then the thought can make you unhappy my mother doesn't understand me and you feel something huge is missing in your life because your mother doesn't understand you but that's because you believed in the thought that says that this should be when it isn't and so you you feel this enormous burden which is not really created by your mother it's created by your own by your own mind so it's your mother is not to blame you have to see that your own mind is creating this enormous burden and when you see that you can actually you can let go and allow your mother to be who she is in that particular conditioned form right now and allow her her limitations i had a similar experience with my mother although not as extreme as your experience probably my mother did not continuously criticize me but she made it very clear that she was unhappy with the choices i made in life and sometimes she implied it she said oh well you could have done so much you had so many chances didn't you and with your intelligence you could have done so much and i was already 45 and she said but you threw it away oh well let's not talk about it and so allowing her her limitations with not as i said not looking down on her

and say you are so limited but compassionately allowing her that's that's how she that's her her mind mental conditioning she thinks in terms of a man needs a career he needs to make money he needs to get married and have children and he needs to show that he's successful and all those things and that didn't happen with her son and she wasn't happy about that so she couldn't go beyond the conditioning of her mind because that was conditioned by the particular culture she grew up in and i could see that and it was fine now we earlier little earlier we talked about likes and dislikes i had love for my mother because i could occasionally one could actually glimpse beyond her conditioned mind and occasionally you could see her being shining through her eyes when she stopped talking and and that was just wonderful to see that that aliveness in her eyes and the beingness in her and even when she was talking i could still sense it in the background so i didn't have to react to her words i can allow the words to pass through me like like some sound of leaves in the wind without any particular meaning or significance and that was fine and yet talking about likes and dislikes i didn't like being staying with her for more than a few days because it got too much although i loved her my preference was after five or six days to say okay i have to go now and she got used to that and it was fine i would come once a year sometimes twice a year and visit for a few days and that was surrender to that my choice was not to say okay i'm going to now spend three months at my mom's place but if that had been inevitable if i had been forced for some external reasons to do that would have been fine too i would have surrendered to it but it's a few days was usually fine was enough as you know ramdas tells us tells you that as the great test whether you're enlightened if you think you're enlightened spend two weeks with your parents and that's the great that's the test this mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation how do we get into the state of presence first of all step one let's so to speak almost inevitably when you choose to be present and it is a choice but not everybody is capable of that choice if there's a sufficient sufficient degree of awareness in you you are capable of taking your attention into the present moment and the first thing then that is you notice is you become more aware of sense perceptions of the world around you that you absorb through your sensory perceptions you will also notice a heightened degree of alertness because that's why it's called awakening it's another part of the awakening a heightened degree of alertness but not an alertness where there's any tension there's no tension it's not an alertness it goes like no there's no tension in it it is a relaxed alertness that's part of presence so you decide to come into the present moment you decide to step out of the problem making mind because you have recognized that a lot of your mind activity is completely unnecessary and even harmful not all for some things the mind is a great tool but a lot of the time it creates it does not solve the problems of life it creates the problems of life so you take your attention out of the stream of thinking and bring it into the present moment so it could begin with sensory perceptions suddenly you are there's an alertness that wasn't there before why wasn't it there before because your consciousness was being absorbed by thoughts your consciousness continuously

incarnated which means took form as thought your consciousness incarnated into thought forms continuously and there was you were not you were not aware of consciousness because consciousness always always assumed a thought form incarnation you see why buddhists want to become free of the wheel of continuous incarnations but many of them don't realize this is the moment when you can become free of incarnation because the most foundational the most basic incarnation is the incarnation into thoughts the primordial forms social

[Speaker 14] (8:05:25 - 8:05:28)

and emotions that go with thoughts

[Speaker 1] (8:05:29 - 8:05:56)

and here goes another incarnation and another so you come to the end of consciousness you are able to take consciousness out of that and then become aware well that's before we go there you become aware of sense perceptions alertness right this this alertness is consciousness itself

[Speaker 14] (8:05:57 - 8:06:02)

without having incarnated and then it you observe

[Speaker 1] (8:06:05 - 8:09:43)

if you find it difficult to immediately become aware of sense perceptions because the mind is still trying to get in there another helpful entry point into presence present moment that has been used for thousands of years is quite simply your breath your breathing simply become aware that you're breathing right now even without wanting to do any particular type of breathing become aware that your body is breathing become aware means you can sense that the breathing is happening that is a perhaps the most immediate entry point into the present moment awareness of your breath already recommended by the buddha might even be older than the buddha as a meditation method but not just as a formal meditation method as a simple entry point into presence become aware that you are breathing now being aware is not could be misunderstood the person might think become aware for your breathing looks like oh yes i'm breathing what's next that's not awareness awareness of your breathing is to be able to with your attention follow the breath as it enters the body and as it leaves the body so your attention moves with the breath now what it does is quite simply it removes effortlessly it removes thinking you can't do both you can't be aware of your breathing and think at the same time occasional fragments of thoughts may come in but they immediately dissolve again you can verify for yourself are you breathing just checking are you breathing are you aware that you're breathing right now sometimes the the awareness can sometimes have the effect of lengthening your breath almost without wanting to so

when you become aware of your breathing that's a wonderful entry point into presence you are aware of your breathing and thinking subsides okay next thing that could happen is you're not only aware of your breathing you're also aware of the energy field in your body not the physical body but that which and the animating presence that which animates the body the life within the body not the physical body and you can sense that your breath can put you in touch with that as your breath moves into the body you feel it going into the abdomen and then spreading out the rest you can feel the body is alive you can sense if i call it the inner body you can sense the

[Speaker 14] (8:09:48 - 8:10:07)

energy behind the physical manifestation of body and thinking subsides and then it's easy to take the next step well let's okay let's uh breathing

[Speaker 1] (8:10:13 - 8:10:48)

beginning to feel to some extent there's an energy field behind the physical body within the physical body sense perceptions now you're able to look around and to listen and to hear let's just talk about the two predominant sense perceptions seeing and hearing and you're able to and this is an important part of it you're able to perceive without labeling without interpretation this room flower

[Speaker 14] (8:10:51 - 8:10:55)

man sitting on a chair and you just see it

[Speaker 1] (8:10:57 - 9:36:00)

but you don't you don't interpret it you don't label it in any way you just allow it again allowing it just to be as it is what is there to interpret you can perceive it without thought just through awareness instead of through the veil of thinking perceiving through awareness rather than always perceiving through the veil of thinking sometimes thinking is helpful and you need it but a lot of the time it's a prison it imprisons you so you become free by discovery discovering your ability to to to perceive without needing to interpret what you're perceiving and you but and you know what you're perceiving but this knowing is not conceptual anymore when you look at another human being in that state of perception of non-conceptual perception you in a way you know that you're looking that there's another human being but not conceptually so you discover a deeper way of knowing that humans have kind of they have in the past perhaps they had it a bit more than they have now you can know something there's a knowing through concepts but there's a deeper knowing the concepts are not needed what you do really is secondary some may do great things others may do things that look on the surface not so significant but how you do it is primary when the how means the consciousness that flows into what you do on ettv we can have some stillness on normal tv that would be

dreadful often people ask questions about about manifesting or the power of not the power of now the power of intention and how does that relate to the power of now and about wanting one person asked a question about what's the difference between wanting continuous wanting that i write about in a new earth always wanting or needing the next thing and what's the difference between wanting and intention intending to create something and what is the importance of manifesting things in your life or creating or is that counterproductive somebody asks maybe we should focus on something else not on manifesting or creating now there are many exciting books these days about creating and manifesting the secret teachings of abraham channeled teachings and so on and so often people ask well how does that relate to stillness and inner peace and acceptance of what is and surrender to the present moment and living in alignment with now is there a conflict is one wrong or misleading or leading you into illusion and so they ask and then expect me to answer so this is an important question for almost everybody unless you've reached the age of 95 and then you can be almost sure that you're not really into manifesting anymore when it's you've done that been there done that and some people don't have to reach 95 before they have a feeling that my life is not does not need to be focused anymore on creating or manifesting so it may have something to do with the stage not necessarily chronological age there's some there's something to do with where you are at in your own life but really your own life is a microcosm of the microcosm so if you look at the universe the first thing you see that it likes to create and it likes to manifest but on this planet alone the universe is continuously creating and manifesting countless life forms millions millions of life forms and then outer space we can only assume we don't know what exactly is there but there's a vastness of life out there that's for sure and probably many more life forms than we have on this planet which is more than we can count and the life forms both in the sea and on land including humans they seem to enjoy a dance of coming into being and destruction they eat each other up if you're born in the sea you go around and it's a transformational process and this entity becomes you and then suddenly something comes up from behind and gets you and you become that entity continuous dance and also if you observe life on this planet the universe also seems to manifest conflict and sometimes people say i don't want conflict but if there were no conflict at all in your life challenges and so on what would that be like imagine going to a movie that has no conflict in it would that be interesting maybe i doubt it but a movie in which nothing goes wrong everybody's perfectly fine all the time no challenging people everybody is so conscious and nothing happens it's well since couldn't try that maybe that's an idea for a script writer or maybe there the script wouldn't be very long how many people would come and watch that movie don't know so you have that you just by just looking not having a theory about life but just looking you see that the universe loves to manifest and also it seems to be the case that life forms over periods of time become more differentiated many more come and even the human societies become more complex we've had ancient civilizations that were quite complex but probably our present civilization if we can call it that is the most complex which of course includes problem

ridden also that goes with complexity it's full of and every individual who is part of this civilization has a life that is full of problems because you live in a very complex civilization so it produces complexity i mean computers just getting in i i can't get into that anymore maybe i've gone beyond that age it's so complex i can't i cannot learn all this stuff that you need to know on computers boys can do it six year olds to me it's too complex and the differentiation of the the analytical mind science cutting every phenomenon up into little pieces and then you have little pieces and then each piece is cut up into further pieces and the microscopes get bigger and bigger now let's examine that and everybody's specialization gets narrower and narrower because you have to be because there's thousands of people writing phds about your subject so you have to have only a little corner then you have to take that out and then examine that and then spend three years examining that complexity of course complexity cannot go on forever and on some level complexity at some point if a tree grows too many branches eventually suddenly a winter storm comes and most of it collapses so the universe likes to create to manifest to experience the play of form that's one movement and you can see it in yourself on some level you enjoy that or you enjoyed it or you still do enjoy it and then there's something else in humans you can only really see that perhaps in yourself an inner phenomenon the universe also wants something else it wants not only to experience that manifested life it also wants to experience peace and something that is not touched by the continuously fluctuating forms it wants to know itself deeply directly in its essence and that really is the root of spirituality is that the universe not only wants the outward movement it also wants the inward the return movement to the one and so every human being also embodies these two movements and that seems you are torn sometimes between the outward movement into form and the inward return movement to the source where it all started but the source that was never really lost that is still there because it's timeless the source of all life is timeless and it's in you and you feel drawn back to that and that is the pull towards spirituality peace stillness being rather than doing and then you wake up the next day and you look in a shop window and say oh that looks nice i need to get that i'd like to do this get that achieve that and then you get okay but on the other hand i want peace also it's the two exemplified by perhaps eckhart tolle exemplifies the return movement mostly and you have tony robbins goes it's that and not one or the other is right or wrong it's only perhaps few you can totally lose yourself in one or the other maybe that's not quite it unless you live in a cave somewhere and you can lose yourself in being can is it possible and perhaps this is a challenge of the universe here on this planet and perhaps on other planets is the challenge to reconcile the two movements rather than have them separate either one or the other is it possible to reconcile the inner movement towards stillness and being and the outer it wants action and doing and i would say that it is and that is our challenge at this time um traditionally let's talk about human doing and action first traditionally it's been very unconscious what humans have manifested in this world to a large extent has been unconscious they have been identified with doing and identified with form because form is about the outer the creation of form and your own form and creating more forms

and so that has been going on ever since anybody can remember recorded history and beyond this identification with form and identification with doing and we call that ego now what happens then is that the the one consciousness that underlies everything timeless formless the one consciousness moves into form assumes forms and enjoys the play of form but it's not enough it seems for the one consciousness to enjoy the play of forms it needs to completely believe in it to really make it real it's not real but to make it seem real you need to lose yourself in that dream of form the play of form and this has happened to humans so identified with the form that you believe yourself to be a separate entity you have you have a life of your own there is no such thing but you can't a life of my own doesn't exist there's only life and you are an aspect of that one life but humans believe that i have a life of my own and then others have their life and of course that's if i have a life then of course one day i could lose i'm going to lose my life oh god i'm losing my life i lose my life who are you and who is life you must be separate from life if you can lose your life so who is saying i is not life who is that i what is that i that says my life consciousness on the unmanifested timeless one life so the every human then believes that they have a life of their own and become that means they identified with the form of life that particular form of life this particular physical body this particular psychological life form the thoughts accumulation of thoughts your past your history your viewpoints and the emotions that go with these thoughts feelings it's all becomes all part of that form identity form identity that's me encapsulated form identity and so consciousness is trapped or believes to be trapped in that so we could say that in that state the universe or the consciousness has entered a dream-like state it wants to do that it must enjoy that dream up to a point it consciousness has entered that dream-like state where it is completely identified with form and doesn't realize that every other form is an aspect of itself every other form um and of course then you are just an isolated entity it's a becomes quite unpleasant after a while so you have to get together with other entities and instead of having an i form you have a we form us and that becomes encapsulated it starts with a tribe of big family or tribe us and all the others are totally weird and and evil people just beyond the mountains in another valley you go they're all dreadful that was quite common and in some places still is when people didn't get around that much to the greeks or also the romans everybody beyond were barbarians the word barbarian comes from trying to imitate the foreign language that those barbarians speak so there comes then and for a while that universe seems to be okay with that to have consciousness identified completely with form and then the movie goes on you read history world history and that's the the movie of what happens when consciousness is identified totally with form and then comes a point when it's time for another stage to arise where the dream of form is no longer your no longer consciousness is beginning to awaken from complete identification with form and that is happening to many humans and this is why human beings are drawn to these two spiritual teachings with the awakening from the dream of form so who am i what does it mean i what is identity what does it mean when i say i what does it feel like what is i what am i now most people yet if you ask them what is who are you they will define

when the word i in terms of form they will say well obviously this body that's i this comes maybe first and then there comes the mind with its accumulations its accumulated its thought habitual thought movements its memories they come the emotions that go with the thought movements the psychological form of i so they say well i am this this body then there's a name which of course is just a sound you say john i am john and and many people say they think that's already a big part of who they are when they can say their name oh okay and then they add a little something else i'm a an architect oh okay we're getting even closer to who you are and i'm a father which okay good and your age okay something that's no okay we're almost there now just just need a few more details and then we know who you are and and so you can put it on a piece of paper a summary of it or if you want a detailed account of who you are you can write down your life history in a book and it becomes your autobiography oh that's interesting now we know who you are and if that's not enough and if you think there may be hidden parts of me then you can go to psychoanalysis for 10 years and then all these hidden memories and hidden desires and feelings that you had when you were four and a half years old towards your mother and your father and your grandmother and what they all readily they all come up and then you can add that and then okay now i've got it i've got my autobiography and i got that's i i'm me i'm complete now and then you look 50 years later which is not much on a universal scale 50 years is very little i know that now i thought when i was 20 50 years was a lot i'm a lot older than 50 by the way by that the body the 50 years pass and what's left of the body and the psychological me that entity in the head with its history what's left nothing well maybe there's a one or two copies left of your autobiography and maybe one person finds a copy in an in a secondhand bookshop this is somebody's autobiography and your grandchildren or their descendants well after my mother my mother passed away three years ago and i realized a few recently that that i'm virtually the only person now who remembers her because all her friends died before she did and her family and all the other people who knew her only knew tiny fragments at least that oh she was a little bit of an eccentric and she was outspoken and and so on they had little fragments but the person who really remembers her more than a fragment is me and when i go nothing nobody remembers and then all is left is photos and a generation later nobody will know who this person on the photo is but this is strange how an identity evaporates that seemed so solid and real and so form we are talking about form identity that is when you when you're asked who are you or you ask yourself who am i okay now is that is that all there is to who you are is that what can be defined and through form what can be that which is form thought forms emotional forms physical forms a conglomeration of that to get put together for a while becomes what you think is i is that really your i your identity or is this is there something else well perhaps we can just at this moment see as you sit here right at this moment you don't remember your past you don't have to let's pretend you don't have one you have no past there is no past let's say there is no past which by the way is the truth ultimately there is no past there's only the now so and okay and no future let's pretend there's no future well there is no future anyway but there's only this so you can't remind yourself you don't even unless there's a

thought in your head that says i am such and such even that you don't know right now let's say you don't know anything about who you are nothing that you can formulate conceptualize call something you don't what is left is there what is lost nothing is lost in fact when you encounter this which cannot be named which is a formless presence aliveness that's the you've touched your that which is beyond form consciousness itself and that is identity that is where your sense of i comes from and so you are more truly yourself when you don't remember your past than when you do remember your past and you are more truly yourself when there's not a single thought in your head than when you are full of thinking thinking about me and my problems and whenever you feel this sense of i this the light of consciousness which you can you can know directly in the stillness that is always there available to you as the essence your essence identity your essence identity timeless that's always there and that is one with universal consciousness it's just coming through this form it's never lost when this form dissolves the consciousness goes out like a little tentacle being so let's stay with this for a moment here you have no past or there is no past no fear what is lost nothing essential is lost you get a stronger sense of who you are in your essence when you are not telling yourself in your mind who you are this is why i said in stillness speaks i believe you are never more truly yourself than when you are still and still means of course the mind is become still it's an inner doesn't whether there's noise outside or not doesn't matter you're never more truly yourself than when you are still then you can sense the essence of who you are and that does not depend on the age of the body whether you're 20 or 90 it's the same stillness that frees you then from the suffering that comes if you have identified with form which then sooner or later will leave you you suffer if you identify with a strong or beautiful body and that body eventually grows old you begin to suffer because you seem to dissolve you haven't realized who you are and so we have you have form identity and essence identity identity and suffering arises through knowing yourself only as form identity my history my story my body my past my this my that my that my my my let's whatever you identify within the world of form if you know yourself only as that that's the state of unconsciousness the dreamlike state consciousness is dreaming the dream of form and then it acts attempting to become free of its inner state of incompleteness dissatisfaction and fear which is inevitable when all you know is your form identity there's always underneath the surface or even very much on the surface there is dissatisfaction fear unease discomfort fear i am not enough this is not enough this is not the right place where i am now this is not the right people i'm with this is not the right thing that i'm doing right now there comes the need to go out and search for more forms that i can identify with so that i can feel more complete but the only way you can actually reach the state of being at home in being rooted in in yourself without the dissatisfaction that always comes again and again and again and without the fear the only way is encountering that which is beyond form to and it's so it's so much it's right here it's closer it's it's god realization it's another word for it but let's not go there the god within the the timeless within and so the universe then has all the people who are into creating traditionally have been very unconscious because those who were most

identified with form had the strongest desire to manifest and create more things out there and conquer an empire or accumulate more and more possessions or have more power so they got driven so all the powerful people the people who created human history if you read the history books they were deeply identified with form and they're all unhappy of course very unhappy hoping by achieving this that or the other and conquering this that or the other the other tribe or whatever to become free of their state of unhappiness and of incompleteness and never getting there and that's been so traditionally the the doers there were always some people who were not into doing but in many traditional societies they that wasn't much of a place for them later monasteries came into being so they could become monks long story but so we still associate going out and doing with unconsciousness i believe there's a line by t.s elliott in a poem where he says the best lack all conviction and the worst are full of passionate intensity talking about contemporary humanity early 20th century the best like all convictions means that they don't know what to do they get because they are torn between there's some inkling of inside them of their essence so they they're not the desire to to do to to is not as overpowering as in those who are totally identified with their form identity so that's an interesting that with where we are at as humanity as a whole is a realization that there is an essence that has nothing to do with the form and only if we are rooted if some of our attention is in that formless essence can we do things in this world without creating more havoc and suffering for others and ourselves if we only go into doing without the rootedness in the eternal dimension which is stillness which is here now always now inseparable from now if you whatever you do when you lose yourself in the doing identified again with form and creating some new problem so the foundation for all doing is conscious being so that's the important realization about what about manifesting that's good but before we talk about manifesting before we build some some new building or structure get the foundation first do you have the foundation don't start building a house without any foundation let's manifest this great business empire this is going to change the world yes but have you laid the foundation what foundation being being the formless the eternal no we haven't thought about that no of course you haven't you can't think about it the foundation is being rooted realizing what that means what is what being is not intellectually not by trying to understand because as you may have noticed there's nothing much to understand about being you can't being can you explain a bit more please being stillness i don't understand stillness can you explain stillness no because there's nothing in it to explain you can't look it up like it under a microscope or dissect it aspects of stillness phd so the the human being needs to find it's his or her timeless and formless essence essence identity that's the foundation if you haven't if you haven't that forget about manifesting or creating you just create more trouble that's okay then you're at the stage where the universe still like to create trouble that's okay and i'm not saying you you you you find that which is so close closer to you than hands and feet the stillness that the formless consciousness itself without which there would be no sense perception and no thought and no feeling that it's the light in which everything appears that which the life within the form and that's always there as

your s right here it knows itself here it's not that i know it it is i i am it i and it are one i know myself sounds like two again but that's because we're using language i know myself i know i i the eye knows itself and so this is the end of all differentiation and complexity because you're going back to the unmanifested source of all life there's no complexity in that at all depths yes infinite depths the vastness as vast or vaster than the outer space it's it's inner space the vastness of that inner spaciousness so what you thought of as i is a tiny tiny bit and underneath there's the vastness that is as vast although not an extension as outer space which is an externalization of who you are within the vastness of inner space people don't know how to what extent they have reduced their own reality to this little entity that runs around the surface of the planet for a few years and then evaporates and of course that's the form but what is it that animates that form the foundation and is not something that you find say okay i've got it now and then you forget it again and then you start getting bored about the next thing you have to do and identify it with every thought that comes again and reacting and you lost not this the secret is to stay connected with the being while you do and then whatever you do is conscious doing not unconscious move unconscious creation of form the but conscious creation and maybe you'll do much less than you would have done before but it's it's more powerful very different kind of doing conscious doing and conscious manifesting if that's what happens through this form foundation comes first and remains primary being needs to remain in your life whether or not you are engaged in a lot of doing or not being is primary if you lose touch with being you lose yourself in your mind and you lose yourself in doing and you don't want to any good for anybody really and it may well be that the universal consciousness may use you and you do something that is then in alignment with this new stage that is arising on the planet and that is conscious creation co-creation before the universe created unconsciously and now through the human form there's a possibility that the universe can create consciously in that sense all those books and teachings are quite exciting that tell you that there is a an important relationship between your your thoughts and so on and the outer reality and that thought creates form yes this is true thought creates form and it's exciting that if humans can fully realize that and then fully realize their power of their creative power which is vast and as unlimited eventually they'll know that as the universal creative power because humans and the universe are not separate you are an aspect of the universe you are the universe expressing itself as this form so it's wonderful creative power is there but it's not the wanting power that is the to to answer the question that somebody asked what about this wanting needing comes from a state of dissatisfaction and insufficiency now buddha called it desire and the buddha of course said become free of desire and then that's the end of suffering he looked at humans and he saw that there was this unconscious reaching out continuously for wanting he called it desire i call wanting is a more direct term that you can actually feel i want i need i must have now this is still very much in many humans there the identification with form that results in continuous wanting and it keeps a lot of our economic system going advertising depends on humans who are identified with form it does not mean that when you are when you

know your essence you cannot enjoy form anymore that you will say no more maybe some some humans might do that but again there's a possibility of living in balance with form you can enjoy all the forms around you and even create new forms without any sense that this is mine or any sense of attachment or any identification with the form and only then can there be true enjoyment of forms and beauty but then the compulsive nature of your relationship with form will go the compulsive running to shopping malls the day before christmas and then running to shopping malls again the day after christmas because they've reduced the prices even more or whatever it's amazing before christmas they're running and then after christmas it's even cheaper i need i must have that's not the true enjoyment of form you can enjoy form by looking at a shop window and say oh beautiful well what do you want to buy it no or you might buy it and then it's in your house beautiful beautiful and then maybe the next day you arrive and a burglar has been there and it's it's gone and some it may only be in that moment that you know whether you were attached or not because you might have had it in your home and said i'm not attached at all but when you get home the next day and the burglar has taken it then you'll know whether or not this was true what you thought that you were not attached that's a good test so we need to then doing and stillness need to be in balance now it does not mean that you separate your life into one part of your life as you sit still and in the other part of your life you run around that's not the balance the balance is when the two are fused together and even while you're walking around the shopping mall not running around the shopping mall walking you can be in stillness as you look around you may perhaps you go with the convention of buying christmas presents or maybe you don't doesn't matter if you do okay and see what i can find still bring this bring the stillness into the shopping mall let it come with you into the shopping mall just to give one example in the north american context or the bazaar or whatever if you're somewhere else and see if you can even while your attention flows out have some attention within to feel the background of aliveness or stillness as i always point out the beginning of that is feeling the inner body the aliveness within the body that's the doorway into the formless you're already moving into the formless feel the alive you're the body is alive now it's alive it must be alive but can you feel that it is alive and that's that's life energy it's the bridge between formless and form and there it is and then if you can walk around a city well here you don't walk but you drive around if you drive around the city can you drive with not too much thinking just presence or walk around to the shopping mall and just look there's you bring a stillness in wherever you go and then when you have to think you think you can pick up the phone and say oh i found something nice maybe he what should i get this for for my mom or dad whatever to bring always the two dimensions that's the most vital thing and then you can also look into manifesting but then the question is what is it that wants to manifest through this form it's no longer this is what i want the surface i what is it that wants to manifest through this form very different and you may you may not know that immediately there may be a time period when you don't know exactly what to do with your so-called life which is not yours just a conventional way of speaking there may be for a while you

don't know what to do with your life and so you just just there being as still as possible do your whatever activity you're already doing and but bring stillness into it presence into it and then at some point either the realization of what it is that you need to do that wants to be done through you comes from the outside somebody tells you something ah or you wake up one morning and ah this is what i have to do and then you start taking action always making sure you're not so attached to the outcome that you think you're it's more important than the present moment and an action can become egoic when you lose yourself it becomes egoic when you lose yourself in the doing and a good sign or good criterion is whether when something happens to that is against your seems to be an obstacle a person or situation say i want to do this or achieve that and suddenly somebody says no you can't do that no they won't allow you to do that no for some or situation becomes a challenge it's difficult it's blocked you want to go somebody says no you you're not qualified to do that you shouldn't do that it's not allowed whatever you need this and that you don't have to achieve obstacles come all the time if you get upset that means the ego is back in the doing when obstacles come if you're not upset you're still present and you look at whatever the obstacle is and you look at it with this penetrating gaze of presence which is stillness also you look at whatever this the obstacle arises you bring this penetrating stillness to it and that is like a light shines on it and then that dissolves the obstacle or it shows you a way around it that's the power of consciousness it always happens either it shows you how to get around it or it shows you how to use the very force of the obstacle and you turn it around if the obstacle is going to go this way and you go with it for i'm just demonstrating now something counteracts what you want to do it's coming this way you want to go that way but you don't meet it head on and start complaining saying no this shouldn't be happening no perhaps you go with it for a little while and you go and then you turn it around and the very power that was against you then works for you and you achieve your goal through that it happens and this is the wisdom that comes with non-resistance so whenever you go into this conscious doing resistance always pulls you back into unconscious doing can easily happen because it's an old habit pattern unconscious doing inner resistance to whatever arises in the present moment pulls you back inner resistance is some form of negativity some form of complaining some form of fear aggression anger and this is important because whenever you complain about what somebody else does that you're already beginning to fall into that trap of unconsciousness and of course you yes you meet lots of people who are still trapped in ego and they may not like what you do but just no judgment just look at what the city they say this they want that you want that and they don't say oh they're dreadful i know what he wants he wants to deceive me and he always does that he wants to go just no just clear this is the city this is what he says he wants this is where i want to go and see okay never no never any judgment of a personal situation just clear seeing clear facing this is the power it's like a light beam of consciousness it falls onto illuminates that that that situation that moment that that person that's the power of consciousness no resistance jesus already talked about the power of non-resistance and that the moment resistance comes you're drawn back into

identification with form protection resistance fighting it's it's a are you going to succeed all the time in this no it's a it's a shift from a way of doing that has been with us for thousands of years and a new way of doing that is only arising now so you are transitional beings between the old consciousness and the new and don't judge yourself if you fall back occasionally into the old consciousness but you will quickly know it how will you know it you begin to suffer you get upset you get upset about situations you get upset about people you get upset about what somebody said you get upset about what somebody should have said but didn't you get upset about what somebody did or failed to do oh there's a sign that you've fallen back beautiful line in the course in miracles i am never upset for the reason i think now upset is a generic term could be any any any in any way that you're out of alignment with isness there's a disagreement with the isness of the present moment and then you become upset now many people are upset a lot of the time but they don't realize they are upset and if you talk to them and say why are you upset they say i'm not upset i'm just bloody angry or i'm not upset i'm deeply hurt because he didn't invite me to his birthday party deeply hurt not upset i'm never upset for the reason i think now the deeper meaning of this of course is you are upset because you have lost awareness of being your essence identity and the reason you think is superficial if it's not if when you lose connectedness with being you just wait a few minutes and something or somebody will upset you i'm and so if we believe that that which seems to cause the upset is the actual cause this is not the case these are interchangeable could be anything and it will so you'll be upset many times every day by other people by situations by the slightest things or the biggest things upset upset upset by the entire world is so frustrating i'm never so that's a little sign then if you're upset you want to go somewhere but but people are not cooperative situations are not cooperative and you can talk to yourself so that's a good sign then you can use also shows you to what extent the ego is active in you because what's upset is not you it's the ego in you the ego is the erroneous identification with form a false sense of i which wanted something to make itself feel more at ease or bigger or more important or whatever and is frustrated in its aims well well that's a good then it's like a little if you had a little it's almost like having a little technical device on your arm that sells you whenever your ego comes back it goes beep you don't need that well if you if somebody here is a technical wizard and is going to invent it it's fine but you don't need that because all you need is to know if you're upset or not in everyday life now for many walking egos upset is their normal state they might not even know it anymore because they're upset virtually all the time and just waiting for some other thing to happen to explain why they are upset again but of course there's the underlying dissatisfaction is always there the foundation then is stillness that's the return journey so can we be then simultaneously in the return journey to the source of all life spiritual dimension god stillness and still be active in this world and then if we are that what we then do in this world becomes empowered by the intelligence that emanates from the source and then the source creates through you no longer the power of the source is then no longer distorted by the ego and its power greatly diminished to a trickle so the source is like

light you can say sunlight wanting to shine through fully but for a long time it's become reduced to tiny little hole there's a little bit of light coming through just to keep you going and now it can come through and use you when we use language we always create duality so when i say it uses you it's not quite true because you are it but language does that it uses let's then once we know that it's okay we can use those words it uses you then now what exactly it wants i don't know perhaps it simply wants to create beauty or forms that are alive and joyful and enjoy that it's enjoyed the drama of of for thousands hundreds of thousands of years it's enjoyed the drama of people cutting each other to pieces and eating each other up it's enjoyed the drama the movie is changing now and perhaps it's creating a much more pleasant movie and who knows what is in store for us i've never i cannot predict the future i'm not particularly interested this the present moment is wonderful enough but something is there's a change happening and of course there comes a comes a point in your life when you may not this the source may become much more important than whatever you do so you reach a time when you say well i've done this and that and it's been wonderful and then all you are is you're just still and you emanate that stillness and even then you affect the world around you without any doing if you just be there and whoever you come into contact with there's some almost one could say transmission even if they don't notice it you can do that and some humans perhaps will mostly live in that way how much doing you do how much varies from form to form person to person some will be very active and conscious into conscious doing and create and and enjoy the creation and others may do relatively little or may just continue to do what they're doing already but whatever they are doing will be a vehicle for consciousness or stillness that flows into this power this beautiful energy that flows it could be even a person who just gives information let's say you work at an airport and you give information to people and maybe you stay there and then everybody who comes to ask where's gate number 16 you say well you go that way and it's only about a three minute walk and there were not only the words there was a transmission of stillness with the words not in the sense that I am going to transmit stillness no it it happens because you let go of the sense of doing of I do it happens and the person this one traditional word for it is blessing the person goes away being blessed with that energy and so beautiful so so what you do really is secondary some may do great things others may do things that look on the surface not so significant and ultimately what you do is secondary but how you do it is primary when the how means the consciousness that flows into what you do or if you're working with your hands again can also happen that how do you put together this piece of wood and this piece of wood there can be a presence that flows into the doing and that's beautiful and that expresses itself in the final product if somebody something is made in the state of presence then it it contains energetically it contains quality quality now there are perhaps quite a few things in this world that are not at all conducive to presence maybe it could be certain things that are extremely repetitive if you even that perhaps is possible but let's say you're in a factory and all you do every day is uh well probably the by this time you probably have been replaced by machine anyway but there are certain things or you live

in an office environment that is so insane that when you bring stillness into it there is an incompetent incompatibility with your surroundings that will result in your dismissal or will result in your walking out but if there is even the slightest compatibility if it's not a hundred percent insane the environment if it's only 90 insane then there may be a possibility that if you bring stillness to it this alert stillness you walk into the office and you listen and you're alert and you answer the phone and you go to the committee meetings where everybody's and you sit there and listen to everybody you don't say oh everybody's insane you know they're insane but you don't say it mentally they're not insane in their essence that is on the surface and you are there as the still point it doesn't mean you can't speak anymore but you embody the being rootedness in being and then it is possible if it's only 90 percent the environment is only 90 insane some change is possible and perhaps the one or two people will be changed by their interaction with you and a shift happens in them or if it's a meeting suddenly there's a change in energy in the room or suddenly you are the only person who says something meaningful and suddenly everybody listens oh or your silence is enough to bring some harmony to the surroundings many ways in which this can affect the outer world and even if you if you stay at home and all you do every day is water the plants in the garden and make a cup of tea and look around at the beauty like a little child but with a depth that is perhaps not yet there in the child a depth of non-conceptual knowing then at this you have you are a point where the universe is contemplating its own creation and knowing its own beauty and its sacredness and its aliveness through you and that's enough for a fulfilled life isn't it that's enough the mind is in yes but i should be doing something meaningful that is meaningful and for some people that is how they contribute to the shift in consciousness by being a point of consciousness through which the universe sees its own sacredness its own beauty where the flower recognizes its own beauty because the flower doesn't know it's beautiful it needs you to perceive it and respond to it and go not call it anything but go really there is no ultimately separation between you and the flower it's a single field so when you contemplate the flower the flower becomes conscious of itself through because one consciousness and so if you provide that that's a wonder that's the universe waking up through this form to its own sacredness and beauty and aliveness and depths and you all you do is walk around the garden every day and make a cup of tea it's wonderful and and if occasional thoughts come you maybe thoughts that come will say wow i made all that you become like god who says and god saw it is he rested on the seventh day and he saw that it was it was good or something like that every at the end of may he saw that it was good see the the goodness of all that and so it varies you maybe i call one word i have for that which i used in a new earth um a person who is not called to do very much is frequency holder because what what you do is not a doing you hold the frequency of that consciousness of presence by and you don't have to do anything you just hold the frequency by embodying it by embodying presence yes that's a fulfilled life every moment is fulfilled and who knows it could be that you you do that for two years and one morning you wake up and suddenly say suddenly something wants to be done and suddenly you start doing

something and you pick up the phone and said we're going to have do this a huge enterprise where everybody can come and to experience beauty and healing and so on i'm going to transform my garden into into a healing center and i'm going to maybe maybe not one person asked the question is connected with this somebody who is fully awake would they still have a personal identity and of course we know the answer by now you are in touch with your essence identity and the person can still operate you have the two they're the two dimensions you have their personal identity but you are not lost in your personal identity you know that it's only it is not ultimately who you are it is only temporarily who you are on the surface but not who you are in your essence and so in that sense no you still have a personality but you are not possessed by your personality it still operates and you can function normally you don't need to look weird but if you do that's fine also you certainly have no desire to stand out and say i am special of course then you would have fallen back into some form identity there is something to be careful of which is called the spiritual ego one could say and that is the identification with form coming back even sometimes to people who are able to periodically go into the stillness and feel the power and be that and then they come out again and then the old ego pattern reasserts itself and it remembers the beauty of stillness and the power of stillness and then it says oh i am very special more special than you well it may not say that in words because the ego at that stage can be very subtle so it doesn't say more special than you but there's just a sense of superiority that can creep in easily the sense of me and again one needs to be careful any kind of conceptual identity that you really believe in is another trap being trapped in form ultimately you're only you're only yourself fully when you have virtually no concept in your head of who you actually are now that doesn't mean when somebody asks me when i go somewhere whatever to cross a border somewhere somebody says well what's your what do you do what's your profession or what do you do i don't complicate things by saying i don't do i be i just be and so it's good if you have a little concept that you can give to a person if the situation requires it you can say i'm such and such and then they they believe you don't say i'm a spiritual teacher when you cross a border

[Speaker 15] (9:36:05 - 9:36:06)

teacher

[Speaker 1] (9:36:06 - 9:50:00)

teacher is okay spiritual teacher and of course you're not a spiritual teacher and i'm not a spiritual teacher because that's another form identity if then you believe i am a spiritual that's who i am okay i'm and then the next moment when i go do my shopping i'm no longer a space of a large presence in the supermarket but i'm i carry around the identity of here's a spiritual teacher is walking around the aisle very subtle traps can happen now that doesn't mean that at this moment this form spiritual teaching happens through this form so i could say at this moment i'm a spiritual teacher but when i get up

i'm no longer a spiritual teacher it's only a function it's temporary in the same way that i could do somebody's accounts well i couldn't but and i would be an accountant but if i carry accountant around with me in my head i'm a walking accountant when that's a terrible trap yeah it's only if these are only functions they're not who you are or whatever it is any identification with that brings you back into form and so to be free and that's a continuous practice in daily life to be as or to one can express it negatively it's not negative but it sounds sometimes negative to walk around as nobody in particular not be anybody in particular just be as a presence but nobody in particular just just an alive presence you don't need to be anybody in particular except when you conform to the conventions when you talk about yourself it's fine you observe the conventions of this world and say i'm a doctor i'm an accountant i'm this i'm that not a spiritual teacher but whatever but not to be anybody in particular this is these to be free of carrying around with you a defined identity which is either in many cases it either take puts you into position of superiority towards others or an inferiority towards others because then if you have some defined identity you always look to then you give everybody else an identity too that's a dreadful thing it's not only you create the present for yourself everybody else well once you look at the world through your defined identity then you give everybody else a form identity first you do it to yourself once you've done it to yourself you do it to others and then you reduce every other being to a form and then usually because all this is part of ego usually then you will try to locate where this other being is in this form as either superior or inferior to you so it's an unconscious process where does this person fit in the ego is always looking to where inferior or superior am i inferior and if the ego feels inferior it's uneasy and then tries to get something to reduce the other so that you can feel if only make negative comments or whatever or say or if somebody on a very simple level the other woman wears a very nice dress and you feel diminished by her beautiful and expensive dress you say oh that that dress would look good on your sister or something so the ego loves to do these unconscious things because it by by diminishing somebody it it believes that it has grown a little bigger itself amazing delusions it's a whole delusional system operating gossip by by talking negatively about others every time you say something negative others who are not there it was this quite a common thing you feel a little bit superior because you have judged the other as not good enough certainly you have put yourself in a position of judging the other which implies that you are superior morally or whatever you know what she did she did that and then she said and then how dare she and then she's always wrong of course amazing silliness but for many people it's their life that's how they live so be nobody so to speak be a presence don't define yourself except when absolutely necessary when you have some interaction with somebody who do who says what's your name and so on of course name and you nothing wrong with your name as long as you don't believe that that's who you are and so on you're but the practice is to gradually shed the the belief that you're here as a person and just let the person become transparent to the light of consciousness and then you have the two that's the form and but essentially you are that which animates the form the underlying deeper

consciousness and that by living in connected in conscious connection with that you live in conscious connection with an intelligence that is far greater than whatever your mind could manufacture or that may use your mind but it will then inspire your mind with creative insights creative ideas and so on it it it can use your mind or it may bypass your mind and will simply emanate throughout every cell of your body you emanate a beautiful alive peaceful presence if your mind is not highly developed it may not say the universal consciousness may say well this mind is not that way i'm not going to use this mind but i'm going to use the body to emanate peace and aliveness and presence and healing for the world it uses whatever is is there or if you're an artist then suddenly your artistic creations become inspired empowered beautiful in my case that doesn't happen because i can't draw and paint it just doesn't happen so this the consciousness is not going to flow into my arm in my hand and suddenly i'm going to produce a masterpiece and that's not going to happen nor am i going to produce the unified field theory that einstein couldn't find because my mind doesn't work in that way physics and mathematics it just so the consciousness is not going to use my mind and bring up make me into another einstein the consciousness uses what is there and empowers that and there's always everybody has something that the consciousness will use and flow into if only every cell of your body that's more than enough and then there's nobody to claim credit when something has been produced created it you just step back it's not i did that or the way people go yeah yeah no you just because you know it's not and not i didn't i did it yes but not i it's the one eye the center of your attention always bring back into the present because it's first of all because it's all there ever is well that's a good reason because it's life itself your life situation yes it exists in time there's a past and a future as far as your life situation is concerned but it's not your life i wrote about that a long time ago but it's so important you can people confuse their life situation with something more fundamental more real more immediate deeper which is called life life situation is circumstances and events in your life and most of your life situation is an experience in your mind and then life situation is relationships work situation financial situation living situation all kinds of problem often problematic situations it's very rare that all of these situations are working smoothly and perfectly relationships family professional work financial uh environments living situation health situation all working in harmony and perfectly it can happen for short periods but usually something somewhere goes wrong it has to periodically and frequently that's normal and it's good but your so your life situation always has this element of uncertainty instability too although you might not recognize that when you look at seemingly solid things and your life is the experience of this moment the only thing there ever is and if you neglect that you miss

Eckhart Tolle Talk YouTube 05

[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 8:53)

The whole thing, and then you reach a retirement age, or old age, and you say, was that it? And you perhaps you spent your whole life trying to arrive at some point, and the points change that you want to arrive at, but you always want to arrive at some other point. So when your attention is in the present, yes, you're more alert, which is helpful.

You notice things that before you didn't notice, people, objects, all kinds of things around you, natural things, and it's quite, everything is a manifestation of life all around you. And the deeper aspect of being present is not just being aware of your surroundings, although that's fine. You're aware of yourself as the aware presence, and that is the secret, that is the key, that is not something that one can easily explain.

You can only experience it, what it means to be aware of yourself, not as an ego self, like having a relationship with this conceptual identity, that's me. I don't like me, or I love me. I'm in love with me.

That's happened to Narcissus, and things after that didn't go well for him. Although you hear that quite often in certain people. I love, I love me.

Well, it's a little strange. No, who are you, and who or what is a me? Oh, I hadn't thought about that.

I love myself. I hate myself. Oh, that's worse, even.

That's the, that's not uncommon either. I'm not happy with myself. But who is that I that constantly says these things?

Who is that I? That has a relationship with an, ultimately an imagined entity, mind-made conceptual entity. And this happened to me one night, as I talk briefly in the power of now, when my mind said, I can't live with myself anymore, because the, I was unhappy, and I couldn't stand the unhappiness anymore.

So I couldn't, I can't live with myself anymore. And this sentence suddenly, I looked at it, and I realized it was a very strange statement. I cannot live with myself.

At that point, I realized that there's, there must be two of me here. I, and the self that I cannot live with. That's an incredible, that was an incredible realization.

There's two of me. There's the unhappy me that I cannot live with. Who am I, and who is that unhappy me?

This is almost like a koan, like a Zen riddle that you can't, hard to answer, or impossible to answer conceptually, but I actually can answer it conceptually. I couldn't at the time. It

took years before I realized what all this meant.

And that moment, the consciousness that I am that was trapped in the movement of thought and continuously absorbed by the movement of thought, this movement of thought created the entity, to the person, the unhappy person, the entity, the unhappy entity, the mind-made entity. And it was so active that it absorbed all of my consciousness, was always trapped in the movement of self-identified thoughts. So it was trapped in there, and when this strange statement arose in my mind, what it, and I looked at it, and looking at the statements, a sudden separation happened between the consciousness that was trapped in the movement of thought, and suddenly was able to release itself, to extricate itself from the, being held in the movement of thought, and stood back, and there was I, as the consciousness, looking at the unhappy thought movement. So it was a separation of, consciousness was withdrawing from the dimension of things and thinking, and then, very quickly, thinking subsided, it was no longer fueled, without the consciousness, there can be no thinking, because thinking is not possible without consciousness, but a thought is consciousness that has taken form, whereas the realization of I as consciousness is consciousness that is prior to form, or unconditioned. So I became aware of myself as consciousness, as the I, and the thought then began to dissolve. Consciousness had been, without consciousness, it's nothing.

Thought is consciousness that has taken form, and it dissolved, and then I was kind of, felt like falling into some hole, but it wasn't fear, not fearful. The next morning I woke up, and I was at peace, like a new person, or no person, I was just contemplating things around me, and everything was lovely, and I didn't know why I was at peace, and then I went around the city, on the buses, on the bus, still at peace, the hustle and bustle of London, where I was living, I was at peace, why I was at peace, I couldn't understand it, of course now, the peace that passed is all understanding, I suppose that's, several years it took me to understand why, that's very weird. I did not realize that I was at peace for one reason, and the reason was that I wasn't thinking that much anymore, especially there's no, the whole movement of thought that is imbued with a sense of self, self-referential thought wasn't happening anymore, occasional thoughts, yes, but a lot of the time, there was just awareness, but I didn't have a word for it, I just called it peace, and so what happened then was the consciousness had withdrawn from its, until then, it had been imprisoned in the movement of thought,

[Speaker 6] (8:54 - 8:59)

and continuously absorbed by thought, and then it stepped out,

[Speaker 2] (9:19 - 9:21)

and now on to joy,

[Speaker 1] (9:27 - 10:57)

now joy, what piece of music do you think comes to mind? Yes, the ode to joy, which is, has been around for 200 years or so, or something like that, a Beethoven, the Ninth Symphony, the last movement, and it's called the Ode to Joy. Most of you will know what I'm talking about, and those of you who are not familiar with classical music, if I sing it, then you will know what it is.

Unfortunately, I'm very bad at singing, but it goes like, Freude, schöner Götterfunken, Tochter aus Elysium. And now I can't stop. Wir betreten Feuer, Ertrunken Himmlische, dein Heiligtum.

Deine Zauber binden wieder, Was die Mode streng geteilt. Alle Menschen werden Brüder, Wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.

[Speaker 7] (10:58 - 11:09)

No. No. No.

No. No. No.

[Speaker 1] (11:09 - 18:07)

I'm better at it than I thought. Now, I'd like to give you the translation, because many people are familiar with the tune and the song, but perhaps not so many people know what it actually means. Now, the words Beethoven took from the poet Schiller, who wrote this poem, Ode to Joy, which is a praise of joy.

So I'll just give you the beginning of what I just sang, or if you can call it singing. The translation of this reads, joy, beautiful, divine spark. Now, joy, the poet personifies the state of joy.

So he speaks of joy as if joy were a person. Joy, beautiful, divine spark. Daughter from Elysium.

Elysium is a celestial realm in Greek mythology. So joy is the daughter comes, in other words, comes from the celestial realm. It is something divine.

We enter your sanctuary, burning with fervor. O heavenly being, still addressing joy. O heavenly being, your magic brings together what custom or convention has sternly divided.

So it reunites what human custom has divided. All men shall become brothers. Of course, that includes sisters.

All men shall be, and that includes women, it's humans. All humans shall become brothers and sisters where your gentle wings hover. The gentle wings of joy.

That is the translation of the beginning of the ode to joy. So it brings you back to the state of connectedness with all other humans. And therefore, there is something divine in the state of joy.

That is the essence of this poem that Beethoven liked so much that he put it to music. It goes on later. There are more lines, which we don't need now, but towards the end, it has this beautiful line.

Be embraced, millions. This kiss to the whole world. That is towards the end when it says.

Seid umschlungen, Millionen. Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt. And then there's the celestial voices of the choir.

Beautiful piece. It's absolutely divine, especially the message that it contains. Now, I'm not going to just play the whole piece here.

There's a particular version of it that I discovered that is called the flash mob version of it. Now, I love flash mobs. I don't know if everybody is familiar with that term.

It means when a group of people come together and do something very strange or unusual unexpectedly. Now, flash mobs are not spontaneous because they need to be planned beforehand, but they disrupt the normal workings of routine everyday life or existence. So, for example, you get flash mobs when people, like 200 people in a public place, suddenly freeze for five minutes in whatever position they happen to be in.

And then all the people who don't know what's going on, they go, what happened? And in a way, you could say it has no particular purpose, but perhaps there is a purpose, and often it awakens people out of their habitual slumber. And sometimes flash mobs is music that suddenly a group of people begin to perform a piece of music.

It looks totally spontaneous, but of course they all plan to do it. But all the people who experience that are transported into a state of astonishment. And this is the piece here, which has been around the internet, and some of you may know it.

Some people say, oh, I don't like this because it was financed by a bank and it's used as a commercial in the same way that our first piece that we saw this evening is a commercial. But if that is a commercial, it doesn't say you need to use our bank in order to be in a state of joy. No, they just financed it, and here it is.

So there's no link between the bank and I have no objection to it whatsoever. If they spend their money and sell something beautiful like that that brings joy to people, why object to that? Now, where this happened was in Spain in a small city near Barcelona, Sabadell.

And the piece is called Sabadell Flesh Mob. The musicians are professional musicians. Now, the most beautiful thing apart from the music, and this is a short version of it, just five minutes or so, the most moving thing apart from the music itself is the reaction of the people who don't know what's going on and how they become transformed from their habitual state into suddenly and feeling, experiencing joy or astonishment.

They are stopped in their track, their mind stopped, and they go. So all the different reactions of people are very moving, very touching. So let's watch it now.

The Sabadell Flesh Mob. Here we go.

[Speaker 7] (18:09 - 18:09)

Hi.

[Speaker 1] (23:54 - 40:11)

Welcome, all of you on YouTube, Facebook, live for the first time. We've had a few technical difficulties. So I'm a little bit late.

That was a great opportunity for, of course, for you to be present in the moment. And let's continue that before we start and perhaps look at a few questions concerning conscious manifestation. Let's just take a moment and become aware of the present moment.

Vitally important in any endeavor that you undertake, no matter what it is, is not to lose your connectedness with the present moment. So before you start a new enterprise, a new activity, always go to take a moment for awareness. Basically, that's what it is.

Sometimes people ask, well, what is the present moment? How do you, where is it? What does it even mean to become aware of the present moment?

And the first thing, of course, is that you become aware of whatever surrounds you. That's the entry point into the present moment, a very easy entry point into present moment awareness. Some people may call it mindfulness.

Mindfulness is to become more aware of whatever surrounds you here and now. Sense perceptions, just be with what is. Give it attention, some attention, the room you're sitting in.

Maybe there's a window, you can look out of the window. You can see trees behind me. I can't see them, I know they're there.

This is, you enter the present moment by becoming more aware of sense perceptions, auditory, visual, and perhaps others. And of course, what that does, you might notice, is there's less mental noise. The voice in the head that speaks and speaks, that talks to

you, that you have a dialogue with, a monologue, that comments and interprets and takes positions, mental positions, identifies with likes, dislikes, says no, never stops talking.

That's the mind, the voice in the head that most people are completely identified with, and that means they are not present. So the first step is take some attention away from that by simply becoming aware of sense perceptions. And if you can look at something natural, that's even better because a natural thing, a tree, a flower, a plant, the sky, a natural thing lends itself to a present moment awareness more than a man-made, human-made thing.

So anything natural that you can look at for a moment, focus on, and give it attention, acknowledge it. You don't need to think about it. So it's just become aware of the present moment through sensory perception.

And already, if you can do that, if perhaps a few minutes before you were very much immersed in the problem-making mind, it wasn't actually solving any problem because this continuous mind activity actually creates more problem than it solves. If it's not focused, it's unconscious. So already, suddenly, there's a certain amount of peace that descends upon this, your world.

It becomes a bit more peaceful. You become aware of the aliveness of things. And then the next step for present moment awareness is you become aware of yourself.

Now, that's very important too because that's the foundation for the entire world, whatever the world that you experience, you experience it through yourself. So, and whatever you manifest in this world, you manifest through yourself. Now, what does it mean to become aware of yourself?

Now, you might be tempted to think that you start thinking about your life, you and your life. And of course, that's very problematic, your past, your future. Or you can think about things that you identify with, the huge problems the world is facing.

But that's not becoming aware of yourself. Becoming aware of yourself is something more vital, something deeper than being aware of your historical self, all your memories, all your expectations for the future. So none of that is really becoming aware of yourself because those are thoughts.

You become aware of the simple fact that you are here as a conscious presence. That's very much inextricably linked with what we call the present moment. Now, this may seem strange at first, you becoming aware of yourself as a conscious presence.

No need to remember who you are beyond the fact that you are. Becoming aware of the I am-ness of yourself. For those of you who haven't never heard of this, it might seem a little strange.

Become aware that even if you do not remember your past at all, who you are as a historical person, what is left of you if you do not remember who you are as a historical person? If you don't think about yourself, what's left is a certain inner spaciousness opens up that replaces the usual activity of continuous mental noise, thinking. A spacious awareness opens up and you cannot say much about it.

You can't analyze it. You're simply aware that you are. That there is a presence that is inseparable from who you are.

There's also a stillness there that's part of that presence, but it's not an asleep stillness and it's not the stillness that you find when you're getting tired. It's an alert stillness. And that is the core of what we call present moment awareness.

So you're not really aware of the present moment because the awareness is the present moment. Beyond sense perceptions, that was a starting point. And then you go deeper and you simply become aware of yourself as consciousness, a still alert presence.

There's a lot more one could say about it, but this is just our starting point for today. The important thing is once you have had even a glimpse of it, as much as possible, reconnect with that as you go about your daily life, as you are engaged in activities, as you speak to people, interact with people, as you interact with people on media, social media, et cetera as much as possible, reconnect and have find these moments of alert stillness, alert still presence. And that becomes then the foundation for everything you do.

And that's that another word for that is spiritual awakening. You're now, you're spiritually awakened begins with little, just a glimpse of awareness of yourself. The awareness that there's something deeper in you than the person with its history.

That awareness is a direct realization. It is not something that is conceptual that frees you from what we call the ego which is all the conditioning of your mental, emotional field, all the things you identify with. And then you derive your sense of who you are from a deeper place within.

And that's an enormous liberation. And then you can operate in this world in a much more effective way. And you can operate in this world in a way that is much more beneficial for yourself and humanity.

You can then from that foundation, we can talk about manifestation. If you manifest from that foundation rather than manifest from the usual sense of identity that is exclusively derived from the ego which is the thinking mind, the narrative that most people identify with as me. That's me.

And the narrative of me is partly personal and partly collective. These are energy streams that what we call short are energy formations that are invisible. And these

energy formations are like, could be compared to ripples on the surface of being.

That's the thought activity. And humans who have no awareness of this deeper dimension, they are trapped on the level of the surface level of the movement of energy forms that we call thoughts and emotions. So that's your mind is, and whatever happens in your mind is conditioned by your surroundings and by your past, so-called past.

So humans are literally possessed in the absence of awareness. They are literally possessed by the thought forms that go through their mind. And so they can, they're partly, as I said, partly personal, partly collective.

And sometimes they are relatively harmless and at other times they can be like a viral infection on a mental level. And you don't even know what's happening to you. When violent mass movements happen, human unconsciousness expressing itself collectively through violence, that means humans are at the mercy, completely possessed by these energy formations that have taken possession of them.

And they don't even know it. Sometimes you know it in the past, perhaps all know, perhaps even from your own experience, how sometimes one thought can take possession of your mind and it refuses to go away and it proliferates. It creates other related thoughts in your mind and you suddenly become obsessive with something.

And some people live like that. They have, they are possessed by one particular mind form and they interpret the entire world through the screen of that mind form. And everything, suddenly they have an explanation for everything because everything is interpreted through that screen.

Sometimes it's a mental illness. It gets close to mental illness when you feel paranoid and so on. And everybody suddenly becomes your enemy.

So you free yourself from that. Ultimately without awareness, thinking can, even good things in your mind can very quickly turn, become amplified and turn it into something very unconscious and destructive. So always returning to that deeper dimension.

Let's start with the first question.

[Speaker 2] (40:17 - 40:17)

Let's see.

[Speaker 1] (40:28 - 1:08:17)

When it comes to conscious manifestation, my interest at this point is not in manifesting anything for myself personally, but in wanting to help manifest a world that is more peaceful and just for everyone. Can how you teach conscious manifestation help with that? Good question.

Relevant. Manifesting a world that is more just. I think that was the word.

More peaceful and just for everyone. Well, that would be a good aim. Now, ultimately, of course, what you experience as the world is intrinsically one with your consciousness.

The only place where you experience the world is in your consciousness. Philosophers have even questioned whether there actually is a world out there independent of conscious perception. We don't need to go there, but there's no doubt that the entire world happens inside you, one could say.

You don't know what you see, what the eyes transmit, the senses transmit, becomes nerve impulses that are sent to the brain, and that's just on the physical level. And then these nerve impulses are decoded, and then some kind of word appears within you. But to what extent that corresponds to a world out there, we don't even know.

So to change the world, so as you look at the world, to some, in some way, you could almost say, go as far as to say, what you're actually looking at is a reflection in the external, in the world of form, of your state of consciousness, you could say. It's an interesting way to look at it. And the state of consciousness is partly your, there is your personal world, and there is a collective world.

So the two, they are connected, but they're not the same, because first of all, there is what you experience as a world in your personal life, or the people you habitually interact with, where you live, your surroundings. It starts with simple things, like even the objects that surround you habitually, where you live. So the, your world is your personal, your relationships with humans that you live with, your relationships with other humans that you meet every day casually, the, where you work, the people you work with.

So all these things, your personal life, so-called life is one sphere that you move in. And the important thing is not to neglect that in search of a better collective world. The two are related, but to disregard, this is a mistake that is often made, to disregard your personal sphere, but the world that is immediately accessible to you as you and your life, the people in your life, where you live, all that, your work.

To neglect that, it's very seductive to think there's so much wrong with the world out there, the collective. That's really what I should be concerned with, because there's so much wrong out there. You can see it.

You just have to turn on the, you turn on some kind of device, whether it's television or that brings you the news and the commentaries, continuous stream. And then of course, that is already, that is the collective world that then enters your living room or wherever you are. And then they get mixed up.

They can obliterate, the collective can obliterate your personal life. And you think your

personal life is quite irrelevant now, because what really matters, the world needs to change. It's so dreadful.

Well, yes, the world needs to change and the world is changing because humanity is a work in progress. Humanity is slowly evolving, fits and starts and regressive periods. It takes a few steps forward and then a few steps, four steps forward, three steps back.

Then a few more forward. There's a gradual evolution of humanity and to focus only on what is going wrong within that process, that evolutionary process is also very misleading because that's what you see when you watch the media and so on. It focuses not on what's going right or what has gone right.

It focuses on what's going wrong. Then you give that more and more attention. By giving attention to something, you amplify it.

So whatever you give, now, I'm not saying to completely ignore the world, no, but to give it an excessive amount of attention and only continuously think about what's wrong with the world, then you forget what's right with the world and that then diminishes. So we have the external world coming into your living room, for example, through the media. And it can be, as I said, you can sometimes believe that your personal world, the immediate sphere of influence is irrelevant, but that's not the case.

So the starting point with changing the world is to become aware of how you operate in this world. The starting point is how do you relate to the humans in your life? How do you, what is your mind, what is your mind doing?

What is your predominant state of consciousness? What are your predominant emotions? What are the predominant thoughts that go through your mind?

It's vitally important to become aware of that. If you're not aware of what the predominant emotions are, that the predominant thoughts are, plus accompanying emotions that go through your mind, you are unaware. And the emotions that, the thoughts and emotions that arise continuously within you are a form of conditioning.

And so they take possession of you. So it's vitally important as the starting point for changing the world is to become aware of your world. How do you operate in this world?

How are your relationships? Is there a lot of antagonism? Is there grievances and a lot of conflict?

Are there many people that you hate? Are there more people that you like or love? Is there love, compassion, or not so much?

How do you relate to people? How do you relate to strangers that you meet in a shop, in a store? How do you relate to somebody you meet in an elevator?

All these things are part of what you manifest as your world. So it's how do you, what is the predominant energy that you manifest in your life that affects other humans? This is a very important starting point that of course is expressed in the famous saying, be the change that you want to see in this world.

Nobody knows who actually said that. Some people say Gandhi said it. Well, he could have said it, but he probably said something similar.

I don't think he said that literally, but it doesn't matter. It's a very important pointer, a very important thought, be the change that you want to see in the world. So change starts with you.

And that means your consciousness, your state of consciousness. What is become aware of your mind? What is, how much complaining do you do?

Useless complaining, not a sort of complaining that can actually bring about change, but useless complaining about other people and groups of people and pronouncing half of humanity to be evil, whatever it is, be aware of your mind, vitally important. What kinds of thoughts are there? And once you, the ability to become aware of your mind, what kinds of thoughts your mind is producing, once that grows, that means there's more awareness in you.

There's more presence in you. Another dimension of consciousness has arisen. So be conscious.

How do you, what do you bring into this world on a daily basis? Do you bring more loving kindness, compassion, other humans, empathy, a friendly, a kind word, even to strangers to do the, do you acknowledge every other human being that you meet, even if you meet them only casually, do you acknowledge the being of that human beyond what role this human plays within that brief interaction? Somebody sells you something, you're asking somebody for information, whatever it may be.

So are you, do you acknowledge the beings of the other, if only for a few seconds, giving it attention, see there is beyond the personality, there's something deeper. Do you briefly, do you, can you sense the being, ultimately it means the sacredness of every human, no matter what their personality displays. Next question is, observe, are you at the mercy of how other people behave around you?

Do you react or are you at the mercy also of situations or circumstances? Now, what do I mean when I say at the mercy of, it means that somebody is angry at you, somebody is, the world is full of people who are very angry and frustrated. They may perhaps, they are justified in being angry because life is difficult.

So one can always justify anger and frustration and grievances, of course. Every, on a conventional level, often these things are justified, but what now, what do you, you meet

somebody who's angry, says something angry at you, driving, for example. Somebody shouts at you, what, how do you, are you aware enough not to be drawn into the same energy that the other person manifests?

Are you able to simply stay clear and present? Not easy. So how do you, but you can only change the world is by not reacting in the same way in which the world impinges upon you or treats you through humans.

So you have to be more aware than that. And so that's your, the world changes when your state of consciousness is no longer determined by other people's state of consciousness that you may meet or, you know, that's, that really is a big change already. If your state of, your mental emotional state is no longer determined by somebody else's mental emotional state, that's a huge awakening.

And there, because as long as your emotional state, mental emotional state is determined by other, somebody else's mental emotional state, that in Eastern terms, it means it's a perpetuation of karma. So there's no freedom in that. So you can, if somebody is nice to you, you're nice to him or her, okay.

But if somebody is not nice to you, what happens? Jesus was talking about something similar. It's easy to be nice to someone.

Jesus said, this is a big paraphrase because I don't remember literal passages from the Bible. He said, it's easy to be nice to others who are nice to you, but what about those that are not nice to you? That's what really matters.

It doesn't mean, of course, that you become a doormat or you don't have nothing to do with that. In fact, there's a great inner power and strength that arises when you're no longer continuously reactive. That is really weakness.

So if you become angry, when somebody is angry at you, the ego regards this as power. You have compensated for feeling of having been diminished by somebody's attack, verbal attack or criticism. The ego feels diminished.

To me, sometimes it happens when I drive because I'm relatively slow most of the time. And sometimes people shout at me and say, you idiot. Okay, that's, and then I look at them.

Now they're expecting me to shout back, but I don't do that anymore. It's happened too often. So it's too unpleasant.

I don't need it. I don't feel diminished by somebody saying, you idiot. It's just that his or her state of consciousness manifesting through words at the moment.

That's a fine. And then I just look at them and sometimes they become even more

disconcerted because there's a lack of reaction. Or they might think I'm completely deaf.

Maybe I'm deaf. I can't hear what they're saying. Just a little example.

But it's amazing, for example, how traffic, it's a simple thing, can make people unconscious. So the moment they get behind the wheel, they become reactive and unconscious and take everything personally. So it can be funny.

It's good sometimes if you can laugh at the ego, but if you want to change the world, you have to start with yourself. What is it that you emanate? It's not only what you emanate through words and actions, it's even what you emanate energetically.

Every human being, if you're a little bit sensitive, then you can sense that every human being has a certain energy emanation. That's part of manifesting the world that you experience because you see it through the lens or the veil of all the conditioning within you, the mental, emotional, and even energetic conditioning within you. So you meet people who are, you can sense that they are in a state of unhappiness.

It's a generic term that could mean many things. They are in a state of ultimately suffering because even a person who is angry is really suffering. They don't know they're suffering, but it's an unpleasant state and it affects the body.

That kind of stress that anger represents affects the harmonious function of the body, the immune system, the heart, blood circulation, everything. So it's not only ultimately not pleasant, it's harmful. First, it's harmful to your body.

It's harmful to other human beings unless they are immune. And so if they are immune to a negative emanation from another human being, now you can't do that through a vaccine. That's the kind of immunity that can alter.

That immunity is awareness, presence. So you're not at the mercy of other humans. You are free.

You may not succeed every time because humans can be very difficult. Not you, just other humans. So humans can be really difficult.

And you might have noticed when you are interacting with humans and you have discussions, another interesting fact you might notice that you are always right and the others are always wrong. It's a very strange fact. And if that's the case in your life, you have to wonder for a moment, isn't that strange?

I'm always right. Wow, I must be Superman or Superwoman. Or you're very unconscious.

It's one or the other. So self-knowledge is the most difficult knowledge. Jesus was already talking about that.

He said, it's easy to see the splinter that is in somebody else's eye and says, look at the splinter in your eye. Let me remove it for you. But you can't see the beam that is in your own eye.

That's a huge thing in you, but you see what's wrong with the other. That's easy. And wrong means unconscious, but to see your own patterns, that's a challenge.

But if you don't, you cannot manifest because that is a starting point for manifesting a better world. And then it spreads out from there. So the essence of what I'm saying here is become conscious of the fact that often you are at the mercy of other people or situations and your state of mind or your emotional state is completely controlled and reactive.

So I mentioned human beings that you react to. When you know, it's also situations. You find yourself in a situation that is suddenly regarded as undesirable.

And that is nowadays very common thing because many people for months have been trapped at home and can't interact with people anymore except through the technology. So many, many limitations have arisen in people's lives of collective kind. Millions of people experiencing the same limitations.

Of course, some are affected much more than others. But yes, to also not just reacting to humans, but reacting to situations that regard it as illimiting, frustrating, and so on. Can you rise above situations also and become free of that reactivity that, for example, the continuous complaining in your mind about what's wrong with the world.

Some people continuously claim what's wrong with the world. Others complain more of what's wrong with their life. And that's a very seductive thing because the ego likes that.

It inflates the ego. If you complain about other people, you experience an ego inflation. Why?

Because the ego feels itself to be superior when it can complain about others. It's implied. You are a judge of the other and you pronounce the other as delinquent, insufficient, not good enough or bad, wanting in the old sense of the word.

Very seductive to experience ego inflation. And all that, as you awaken spiritually, become more free of this reactivity. Then what the words you speak, the actions you take in your immediate surroundings make the world a better place.

And you break the karmic chain, which is action, reaction, action, reaction. Some people who come into this world, into a very dysfunctional family environment, and there are millions of people who are born into a very dysfunctional family environment. And it's a huge, huge challenge.

Because if you're not given enough love or attention, you're not encouraged as a child. If that is missing in your early years, it is a huge, a huge burden or dysfunction that you carry in many cases for the rest of your life. And in many cases, you inflict the same thing on your children that your parents have inflicted on you.

There has not been enough consciousness to break the pattern. So these things are, those patterns that we inherit, it's only through waking up, to becoming aware that these patterns can be transcended. That is our task here.

And that's how you make the world a better place. You have to, the dysfunctional patterns in your own life, you have to look at them. And I know many people who've had very dysfunctional upbringing and then have suffered enormously because they were forced to, because of their unconsciousness, not enough awareness, they were forced to reenact the same patterns that they experienced.

And that you bring more suffering into this world. Are you bringing more suffering into this world or are you bringing healing into this world? Healing is not weakness, healing is power.

So you have to seriously ask yourself, next question in your world, what do you do with the internet when you social media? What is the quality of the nature of your interactions with other humans that you, most cases have never met? So you don't need, you don't know them as humans.

They are just abstract symbols on the screen. They have expressed an opinion. And what, how do you, they've expressed an opinion that seems to conflict with your opinion.

And suddenly this unconscious reactivity, this human whom you don't know, have never met, you only know him or her through certain statements on Twitter. And suddenly this, you treat this other human being as some kind of demon. It's, and it gets, it's happened millions of times.

Is that creating a better world? And the Twitter world is showing increasing signs of insanity. So it's an externalization of the human mind.

You see it, oh, there it is. There's, it's good, it's wonderful. You can see it before it was all in here.

Now you can actually see it on your screen. There's the craziness of the human mind. Well, that's helpful.

It's good to be able to see it. It's an externalization of the collective mind. Before we invented this technology, all humans could do is what they can shout at somebody in the street, but you can only reach one or two or three people.

Or you could, well, maybe you could stand on a soapbox in Hyde Park Corner in London and give a speech. But even then you only had a few people listening to you. But now even the most unconscious person will have an audience.

He or she will attract similarly unconscious people on Twitter and other platforms. And so, as you know, one wrong tweet can destroy your entire career.

[Speaker 7] (1:08:17 - 1:08:18)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (1:08:22 - 1:43:46)

So this is the certain, every age, in every age, time period, human unconsciousness manifests in somewhat different ways. And it's easier when you look back on a past age, we can see, oh, weren't they crazy to do something like that? How could humans do something like that?

It's more difficult to become aware of the craziness in your own time period because you're in the middle of it. Retrospectively, it's easier to see the craziness. So you make sure to create a better world that do not participate in the craziness of this world.

To be very, don't be at the mercy of others as far as your state of consciousness is concerned. And you can only do that by being present more and more, always connecting with that alertness, a very key word. Be alert so that you know what's going on in your mind and in your emotion.

Don't repress anything, just know. And that will gradually dissolve dysfunctional patterns. And you still feel drawn back in, that's fine.

So this is the beginning of changing the world on your personal sphere. And then if you can then interact through the media, various internet platforms, you can put out something that is more beneficial. Then you already begin to affect a larger sphere.

You have a lot, everybody has a sphere of influence through these platforms here. And what is it? What do you put out through your sphere of influence?

So there's a great opportunity for something that in many, many cases is quite insane, but it is also a great opportunity for actually help to elevate human consciousness. So that is your great opportunity, no matter how you do it. And then we come to the larger sphere, political, social institutions and so on.

How do you change that? How do you diminish the suffering of so many humans on the planet? Well, you continue to no longer contribute to the suffering of others.

So to some extent, you have to allow humans to evolve. Humanity is evolving. The

consciousness of humanity is evolving.

And it's vitally important to bring healing and compassion and so on to all your interactions, whether at home or online or wherever you go. And if you want to participate in political discourse, maybe you want to run for office somewhere, who knows? You need to be really conscious if you decide to do that.

And you may feel called upon to do that. And then it becomes, you've already, in your own past in life, you're already practicing not being reactive, not being at the mercy of other people's state of consciousness. And then you can bring that into the, that wider, greater sphere of political structures and so on, if that's what you choose to do.

But you also need to realize that humanity is, as I said before, is a work in progress. So humans are slowly evolving towards more consciousness. The entire universe is engaged in an awakening process.

And you are part of the awakening process of the universe. You can see it on the planet, how gradually from very simple life forms, gradually grew, became more complex. Then they were destroyed.

There were many, five was five extinctions already. Then they were destroyed. Then new life forms arose from, where did they arise from?

From an underlying field of vast intelligence that then manifests through physical forms, gradually manifests more fully, gradually manifests in more complex life forms that have more, greater share of consciousness, but it's always the one consciousness moving through. So have compassion with humans. A lot of the suffering that humans experience is created by other humans.

Just read history, history book, and you see how dreadful suffering humans have inflicted on other humans throughout history, 20th century alone. We've now become very much the last few, present time, very much conscious of racial suffering that humans have suffered from, tremendous suffering that humans inflicted on other humans. And it's great that we've become aware of it now instead of before just the, it was just, nobody could talk about it.

It was so not, throughout history, slavery was an accepted fact that nobody seemed to question it. Consciousness had not yet developed enough, but now consciousness is developing and we become aware of it, and it's a wonderful thing. As long as the, what arises doesn't, isn't, it's there.

There's sometimes a danger that even realizations can be hijacked by the ego, so to speak. And when you know that something has been hijacked by the ego is when you demonize others for example, because the ego loves to demonize others. So be very careful with, it's very, so that you don't, you get dragged into the gravitational pull of the

ego, drags you back into unconsciousness.

We're living at a time that's very challenging, but also a time of opportunity. Nobody can predict right now whether we're going to experience a regression in state of consciousness. Every regression in the evolution of consciousness is actually part of the evolution of consciousness.

Or if we can go from here straight to a more conscious society, more conscious world. But humans have to go through this evolutionary process and not every human is at the same stage of evolutionary development. You have to be compassionate with people who are not yet evolving.

And that could be your parents. If you become compassionate with, when you go to your, visit your parents and they're trapped in the same patterns that they were already 20 years ago. And the same, they criticize you in the same way they always do.

And you realize they are trapped in their patterns and you have compassion and you allow humans to go through their patterns. And if in some cases you even have to allow humans who insist to go through their own self-created suffering, you do as much as you can to help to bring more awareness into this world, to bring love ultimately, not conventional love, but the deeper, the love that recognizes every other human as inseparable from who you are, to recognize the other as ultimately not separate from you as that is true love. Love, that is that nothing else will redeem the world and create a better world. We need humans to be able to access the dimension from which love can flow.

And love means what the Dalai Lama calls kindness. It's the same thing. What he really is talking about is love.

So Dalai Lama said, he didn't say strangely, my religion is Buddhism. The Dalai Lama said, my religion is kindness. So he's really pointing to the essence of what we transform.

And that kindness manifests as compassion and love, empathy, and also manifests as wisdom. Wisdom is very important, it's not just intelligence, it's wisdom, it's something deeper that sees the totality of things that doesn't attack one problem and then create three more problems. The solution to one problem creates three big, even bigger problems that apply only the intellectual analysis or conventional intelligence.

Wisdom sees the totality and then takes action on the basis of that. Let's see another question. Is there some type of discipline that is needed to be successful with conscious manifestation?

If so, can you describe what the discipline is that is needed? Well, basically, I have already described the discipline that's needed in your daily life. To be aware of yourself and of your own state of consciousness.

Also, an important factor, perhaps, that is implied in what we've been saying, but it's worth pointing it out explicitly, is the importance of what is conventionally called gratitude. But there could be other words. Gratitude is a very powerful transformational tool and also one of the most powerful tools for manifesting better things in your life.

Now, what does that mean? The gratitude is to acknowledge the good in your life now. And it's surprising how many people don't do that, who can only see the bad in their lives or only complain, but it's extremely powerful to acknowledge the good that's in your life now.

Now, let's talk about this for a moment. This does not mean that you have a conceptual idea of what your life is and then you compare it to somebody else's life. And you say, oh, really, I should be happy because I have it so much better than look at these people.

Their life is worse than mine, so I really should be grateful for my life. That's not it. That's not real gratitude.

You're moving within the conceptual realm and your feeling of wellbeing is dependent on somebody else who has less than you or is suffering more than you. So gratitude is not if you compare yourself because that's a misconception, very common misconception of gratitude is you compare yourself to somebody else or even a whole group of people. You say, look at people in the third world.

I really should be grateful. We are so much better off, even though I may be poor, but I'm still better off than, so let's be grateful. No, that's not real gratitude.

You're depending on others to be worse off than you, but you can feel gratitude. It's crazy. It feeds the ego.

No, gratitude is to acknowledge the good that's in your life now, now, this moment. Okay, so it's not the good in your life situation. I'm fine because I have achieved this or that or whatever.

No, at this moment. And that's simple things. It really comes down to simple things.

What can I be grateful for at this moment? Wow, there's so much I can be grateful for. Now, what is it?

To be grateful is to acknowledge something, to give it attention and to appreciate it. I have this, you can't see it, but I have a nice round table here. And it's lovely.

I touch it. It's made of wood. And it's lovely.

It's not spectacular. It doesn't need to be spectacular, but it has a presence and a beingness. There's light coming through the window there and from behind me.

I often sit here. I'm lucky to have these trees here. And I often sit here.

There's a little screen to, otherwise there's too much glare. But I often sit here. I look at the trees for 10, 15 minutes.

And there's a continuous feeling of goodness because, and we could call that gratitude, but I don't say in my mind, I'm so grateful for these trees. I simply appreciate the wonder and aliveness, the beingness of these trees. So I acknowledge the good in this moment by appreciating the wonder, the miracle of these trees.

It's just, you can look at the sky here today, happens to be completely overcast, but very, and that's fine too, because there's light filtering through. There's more light in the way today than when the sky is blue because the light is dispersed by the cloud. It's everywhere.

It comes from the sun. It filters through the clouds. Now you appreciate that.

You look at a potted plant. You become, you're grateful for that. You're grateful for all the little things.

You hear a bird. You drink a glass of water, acknowledging all your breathing. So that's gratitude.

The gratitude is the appreciation of life that's around you. So you can say the gratitude for being alive, for to feel that you're alive in your entire body, the inner body, the invisible presence that inhabits the body, to feel that. So all my, all the little things, gratitude is best applied to all the small things that continuously surround you in life.

And then you see the goodness of it all, or you can just, let's say you have little or no money. So, and you're looking for abundance. So how do you bring abundance into your life?

You have to discover, to acknowledge the abundance that is already everywhere around you. You walk past this, you go, you're walking in the street and there's a flower store. There's flowers on display and potted plants outside.

If you live in a city, an abundance of life, the flowers are just amazing. There's abundance and you can look everywhere and see abundant life. Jesus used that term.

He said, I want you to have abundant life. In other translations, he says the same term translated in a different way. I want you to have the fullness of life.

Jesus promises the fullness of life or abundant life. Now, true abundance, which many people are looking for and they think abundance is to do with having many things. It could be that quite a few things come to you when you access the source of all abundance, which of course is within you.

It's the feeling of the fullness of life. Now, once you get this feeling in the present moment, then this is the, perhaps the very core of gratitude is to feel the aliveness of life within yourself. So when Jesus talks about the fullness of life or abundant life, he's not talking about, he's not, it is not a prophecy of the arising of shopping malls 2000 years later.

He wasn't talking about the abundance that you find when you walk through a shopping mall and you say, oh, look, oh, I must have that. Oh, I must, all these things, I must have that, I must have that, that comes from a place of lack, the egoic place of lack. I must fill up the sense of lack with this and that and that, this kind of addictive thing around.

If you might've noticed when you go to the shopping mall and you feel very tired, well, I do. I walk around for 10 minutes and, ah, that's enough. So this, Jesus wasn't talking about lots of things.

He's talking about the core of life, the fullness that you, that is inseparable from what, when we started today, we started with getting in touch with the consciousness within you to realize that you are conscious, that the essence of who you are is the awareness, not your history. The essence of who you are is the awareness. And the awareness of that awareness is the realization of that which is prior to all forms, that can become forms, but that the, that which is prior to all manifestations is the unmanifested life, the one, the consciousness, the one life that underlies the entire universe.

And because you are only a microscopic version of the entire universe, you can discover virtually all the secrets of the universe by going within, because you are inseparable from the universe. You discover the most incredible, deepest realizations, not factual things, you may not know how many, how many planets have life, intelligent life in our galaxy, nobody knows, not those things, but the deeper laws and movements that underlie the manifestation of the universe, you can find that within yourself by going within. So the abundance is the aliveness that is within you, and it's the awareness of that aliveness, but the awareness of that aliveness and the aliveness are a single thing, it's duality arises when we talk about it.

Then they can say, oh, I'm aware of consciousness, but you're not, you can't be aware of consciousness because the awareness is a consciousness, the consciousness is the awareness. So consciousness is becoming self-aware. And what is that consciousness?

It's not yours, it's the consciousness of the universe manifesting through this little form. So you are part of the awakening process of the universe. So all manifestation that you do in your life must be aligned with the awakening universe and the universe is moving towards greater consciousness.

But where does it come from? It comes from an unmanifested source of all life that is traditionally has been called God. The source of all life emanates into this universe, but it

has no location in space or time, it is beyond that.

But to realize that the essence of who you are is inseparable from that, that is when the ripple on the surface of the ocean suddenly realizes that it is the ocean. Yes, it's also a ripple, not for long, for a little while, it's also the ripple, but in essence, the ripple is the ocean. And when the ripple becomes aware of its true nature, then that means the ocean has become aware of its true nature and the totality of life has become aware, has woken up.

That is our, so everything that we do in our, what we want to manifest, let's make sure that it is part of the evolving consciousness. So even the simplest things, let's say you want to manifest a, let's, you're a hairdresser and now you want to manifest, now that you can, salons are open again. Okay, I'm going to have a hairdressing salon.

Okay, I'm going to focus on that. And I can feel that I already have it because I can feel the fullness of life already. And it does bring in the image of this hairdressing salon and it bring it into this sense of fullness, which means you're already feeling that it's there.

And when it comes on, it's secondary now. That's the, you become a more, very powerful manifester if you do not depend on some future outcome, you're already experiencing the fullness of life. But you also know that this hairdressing salon is a place where people will, when they go there, they not only get a good haircut or hairdo, they also get your presence.

They also get your attention. They also get the energy that you emanate there. And they will feel better while you're cutting their hair.

I'm just giving one example. I could give thousands of examples. They feel, in that moment, you listen to them.

You acknowledge that they're not just a client. You acknowledge their beingness. I always say the human being has a two dimension.

The human is the conditioned with a history. The being is the unconditioned. So that's the consciousness that you are.

That is the transcendent dimension. If you don't know that, your life is the most frustrating experience. You might've noticed that without that realization of the deeper dimension of who you are, all your experience is one damn thing after another.

It's always, oh my God, not another thing. So the hairdresser, now everybody who comes into that, yes, they're getting a good haircut. Let's presume you're a good hairdresser.

That's important too on the human level. But there's something else that you provide. And that is the love one can say to acknowledge the beingness of every human.

And perhaps some hairdressers after a few years become very good counselors because they've listened to so many stories. And suddenly they can actually give good advice. It doesn't matter what the form is that your manifestation take, but make sure that it is aligned in some way with the evolving consciousness.

So you bring something good into this world. You make a contribution. You bring more goodness into this world in one way or another.

Even if you, whatever it is, you make, if you're very good at something, let's say you're good at sports or something, and then people like to watch you. Why do people, I sometimes ask, why do people watch a tennis match? It's always the same thing.

They just knock, there's a ball, and then it goes on for hours. But it can be very, very, why are they so excited by this? Well, on the one hand, yes, they have a favorite.

They either favor one or the other. And that is an egoic thing. But I believe they also find it fascinating because the people who are, if they are masters in tennis playing, they are in a state of absolute presence while they play.

And somehow it's lovely to watch people who are in that field or the zone of mastery. And because something almost transmits itself, it doesn't mean that these tennis players are necessarily more conscious than others in the rest of their lives. We don't know.

But while they're engaged in the activities that they have mastered absolutely, you can somehow absorb a little bit of that presence. It's great to watch. So I occasionally watch, but not very often, tennis, and I can sense why people, there's the two reasons why people watch it.

One, they want their favorite to win, but there's a deeper reason. That is, there's something almost transmits itself. This presence can be contagious almost.

And again, here we come to an important point. When you are present, that also affects many, many others that you come into contact with. It's contagious in a positive sense.

It transmits, there's a transmission of presence, and there can even be a transmissions of presence in some miraculous way through the screen right now. How is that possible? These are just, well, it's possible because the screen is in your consciousness.

Who knows where there's actually a screen out there, but the screen is something that arises in your consciousness. So even there, it can work. So whatever it is you want to manifest in this life, go ahead, but realize the foundation for manifestation is, I call it the vertical dimension, that's the cross.

Life has the two dimensions, the vertical, which is the present moment, which is the depths of who you are in the essence of a being that is, and who you are in the essence

of your being is already complete. You don't need to become a better person in the essence of your being. You just need to manifest into this horizontal world more of the essence of your being.

So on the deepest level, this you cannot improve upon anything or who you are, but on the horizontal, they have the cross, the two dimensions. On the horizontal, there's a lot you can do, but it is not ultimately beneficial in the absence of the vertical. But if the vertical is there, then that more and more from there, which is consciousness, can flow into the horizontal dimension.

And that's how you create a better world. That is a miracle, and that is the secret. And that is your task in this world.

What else could be? That's the purpose of your life. I mean, that doesn't matter what form it takes.

It could be the simplest things. May you acknowledge the good that's already there. And if you are not, if you feel there's much more that you could do on the horizontal, yes, there probably is.

But in the meantime, let's say you deliver, we had a meal delivered yesterday to DoorDash. So DoorDash, there was a brief interaction. I opened the door and some, before they just left it at the door, it's the virus thing.

But I opened the door and for five seconds, I interacted with the dasher, they call them. We will work for DoorDash. They bring food from restaurants in case you don't know.

We interacted for, there was a moment of interaction and I could sense a connectedness. He loved interacting with me for these few seconds. And I loved it.

He wasn't a DoorDasher. He was, there was a being behind it and I acknowledged his being. And through that, he found me, he felt very good just looking at me, nothing to do with me as a person at all.

And it was a lovely, lovely encounter for a few seconds. So, and if you're a DoorDasher for a while, why not practice that? Now, most, many people that you deliver food to will not be, probably not acknowledge your being, but that doesn't mean you cannot acknowledge their being.

So for as long as you do that, even there you can bring more consciousness into this world, no matter where you are and what you're at, instead of complaining that you really should be doing something more interesting. Yes, perhaps you will be doing something more interesting, but a starting point is acknowledge the good that's here now, then you're much more likely to evolve. The situation is much more likely to evolve from there.

But if you are in a continuous state of resistance to what is now, you're much more likely to be stuck for a long time, if not forever. As you know, the famous saying goes, what you resist persists, which is of course very true. So alignment with universal purpose.

Universal purpose is consciousness, bring more of that. And this consciousness manifests as an emanation of kindness, love, compassion, a sense of deep connectedness. And it also manifests as wisdom when you use your mind so that it's not just the conditioned mind that's operating, there's actually an awareness behind it.

And the conditioned mind is then inspired by the deeper consciousness that's behind it, of which it is an inseparable part. It's inspired then by the deeper... And then the mind is a lovely tool too.

You can create through the mind, but you can only create if you have access to real creativity, you need access to the deeper dimension that is transcendent to the mind, not separate from it. The analogy I used again is the thinking mind could be like the ripple on the surface. And then there's the ocean of which the ripple is only a temporary expression.

It's so that life is... Once you realize that, then any situation is fine for the time being, any situation that you're in. And the more you are aligned with the present moment, the more likely it is that the situation will evolve and change to reflect your growing consciousness.

That's a miracle of being alive. And that's why you're here.

[Speaker 2] (1:44:00 - 1:44:05)

So the picture is not stuck.

[Speaker 1] (1:44:05 - 1:47:08)

I just stopped talking. I just wanted to make sure you know. I have probably said enough.

The rest is up to you. Many of these things I said you already knew. And if you didn't know them in your conscious mind, there was a kind of recognition.

It suddenly made, you know, that makes sense. Somehow you knew that already. So the truth is always recognized.

It's not something new that you learn. Perhaps you hadn't realized it. So truth is realized, recognized.

And then there may be others who are not yet ready for it. That's fine. There may be some people who said, or somebody said to a friend, perhaps, oh, you must listen to this guy Eckhart.

He might have something important to say. And then the friend looks, what the hell is he talking about? So it's fine.

Not everybody's yet ready for the next step in evolution. Usually it means they need to suffer a little bit more, mostly self-created, unconsciously. That's also part of the evolutionary process of the universe.

So the rest is up to you. It is a wonderful adventure. You don't need to seek for satisfaction on the personal level.

This comes as a by-product quite often. The satisfaction on the personal level comes on the horizontal level, comes as the icing on the cake or the by-product of something that something deeper than that, something that happens through you, that you can't claim I did that. It happens through you.

And then the person, the personal sense of self, they might feel, oh, it's nice to have. But if it claims possessions as I did that, you fall back into illusion as a separate self. You cannot do anything as a separate self.

As Jesus said, I of my own self can do nothing. It is the father that does it through me. What's the father?

The consciousness that emanates from the source of all life that is called God. Thank you. I will see you again, perhaps.

Soon, but always in the present moment.

[Speaker 4] (1:47:34 - 1:51:03)

I've known all the things that you've talked about in many of your books and, well, there's two books, but the books I've read. I've experienced this presence through music. So, and it's a very profound sense of grace that I feel when I know I'm being played.

In a sense, I'm an instrument. And in a way, what we call instruments are voices. So I've been very taken with this description and imagery I've had from what you've discussed about being near the void, because that's what it feels like.

It's something comes up. I know there's something in there. We've been talking about dogs a lot.

It's like I smell it inside. It's like, and it can become obsessive because it's such a beautiful presence. But I mean, I think of Stravinsky.

He said, the Rite of Spring. He said, I did not write the Rite of Spring. I transcribed it.

Some artists get these things and the clarity is there. What I experience is mostly an

inference or something that needs to be embodied and brought forth. And that which is actually, my experience is more of knowing what it isn't.

I just play it. As it moves through me, I can sense that grace, especially when I know, when I don't feel my hands. I don't feel anything.

I just feel this presence, this music that's just as surprising to me as anyone else. And I'm really fortunate because I never took lessons and never got trained or anything. So my mind doesn't really get that involved.

Don't ask me to play Happy Birthday, though. I don't know how to do that. So I guess my question was about this connection to the creative and, in a sense, the artifacts that come.

I use the word inform. And when I was thinking, does art and music inform the ego of presence? That was really what it was.

And so how does one be part of that manifestation but not get too, let's see, involved? To keep the distance so one doesn't become too obsessed with that process. So the balance of the two, that's what I'm looking for.

[Speaker 1] (1:51:03 - 2:06:24)

Thank you. Well, of course, on the one hand, you have the creative process of music or art. And then you have the finished product.

And then you have the piece of music is being played and somebody listens to it. Or the work of art is there and somebody contemplates it. When you ask, can art or music inform the ego of presence?

Well, first of all, the ego doesn't know anything about presence, so it can't do that. And there needs to be some opening in the ego in order to be receptive to the power that is latent in music or art that was created from that deep place. There's a lot of music and art that's not necessarily created from that deep place, but the ego is trying to be clever.

And so it tries to come up with something clever and then that's fine. But let's talk about some piece of music or work of art that has come out of connectedness with the stillness or the presence. So some of that then, to some extent, the work of art or the piece of music still carries that energy field.

So it can put the listener in touch or the person who contemplates the work of art can put that person in touch with the deeper dimension within, as long as there's even a little bit of opening is required. If there's only the density of the ego, then the transformational possibilities of art or music are not realized. So a little bit of opening is required in the viewer or the listener, and then it can be quite a wonderful thing to listen

to music or to contemplate a work of art and be transported, if only for a moment, into that alert stillness out of which it originally came.

That's a beautiful thing. Another aspect of your question is, I believe, losing oneself, perhaps going too deep, almost losing yourself in the ground out of which creativity comes in the creative process. There's always a balance that is needed so that you don't lose yourself in being.

It could happen to an artist. It can happen to some people who awaken spiritually and they suddenly plunge so deeply into being that they lose all interest in doing. So that happened to some spiritual masters who spent several years in being without doing anything, for example, Ramana Maharshi in India, who had to be fed for several years because he wouldn't even pick up food.

He was so deeply immersed in being, he just sat there and people recognized something extraordinary about him, which they wouldn't have done in the West. In the West, he would have been a medical problem. They recognized something extraordinary and they put food in his mouth.

But there was a loss of balance, certainly, between in this, he could no longer function in this world. This, of course, to such an extreme, this does not happen to you. You're still here.

And then gradually, after a few years, he gradually was beginning to function again in this world and then gradually was able to regain a balance between dealing with things out here and connectedness with being. To a slightly, in a slightly minor way, it happened to me when I lost interest completely in doing and drifted around for two years. It wasn't a problem to me.

It was only a problem to people who were watching me or who knew me. So there was a loss of balance for a while, but then gradually the balance reestablished itself. I didn't have a teacher as such, so it had to be a natural process.

So not to go so deep that you, as long as there's the, there's the, you have to go within and then take, give form to that which was resting in the formless, be used by it so that through you, it can come into this world of form. Don't stay down there and lose yourself in it. Not necessary.

So bringing, do you, what do you compose music? Yes, yes. Well, that's a wonderful way of getting in touch with the stillness within any creative process.

Anybody who is, I don't, unfortunately. The world has not given me that gift of being able to either play music or have some kind of art to bring into this world for a reason, because the world also needs direct spiritual teaching and so, I love some listening to certain kinds of music. For the viewer, it's important not to become dependent, however,

on anything external to enter the state of presence.

So whereas music can be a help, there too needs to be a balance. If the only place you can become still is when you listen to certain kinds of music, then that's not quite it because you're becoming dependent on something external to get in touch with that. So use it as a help, and this is the same as a spiritual teacher or spiritual teaching.

It can be a great help to listen to a tape or to see a video or whatever, a great help. But if you become totally dependent on that or on a group, also a group can be a great help to sit with a group of people in an energy field of presence can be a great help, but not becoming dependent on the group either, not becoming dependent on one teacher, any external teacher. And every good teacher will tell you when the time comes, enough is enough.

The true teacher is within you. And what you see in me, that which you find so precious in me must be in you, otherwise you wouldn't see it. So the good teacher will always direct you back into yourself, will not foster any kind of dependency.

So knowing what is a help, using it, any of the things that can be helpful, but not becoming dependent, eventually it is necessary for you to go there without any help, still being able to appreciate even teachers and teachings. I love listening to other spiritual teachers. If they come from a deep place, I have great joy when I listen, wow, this is so wonderful.

Or reading a spiritual book that comes from the deepest place, there's still great joy in that. I don't, it's nothing to do with need, it's enjoying a slightly different expression of the same deep truth. Just wonderful.

And so, and then also you can see it wherever it is, no matter in what form it's hiding, you can see the truth shining through wherever it is hiding. It might be hiding in some ancient religion, hiding very deeply. And there you see it shining through some, there may be a lot of mythology around it, there may be a lot of cultural beliefs around it, and yet deep down there you can still see, oh, this is about, this is the truth shining through all the mythology around it and so on.

So once it's in there, you see it everywhere, but primarily it is who you are. So I wish you well and be thankful that you have this wonderful gift. So how to reconcile accepting what arises in the present moment, and at the same time, perhaps holding in your mind an image of what you want to manifest in your life or using affirmations.

Now that's the, perhaps that's the most important part of manifesting, living in this world, is to bring the two together, accepting whatever arises in the present moment without losing the ability to, in your day-to-day life, in your personal and professional life, without losing the ability to have goals, for example, and move towards goals or to have

certain aims. When you practice manifestation techniques, it might, you might do it as set aside a few minutes every day, maybe twice a day, and maybe in the morning and in the evening. When you focus on something that you want to manifest, the rest of the time you live your life without continuously thinking about something that is other than what arises in the present moment.

So it's important, the very foundation for successful living, but also the very foundation for manifesting things is to be deeply accepting of whatever the present moment brings to face it in that state of acceptance. If you're not in a state of acceptance, it's a state of acceptance that takes you deeper into the vertical dimension, which is beyond ego. The state of non-acceptance keeps you trapped in very limited egoic consciousness.

So when you are in opposition to the present moment, in whatever form it arises, and that's very easy to fall back into that, even for spiritual practitioners, so to speak, it's fall back into this deep seated habit of being in opposition to what arises in the present moment. So it's vital to recognize that something that is the case now cannot be otherwise in this moment. This is beyond any doubt.

It is because that's how it is. You cannot wish it away or say it shouldn't be. It is whatever is arising now is.

It's dysfunctional to argue with it or to create some kind of mental, emotional resistance to it. It does not mean that change cannot take place. It does not mean that you cannot take action in order to manifest something that you would prefer.

But the important thing is at this moment, there's no division, no, there's no antagonism between you and what you experience as your reality. That's very important, not to have an antagonistic relationship with whatever arises in the present moment.

[Speaker 6] (2:06:28 - 2:06:32)

Millions of humans still, that's all they ever know.

[Speaker 1] (2:06:35 - 2:42:03)

All they ever identify with is the personality conditioned by the past, problematic, problem-making. You perceive the world and judge it through the veil of your mental conditioning. You don't see anything clearly.

Some people hate themselves. I don't like my body, I don't like who I am, I don't like this, I don't, what an awful way to live, I hate myself. It's much better to love yourself.

So in new age teachings, you learn to love yourself. Let go of this dysfunctional relationship with yourself. And then this is a good thing.

It's much better to love yourself than to hate yourself. But you have to achieve that

transition, not easy if the hating yourself has been deeply ingrained. You may have to put little stickers on your bathroom mirror.

I love myself. Oh yes, and everywhere. You are lovable.

Oh, thank you, thank you, yes. And again, this is fine. It's a transitional stage.

It's not the final stage. Sometimes in new age things, it's a final stage. It's a lovely transitional stage, but really it's the stage of awakening is that you begin to let go of having a relationship with yourself so that you can just be yourself.

And you have to be in the present moment in order to be yourself. And that is, you can sometimes learn by looking at an animal. The animal is at a pre-egoic stage.

What we are moving towards or into is a post-egoic stage. Now, the animal, like your dog, is pre-egoic. The dog has consciousness, but not conceptual consciousness.

The dog does not operate through mental concepts. In other words, the dog does not have an opinion about you. Isn't that, that's why you love the dog so much.

And also, the dog does not have a relationship with himself or herself. Humans have, but I have not met a single dog that has a problem with self-esteem, for example. I have not met a single dog that has a problem with body image.

Even the ugliest dog is okay. Because the split hasn't happened yet, the split into me and myself. So the dog, this is why the dog is often joyful.

The slightest thing, sometimes you go, if you have a dog, you go away for 10 minutes and you come back home. The dog acts if you have been away for 10 years. He's so happy.

And the happy is contagious a little bit, the happiness of the wagging tail of the dog. Why is the dog so happy? Because the dog does not have a self.

The dog is him, her, itself. The dog is, and then the tail goes, life is good. If the dog could say something, it would say, life is good.

In the present moment, just give me my food and then it's even better. So the humans, they love to be with their animals because it gives them a little bit of, a little glimpse of self-transcendence because when they look into the eyes of the dog, they are not being judged. And that feels good.

And you can sense, by looking at the eyes, you can sense the being of the dog. Wow, now, the dog, what you really love in, just an example, dog, cat, what you really love in the dog is not the outer surface of the dog. Although it's lovely to the touch and all that, yes, but you know there is something that you cannot see that you relate to when you

look into the eyes of a dog.

That is the essence of the dog. What you love is actually the consciousness of the dog, which has no ego in it. It exists at a pre-egoic state.

You love the consciousness of the dog. And when you look in the eyes of it, you feel a little bit, you connect a little bit to that in yourself for a few seconds. When you're not, you don't need any defense mechanism or anything like that when you relate to a dog.

Although there are some humans with huge egos, I have observed a few, who relate to their pet through their ego, but that's another story. And that's a sad story. They have an ego relationship.

I knew a woman who would, in the evenings, she would put food out for her cat, would go out, the cat would be in the garden, and she had the window open. That was a neighbor of mine years ago. And she would put the food out.

And this woman had a very accomplished person, but it was a gigantic ego. She would, she put the food of her cat out. And then if the cat didn't come, well, because cats have many things to do out in the garden.

And it was dinner time for the cat, and she put the plate there, and she was sitting there waiting for the cat to come. And 15 minutes passed, and then she said, okay. Then she would close the window, said, if she doesn't want to see me, I don't want to see her.

Oh my God. She has an ego relationship with her cat. So a relationship with yourself, that eventually is transcended, so that you can simply be in the present moment, not, and let's go deeper now, so that in the present moment, which is a portal into the awakened state, in this present moment, let's see who or what are you in the present moment without reference to any thought, without reference to any thought about who you are.

That's an interesting pointer. In other words, what does it feel like to be yourself without remembering your past or thinking about the future, just in this moment? You don't need to remember your email address or anything.

It's not necessary now, or what you ate yesterday. Without reference to past and future, what does it, do you disappear, or what is left of you without the memory, the narrative that usually you describe as my life? Without that memory of that you need to revive continuously, without that, what does it feel like to be you?

And I cannot answer that. I can only give it to you as a pointer and slow down a little bit as I talk so that you can perhaps inquire, investigate internally what it feels like. What is the most essential thing about your identity?

Is, are you still there when you don't think about your life, like now? Are you still there?

And what is that?

I'm not going to answer it, and I don't expect a conceptual answer. So the, that's me. There was a spiritual teacher in India whose favorite meditation was asking his disciples to ask themselves, who am I?

You can also ask yourself, what am I? Who or what? What am I?

What am I? But don't answer it verbally, but feel or sense what it means to be alive or to be you. What am I?

There's a, there's a gap in the stream of thinking. Then what, what is there when there's a gap in the stream of thinking, like now? And in that gap, there's a, there's a stillness, yes?

There's also a sense of, there's something there, but it's hard to describe. There's a sense of presence, of beingness. And in that sense of presence, of beingness, you know that you are.

You know, you can say, I am. You know that without adding any qualifiers to it, without adding anything to the I am, it's a pure sense of being, which is I am. It's very peaceful.

You need an alertness to sustain it just for a little bit. Without the alertness, you will immediately fall back into the stream of thinking, but it's not, you don't use willpower to stop your thinking mind. That doesn't really work.

So you don't hold your breath in order to stop thinking. That does, it might work for a little while, but then you think even more. It's like a boiling kettle, hold the lid on a boiling kettle.

Just alertness. And so Jesus said, as I said at the beginning, and what I say to you, I say to all, stay awake. In some translations, it's translated as stay alert.

What I say to you, I say to all, stay alert. That alertness is consciousness without thought. It seems at first just to be an absence.

It seems at first like, okay, stillness, one could say it's the absence of noise, in a stillness, an absence. It might seem at first as a kind of nothingness. And yet, if you stay with it for a little bit, just a few more seconds, stay alert, then you can sense it's not just the absence of something, it's also the presence of something.

But not so much the presence of something, but the sense of presence itself. Not of something. And so that is dimension of consciousness, that is the fourth dimension of consciousness, awareness or presence.

And you encounter that in between two thoughts or, for example, if you find it hard to

stop thinking, don't use your willpower, use a little device, use a little bit of help, for example, become aware that you're breathing. You become aware of, you're aware of the inflowing and outflowing breath. And your attention moves with the breath into the body and out of the body.

And again, your attention is there. And again, your attention follows the breath into the body. Stop for a second and out of the body.

You might, it's helpful if you can breathe as deep as the abdomen, although the air doesn't actually reach it, but your attention reaches it. And now you may realize that when you become aware of your breath, which is a very ancient meditation method, when you become aware of your breath, you cannot be thinking at the same time. That's why the Buddha recommended this meditation, which is called Anapanasati, which is the awareness of your breath stops your mind, the thinking mind, automatically.

The moment you start thinking, you lose awareness of your breath. So the Buddha said, his main teaching, I would say, would be aware of your breathing. He didn't say, stop thinking, because that seems too difficult, but awareness of your breath is possible and automatically thinking subsides.

What remains is a sense of alert presence. That is the awakened consciousness. And that is inseparable from what I call the vertical dimension of life.

It is the presence in the now. There's no time in this sense of beingness, stillness, alertness. There is no time, and yet that is essentially who or what you are.

That gets usually mixed up with content, a bit like diluted. So this is the consciousness that is in its pure form. When you start thinking, it's still consciousness, but it takes on a form, a thought form.

When you perceive things, it's consciousness perceiving. The perception is a form in your mind. Consciousness has taken on a form, takes on many forms continuously.

And there is a bundle of thought forms in your mind that make up the main part of your sense of identity. And that is the, when you identify with that, and you don't know yourself more deeply in the vertical dimension, then that's the ego. But when you know yourself more deeply in the vertical dimension of the present moment, then all that is is that which makes up your personality.

Of course, it's still there. Your story, the narrative of you, unchanged, it's still there. The difference, however, is you no longer look to it for your ultimate sense of self.

You don't derive your true and ultimate identity from the narrative of your life that you tell yourself in your mind. Of course, it's still there, but you don't look to it for liberation or fulfillment or some future self. You don't even look to that for liberation or fulfillment

because all that is the horizontal dimension of life.

That is time, what time operates. And for millions of humans still, that's all they ever know. All they ever identify with is the personality conditioned by the past, problematic, problem-making, continuously, often very dysfunctional, coloring everything that you see and perceive.

It's like through this veil of conditioning, you perceive the world and judge it through the veil of your mental conditioning. You don't see anything clearly. So this is the awakening into that Turiya, the fourth state of consciousness, the awakened state that all the ancient teachings already pointed to as a possibility.

And it's here now, and it's more important now. It's not just something for very few humans to realize, but something that becomes available to more and more humans, especially now that we are being confronted collectively with various manifestations of adversity. And it's not the end yet, fortunately.

It's not the end yet. There's more to come. So, and that is, this gives you this dimension, the awakened dimension.

This is where the resilience you find for living in troubled times. This is where you are rooted in this ultimately deep and unshakable rooted consciousness of being, you are, you realize who or what you are beyond the personality. It's not, they're not ultimately two.

The analogy I often use is the ocean and the ripple on the surface of the ocean. You are a ripple on the surface of the ocean as a personality, surrounded by other ripples on this horizontal dimension. Some ripples you like, many others you don't like.

Some ripples are very unpleasant. A few others are great, you like them. And yet you're only a ripple and it's uneasy and it's never quite enough.

And others are bigger ripples and even waves come occasionally. Who is that guy? It's a wave.

And life becomes unsatisfying. And at some point you meet another ripple who says, have you not realized who or what you are beyond your ripple existence? And you say, no, no, I haven't.

Okay, then can you sense, if you stop thinking for a moment, can you sense the depths of you? Can you sense that there's more to you than this surface appearance? And the ripple goes, no, no, okay.

And finally the tension goes deep as the vertical dimension opens up and the ripple goes, oh. And then of course the ripple won't know what to say, doesn't know what it is,

but it senses something. It senses that it's connectedness to something vast, infinite.

It's the ocean. And it's not only senses it connectedness, it senses its oneness with that. And then that is self-transcendence of the ripple.

And in this analogy, of course, you are the ripple. And this is the essence of all spirituality is to sense that in yourself, in the vertical dimension of yourself, to sense it as yourself. And the moment we talk about it, it sounds as if it were something that you perceive, this sense, but it's only because we use language and then every sentence has a subject and an object.

So you could say, I am aware of myself. Yes, it's true, but ultimately that's not how it is because the moment you have said that, you've created a duality, I and myself. But when you sense the essence of who you are, there's no duality.

The awareness of yourself is the awareness. So it's not aware, being aware of something, but being aware of awareness itself, so to speak. You can, you sense your own consciousness as consciousness.

You know you are, that's an amazing thing. It sounds almost, it sounds so simple that it's impossible to realize, to know that you are, not as a particular this or that, it's pure beingness. You know that you are, and you can sense that you are.

That is such a liberation and such a wonderful, and then you realize there's a depth to who you are that far transcends who you are as a personality. That's, and that is, in some spiritual traditions, that is called liberation, and you can see why it liberates you from yourself. Jesus also used the term salvation.

You can use salvation, you can use liberation. So this is the, once you have a glimpse, it's your mission to invite that dimension into your life more and more. Not just doing a, meditation is good.

If you have a meditation practice, if you meditate rightly, and many people don't meditate rightly, the mistake that can easily creep into meditation is you meditate in order to achieve a particular goal, or you have a future self of an awakened master, and you want to achieve that. And therefore, you have the idea that you are doing a meditation in order to get somewhere. That's always very hard to get rid of this mind pattern because everywhere else it operates.

You always do something in order to achieve something, and in order to achieve something through your doing, you need time. For everything, you need time. Even make a cup of tea, you need time.

And this doing idea can easily come into the idea of meditating, so you're doing it in order to get somewhere. So you bring future time into your meditation unconsciously

without knowing it. Whereas meditation, true meditation, is not a doing, but it's the realization of being, and there's no time in being.

Do people start becoming nicer as you become more aware, or is it just that you no longer get consumed by the anger that arises when in the company of not so nice people? Well, I would say both. When you become more aware, you're not reactive anymore towards people.

You don't personalize things anymore, make everything personal, and are always looking out for some kind of hidden insult or look at what's his real intention behind what he's saying. What does he really want? You're just, there's an openness and a non-judgmental attitude towards others that non-reactive relationships then generate already more consciousness in the other, because unconsciousness is two unconscious people to strengthen each other's unconsciousness.

So if somebody says or does something that may be unconscious and I don't react to it, it does not become amplified through my reaction. If somebody says or does something unconscious and I react to it, condemn it, even if it's just in my mind, I actually amplify it, and I myself become part of that unconsciousness through my judgment. If I can be non-reactive, I can allow other humans their behavior because that's their present stage of consciousness or they behave as they have to behave at this moment.

And so I allow them to behave, to do what they do. I accept it. And then suddenly there's a different energy there.

And so I don't amplify that. And those people then, I don't condemn them. I don't equate their unconscious behavior with who they are.

That's why it's so important not to judge others. It doesn't mean you kind of go through life saying, oh, they're all, everything is fine, that you don't see unconscious behavior. You see what they do.

You know what they do, but you don't equate that with who they are. You know it is an overlay on, it is human unconsciousness. They're expressing that.

It's not who they are in their essence. If you confuse the unconscious behavior with who they are in their essence, then that's called judgment. If you see that somebody is doing something extremely unconscious, that's not judgment because you don't equate it with who that person is.

And so you don't say he is evil. That statement would be wrong of anybody because in essence, nobody is evil, but they manifest extreme unconsciousness, which we can call in many cases evil. So that's important then not to strengthen that and to get trapped in illusion because when we believe in our own judgments, it's not only we trap others in the judgments, we ourselves get trapped in the judgments.

Also people become nicer, which is true, what the questioner says, people become nicer when you're present and aware because they can feel the absence of judgment in you. Even if they don't, they may not be able to tell you, but I can feel the absence of judgment. They only feel it as a certain goodwill flowing out from you towards them or an acceptance flowing out from you towards them.

And humans can feel that, even unconscious humans, unconscious they can feel that. And everybody's grateful for that underneath all their madness. They feel grateful because somehow in that acceptance, in that goodwill that kind of flows out in that space, through that space of acceptance, they feel a little bit more themselves than they usually are.

So, and when a human feels a little bit more at ease in themselves, when they come to you, they like you and they are very nice to you. They don't know why. And their usual ego patterns, not all of them are operating anymore.

Some may still come up, of course. So the ego is less, the ego doesn't feel threatened. It feels, oh, there's no need to be that defensive here.

The ego feels it can kind of relax a little bit. It's cause it's still there in the background. We're just like a little, like a dog.

But it's not at its usual state, like the Rottweiler. So it just, okay, can relax a little now. And then they like you.

So you become a nice person to them. That's perhaps all they know. When they ask him, oh, he's such a nice guy.

Like to see him, like to go to him and touch a nice, okay. So yes, you do experience that. So partly simply because presence, acceptance is there and is recognized.

And partly because there's the absence of reaction when somebody suddenly blames you, for example, says, you left that door open. You shouldn't. And say, oh, I did?

Yeah. The usual ego thing, of course, is to say, no, I didn't. Whether you did or not, because it's regarded as the ego feels diminished when somebody blames you.

You did that. No, I didn't do that. You did.

And it starts from there and then escalates. Why do you always blame me? Look what you did yesterday.

That's called reaction, defensiveness. And that's not there. So then it's just you're stating the facts.

You left that door open again. No, I didn't. And then there's no further arguing.

Yes, you did. Well, maybe if that's what you believe. Or say, yes, well, you're right, I did that again, sorry.

You don't feel diminished when you were wrong. The ego feels diminished. Just to admit that you've been wrong is a dreadful thing.

So the ego can't do that. It's like a little desk. To say that you've been wrong is a little, and if somebody proves to you that you've been wrong, it's even worse.

And then some people will start hitting you. That's how the ego can, an ego can easily do. If it's so obvious that you've been wrong and somebody proves it, then you start hitting them.

That's a big argument. And if you knock him out, the ego still wins.

[Speaker 2] (2:42:14 - 2:42:19)

Yes, there is a general improvement in relationships, of course, with presence.

[Speaker 4] (2:42:42 - 2:43:21)

My question is about confirming consciousness. If you look at the world, a world of form, as all illusory and impermanent, and yet we can confirm that by witnessing its constant change or its constant impermanence or the cycles that it goes through, and yet true reality is consciousness, the background or the substratum of all of the true existence that is out there, how do we confirm that consciousness is there and that it is unchanging and that it is choiceless? Thank you.

[Speaker 7] (2:43:22 - 2:43:22)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (2:43:35 - 2:53:48)

I have a strange feeling that somehow you know the answer deep down, but are you conscious at this moment? Yes. Perception is happening.

Now, if I ask you how do you know that you are conscious, I don't think you would be able to answer that question because how? You just know that you are conscious. There is no how.

It's direct knowing, but it's a very different kind of knowing from how you would know something in the external world, subject, object, knowledge. Do you know that you are alive? Deep down, there is an aliveness.

There is something there, even if the entire world is a dream, which you can either say it is a dream or you can say it's not a dream, what is beyond doubt that the sense-

perceived world has a lot in common with the dreamlike state in the sense that it evaporates fairly quickly. It forms, come and go, even yesterday's dinner. Was that a dream or did you actually have it?

It's not that different from dreaming that you had a dinner and that you're actually having a dinner. It is dissolved into what we call the past. It is no longer there.

This is why many philosophers have compared ordinary existence with a dream because of the fact of impermanence, everything dissolving so fast, everything being in flux. We don't need to come to some kind of conclusion as to whether this reality is actually real or unreal because that's only a mental position. It's only a conceptual thing to say, well, to me, it's unreal, or you read some Indian philosophers who speak from a very deep place of connectedness with something vitally alive, and then they say this world is unreal, and then somebody reads what they said and they take it as a belief and say, okay, and then next time you talk to your friends and you tell them, well, you know the news, this is all unreal, and then your friend says, you must be joking, and then you start arguing.

I am telling you, it's unreal. It's so unreal that you're getting angry. So when people have said the world is unreal, it came from a deep realization of a place that is felt to be far more vitally alive than the phenomena of this world, and out of that, the words came unreal.

They could have used different words. They could have said it's dreamlike. They could have said all forms are passing and some did say that.

So if it's a dream or whether it's a dream or whether it is unreal, the fact is that there is something there to whom or to which this dream happens. Otherwise, the dream could not exist. Its existence depends on the being.

Existence is a form. Being is a formless. So for anything to exist, let's say it is a dream.

Okay, who is dreaming? I am. There must be a consciousness in which the dream appears.

Otherwise, there would be no dream. Everything may be unreal except the thing that is having the dream, and it's not a thing. The dream appears in that space that you are, and that space could be equated with the now, and that's why no matter, you can look back on your life.

It was always whatever, anything that ever happened in your life, anything that you ever experienced in your life happened in the space of now. It was always now. It is always now.

Even to say it was now is somehow a paradox. There is no was. Life is always now.

For anything to be experienced, to be thought, to be felt, can only occur in the now, the space of now. And the space of now doesn't change. Why not?

Because there's no content in it. It is spaciousness itself. It cannot change because if there's nothing in it, there's no change.

Like the space in this room, because outer space is an externalization of inner space of consciousness. We perceive it as space on the outside, and the space in this room cannot change. You can't do anything to it.

No matter what you do, you can shout and punch it. There's nothing to punch, but it allows you to go like that. So space is unchangeable, external space.

And of course it doesn't, space doesn't even exist in itself outside. It's a projection of something else inside us. It's a weird thing, space and movement.

Imagine that you are traveling as a point of awareness through the vast space of the universe at the speed of, let's say, if it were possible, Einstein said it isn't possible. Let's say you're traveling at 10 times the speed of light through the universe, and you see all planets and suns like you see in the movie, Star Trek, next generation, you see the flashes of planets go past. And so you know there's enormous speed, and at that moment, let's say, everything from the universe disappears.

All planets miraculously, all suns and planets and galaxies miraculously dissolve. What's your speed now? And how vast is the universe?

It has, you're just, there's just a nothingness. And suddenly there's no speed anymore. There never was any speed.

You never went anywhere. It was just a delusion. So nobody ever goes anywhere.

I believe it was the Greek philosopher Parmenides who had that insight already. So ultimately nothing ever moves. All these things are delusions, but it's fine.

But you are the space, in essence, for all that. So that's all you need to know. And one possible approach to that is to say you are, you are the now, in which it's one way you can approach it, because the now is the space.

The now is not what happens. The now is usually confused by people with what happens in the now. But the now is always the space in which everything happens.

Otherwise there would be many nows. But only if you equate the present moment with what happens in the present moment, then there are many moments every day and every hour. But if you know that your life is always the now and whatever appears in it, appears in that unchanging space, then you're getting closer to who you are, because you are the now.

That insight hadn't come to me yet when I was writing The Power of Now. I never actually wrote that you are the now. A couple of years later I was giving a talk and suddenly I said, you are the now.

Yes, of course. That's an even better approach than anything else, to realize you are that. Sometimes it takes a while before the inner realization reaches the outer levels and becomes verbalized as a teaching.

So that's also the very fact that you're able to see the impermanent nature of all forms implies that there's something from where the impermanent nature of all forms can be recognized. Because it's only through that you can recognize if the entire world were painted green or blue, there would be no green or blue. You wouldn't be able to recognize it.

So there is something from where the changing, continuously changing nature of things is seen and that is not changing and that is who you are. And it's the present moment and it's space, inner space. And it's consciousness.

Any more pointers?

[Speaker 7] (2:53:49 - 2:53:52)

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (2:54:11 - 2:54:29)

So in addition to visualization or affirmation in the being dimension, you may need to address also the doing dimension.

[Speaker 1] (2:54:30 - 3:01:30)

And again, bring the two together. Enjoy the doing. Don't use it, don't treat the doing as a stressful thing because you need to achieve this or that.

No, you enjoy the doing of it. That's the power, the power of presence has to flow into the doing. The doing is not just a means to an end, it's an end in itself.

That is very, very important realization so that the doing does not become stressful. If stressful, if it's stressful, it means you're excessively attached to the outcome, which means you want to be there, but you are here. And that gap between there and here creates stress.

And that's, and then you, as far as manifestation is concerned, that is disempowering. Now, some people who work very hard with that mindset of stress, they exercise willpower to achieve this. And sometimes they actually do achieve what they, occasionally it happens, but it doesn't make them happy.

It makes them, when they achieve, they are still unhappy. And in the meantime, anybody else they had contact with in whatever work they were doing, they are made unhappy too. So it's, if that is your underlying mindset, I will achieve through sheer willpower.

And of course it's stressful. You create stress for yourself, you create unhappiness for yourself, and whoever you're in contact with, you make them unhappy too. Some companies operate like that.

Everybody's stressed and unhappy. So if you work in a company like that, my recommendation would be to depart. So if your environment is dysfunctional, that can be a considerable hindrance to your power of manifestation if you're trapped in a dysfunctional environment.

So look out for any sign of stress when you're moving towards your goal and you're active in whatever area. Look for any kind of stress that arises, like something not right, if stress arises. Now, this is not to be confused with a kind of feeling low energy activity.

There can be, when you're engaged in something that is meaningful, there's intense energy behind what you do. But this intensity of energy is not stress. There is an enjoyment behind it.

So yes, you may be very intensely engaged, but as you're intensely engaged in whatever it is, let's say, let's come back to this person who wants to be a famous YouTuber, just right now. At this moment, then he or she is learning how to edit videos, how to do that, okay? And again, enjoy the learning process, trying this out and that, asking questions, what can I do here, there?

And then there's the next thing to master, and you enjoy the doing of that in order, rather than, oh, why am I not a famous YouTuber already? I want to, I need to get there to feel happy. No, you're happy in the doing.

And then even if you don't become a famous YouTuber, you'll still be happy. Maybe you reach only 1,000 people, or 5,000, or 10,000, or 200, and even out of those 200 that you reach, some people may contact you, and something else will arise out of that. If you can't, many things arise, you have to be always open to new possibilities that you hadn't even thought of.

So not everything that you achieve in this life comes through wanting to manifest this, so that often it's a good starting point, but sometimes, and quite often, the best things may come that you never even thought of to manifest. But if you hadn't started with this particular manifestation, the other things that you never thought of would never have arisen. So sometimes the universe, so to speak, may have greater plans for you than you could even think of.

But you have to take the first steps, and sometimes the first steps is, I want to manifest this now, and then you practice. You go into being, rooted in the fullness of being, then you visualize, or you affirm this or that, and in doing that, you feel it's already there, in the unseen. And then, in addition, you may have to go into the doing dimension.

And in the doing dimension, don't lose touch with being, because if you lose touch with being, you're lost in doing, and you're stressed, and you're not effective anymore.

[Speaker 2] (3:01:30 - 3:01:42)

And even if you achieve what you wanted to achieve through sheer willpower and hard work and stress, it'll make you unhappy, and make others unhappy. It's pointless.

[Speaker 3] (3:01:52 - 3:02:19)

I can walk into a room and feel other people's pain, and when I was younger, I identified with that, and thought there was something wrong with me. Now that I'm older and have more experience, I realize that it's not me, so I've disidentified with it. But I still have to deal with it.

So, any advice?

[Speaker 1] (3:02:21 - 3:08:50)

Thank you. Well, the vital thing, you're already doing that, the disidentification, and as presence grows, you are less affected by it. It takes a little longer for a woman, because there's more sensitivity to energy fields in the female form than it is in the male form.

So, for a woman, it takes a little longer to, need, a woman would need more presence, because there's such sensitivity in many women to energy fields. The feminine has that sensitivity, and so you can feel it more than a man can, generally speaking. The main thing is already, you're practicing already, which is the disidentification from it, so that there is awareness and it.

You haven't become it. You are the awareness, and there's it. It is allowed to be in the field or the space of awareness.

No longer that problematic, because it is not who you are. And so, negativity, of course, is contagious, highly contagious. The immunity gradually has become more present.

The immunity is there, because intense presence is no longer susceptible to that illness, the negativity. And so, when you feel a negative energy field, you touch, as you said, a room that you go into. There are also other energy fields in this, even when there's a full moon, for some reason, it seems to influence some people's behavior.

Lunatic, that comes from the word lunar, the moon. And when we were in Chicago two

years ago, with Oprah, one day, there was a full moon. And I read in the Chicago paper that on that night, there were something like 15 murders on that night.

And all kinds of energy fields impinged upon us, but there needs to be something in us also that resonates with it. So as your pain body gradually shrinks, also you'll find there's less in you that resonates with negativity. Pain body, of course, takes a while to dissolve.

It dissolves through presence. But as long as there's some pain body there, there may well be something that resonates with certain forms of negativity. And then you feel it.

It's nothing personal. Even the pain body is not personal. Nothing is really personal.

And then as the pain body dissolves, then you find you're free. You can go into a negative energy field and you're fine. It's just not that you build up, presence doesn't build up a barrier around yourself.

It's not like that. It's just, it passes through. It's a different frequency.

It can't hang on to anything inside you anymore. So it goes through you. I haven't studied astrology, but it sometimes seems to me that there may be some truth in some of that.

And the less presence there is in you, the more it applies to you. And the same applies to the full moon. The less presence there is in you, the more you are susceptible to these energy fields.

And the moment you think a negative thought, especially if you think more than one negative thought, it goes on for a few minutes and then leads to another and another, you connect to negativity and a million other people in the same city, kind of, and then you're in it. Nothing personal. And then people are surprised if they can't get out.

It's not just yours. You have connected with the whole city or beyond. That's why it's so important to keep yourself as clear as possible through presence.

The less you carry inside, the less likely it is that it'll affect you. Well, now you may still be able to feel it, but it does not impinge upon you. Especially if you're a woman, you probably are still able to feel the negativity, but then you no longer need to...

There's nothing in you where it gets stuck. So it passes through. You know it's passing through, there it is, but it has nothing in you to hang on to.

It can't attach itself to anything. And the same applies when people are negative, their dialogue is negative, what they speak to you is negative. And again, if you are in the state of alert attention, there's no negative thought in you that this can connect to.

And so you're immune, so to speak. The mental negativity can't hang on, can't lodge

itself in your mind. If there's nothing, there's no frequency in there that it corresponds to.

[Speaker 3] (3:08:54 - 3:09:12)

I've been told by some spiritual teachers that there's something in my system that is trying to take this on from other people to rid them of it. But I mean, it's nothing I do consciously, and I don't even know if that's true, but I...

[Speaker 1] (3:09:13 - 4:11:16)

Well, to some extent, presence does that, but presence doesn't take it on, it dissolves it, not only for yourself, but wherever you go, you go there as a field of presence into an energy field. To some extent, something happens, it dissolves through presence. And so, yes, that's a beautiful thing.

You don't take it on. You don't need to suffer for others, but you can let go of suffering for others. So you let go of suffering.

The same thing you do, for example, when you sit with a person who is in suffering, it is your job to relinquish resistance. And if they can't do it, you can do it for them. Enter the state of surrender.

Do it when you're with somebody who is dying, when you're with somebody who is seriously ill, or has had some other kind of disaster, or is just completely unhappy. So be with that person and become very still and very alert, and that means you surrender for them. And very often that has an effect, it affects them.

It burns up some of the suffering. It invites them also into that space. Sometimes they're able to join you in that space, but even if they are not, it does burn up suffering.

That's the most beautiful gift you can give is your presence. And so you bring that undiluted presence, just that. A good starting point is perhaps the famous statement by Martin Luther King, who said that he was looking forward to the day when people would be judged not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.

And we take that as a starting point. We need to ask ourselves, what is the content of a person's character? What does that mean?

He's pointing to that in each human being that is actually invisible to the senses. The most important part of every human being is invisible to the senses. That begins with simple things like the thoughts that go through your mind, the emotions that you feel.

Those things are already the invisible part of who you are. You might be able to see certain ways in which the invisible manifests externally. It can manifest through words, through facial expressions.

It manifests through actions. But very important realization is that what Martin Luther King calls the character is the invisible dimension of who the human being is. And perhaps the most important realization for any human being, which is a spiritual realization, is the realization that they are essentially invisible.

What you see on the surface is a relatively superficial phenomenon. You see the physical body. So if you are able to sense, this is perhaps a good starting point, sense within yourself that invisible being that you are, which ultimately is a consciousness and the various ways in which the consciousness takes on form as thoughts and emotion.

But essentially you are the consciousness and the consciousness is invisible. You can open up the brain and examine every cell of the human brain and you will still not find, open up my brain, you won't find me. You will not find who that human being is.

You will not find the character of that human being. So he refers to the inner being. You can only get a glimpse of that inner being that you are beyond even the conditioned entity that is, yes, also the conditioned entity, which is the ego is invisible.

But beyond the conditioned entity, there is the unconditioned being or consciousness that you are. And the starting point as a very foundation for what I'm going to talk about is it might even be a glimpse to sense within yourself that invisible presence, even beyond thoughts and emotions or the thoughts and emotions are a manifestation of that. Also they are formations of the consciousness takes on form as an emotion or as a thought.

But before it takes on form, it is the unconditioned consciousness. You are essentially that. So let's, if you can even just get a glimpse of what it is that I'm talking about and sense this essential, this essence within yourself, this presence, this aware presence.

Then you step beyond ego within yourself. And it's only then that you can look at another human being and look beyond the external appearance of that human being and sense also their innermost essence. Now, most humans are not able yet to do that.

Anybody who has not yet awakened spiritually or even had a glimpse of spiritual awakening, that human being will have certain mind forms, certain thoughts in their mind with which they judge other human beings. They're not able to truly relate to other human beings because they are, one could almost say possessed by their conditioned mind, by the thoughts that go through their mind. So you cannot meet another human being, you're meeting the judgments that your mind has formed about the other human being.

So there is a complete sense of separation and that is how the ego works. The ego is a mind-made sense of self and this mind-made sense of self that consists of identifications with externals, with your body, with possessions, with abilities, with knowledge, with

things that have happened to you, things that you have achieved, failures also. All these things become part of the human ego and you are not able to sense anything deeper within yourself than the ego of who you are, which is the conditioned entity, the conditioned self.

Then every human you meet is immediately labeled in some way, you attach certain labels to human beings and you need to realize that the ego in humans in order to assert its sense of identity is always looking for some kind of superiority. So the ego is comparative. When you meet another human being, the egoic sense of self will feel it's seeking superiority and it fears inferiority.

So when you meet another, there's an unconscious attempt by the ego to feel superior to another human being, but the other human being, you're not actually meeting the other human being, you're meeting a mental veil. Now, in the case of race, your mind may have been conditioned by the surrounding culture to have certain thoughts about another race, especially in the case where the other race is a minority. So if there's a majority, that is what in our Western world, it's the white race in the majority, then the most obvious thing for the egoic sense of self is to judge another human who is different, whose external appearance is different, whose skin color is different, to seek that out in an attempt to assert their superiority.

And it's an egoic fallacy, but it's a very common thing to happen that you would lose the ability to actually connect with, to actually see truly that human being, because all you see is the judgments and the labels that your mind has formed, partly due to the conditioning of the culture and ultimately the conditioning of the egoic mind. So when Martin Luther King talks about character, that's already, you're not able to meet this human being because this human being for you, as an ego, is completely obscured by the mind form that is the veil, the mental conditioning. You are judging this human being as the ego is judging this human being as inferior in an attempt to assert its superiority.

And one of the most obvious things when there is minorities in the culture is to latch onto that for the ego, which might not have much else to identify with. Perhaps you haven't achieved anything. You don't possess much that is more than others.

You might be actually of very low intelligence in conventional terms, but then you can seek out the one thing that would make the ego feel superior. And then you go on, you see there's another race and I'm superior to that race. It's satisfying to the ego.

And there are people in whose main, in whom a substantial part of their sense of identity is built around their race and the superiority of their race. And that is the definition of racist is someone whose sense of identity is predominantly based on race as opposed to another. And it's perceived as superior in the search, the egoic search to assert its superiority in order to feel a stronger sense of self.

So it's a complete inability. You meet a human of another race, but you're not really meeting that other human. All you're meeting is your own mental conditioning as a veil.

And there's complete sense of separation. And this is how the ego operates. The ego actually likes to emphasize that sense of separation.

It likes to emphasize the otherness of other humans. And the other is usually, but when the ego emphasizes the otherness of others, the other must be inferior so that it works so that the ego can feel strengthened in its sense of identity. It's of course a fictitious sense of identity.

So when Martin Luther King talks about character, of course, first he's talking about the unseen part that when you react to the color of a person's skin through the veil of your conditioning, you cannot see the invisible human being that is behind the external appearance. You're completely disconnected from the human being. And character, of course, in the first instance means who that person is on a psychological level.

The person might be a wonderful, enlightened human being, might be a human being that has certain forms of conditioning, which may be good or bad. Character is all the various things in which the human being becomes conditioned. And you can't even see that because you've already formulated a mental image, a conceptual sense of self for the other.

And character, of course, is deeper than that. I would, beyond character, I would define character as the way in which a human being has been conditioned to function in this world, the mental emotional conditioning. Beyond character, in every human being, there's a deeper essence.

And that deeper essence, of course, is totally invisible to you. You cannot sense the humanity of the other beyond their conditioning because you have already dehumanized the other by imposing a conceptual identity on the other. And enormous amount of suffering is inflicted by humans on others because they have dehumanized the other.

They have completely conceptualized the other. And then you attach labels to the other person. Once you've done that, if you're very unconscious, you can even inflict violence because you have already dehumanized the other.

So it's an inability to go beyond the other way in which your mind has been conditioned to even have a glimpse of the other, of the human being that you're meeting. It's a veil you move. And now imagine that, well, you don't need to imagine.

It's the case if a majority of humans in a particular culture if a significant percentage of humans are trapped in that egoic dysfunction, then this will become translated into externals. It will become translated into institutions, all the structures that humans create, economic structures, social structures, political structures. Those will become

contaminated by the basic egoic dysfunction in humans.

And this to some extent has happened in the Western world and in the United States. It's very important to see that the root of racism is in the human mind. And the root of racism, ultimately, yes, you can.

I differentiate between the unconsciousness that is in humans, that is the egoic sense of self and the effects of that unconsciousness in the external world. So that state of unconsciousness creates certain structures in the external world. And you can, to some extent, undo the injustices and discriminatory practices and so on in the external world.

We should, to some extent, attempt to undo as much as possible those structures which are the effect of an underlying dysfunction in the collective mind. So it's important to realize, yes, we can and should do as much as possible to undo the effects of that unconsciousness in the world. But realize that the ultimate liberation from racism is in the human mind.

So my work concerns primarily what I consider to be the foundation for everything else, which is the human consciousness. No human individual being and no human society can ultimately act beyond their level of consciousness. You cannot expect an unconscious person, but you should be more conscious, he or she cannot.

He or she is trapped in the unconscious patterns. And so while it is very important to be active in this world in order to undo as much as possible the effects of human unconsciousness, I still, I consider it of primary importance to realize that the ultimate, what we could call transcendence of the ego is inseparable from the awakening of human consciousness so that people are able to go beyond the egoic sense of self so that they do not perpetuate those patterns.

Because even if you dissolve one, if you undo one of the institutions or whatever it is that the unconscious pattern have created, they will create something else. So it is obvious that in this world there's some glaring injustices, for example, in America, even to me as an outsider, it is obvious that the glaring injustices of the incarceration of hundreds of thousands of humans, in many cases, black men were incarcerated for non-violent offenses, often simply for the possession of dried leaves of a plant that they carried in their pockets. It makes them feel good when they ingest it.

They've been in prison for years, their whole lives destroyed, incarcerated. I believe 45% or almost half are in prison for drug offenses and trapped in there for years, terribly misguided, deeply misguided policies. So if that, of course, anybody to become active, that is something that many, many people should be aware of.

And whatever steps they take, they should undo that particular effect of human unconsciousness. And then there are many others. I rarely tell people, I almost never tell

people what to do because that's not my function.

Because all doing arises out of a certain state of consciousness. So my main focus is always the state of consciousness out of which any activity or doing arises. My main focus is, I call that the causal realm, the realm of cause.

Everything else is the realm of effect. Now, we need to emphasize the realm of effect. We cannot say, I'm not going to do anything about the external things because I'm only concerned with awakening, spiritual awakening.

But there's nothing we can do until humans have awakened spiritually. That is not quite true. There are many things you can do without having fully awakened.

You don't need to wait for some kind of awakening in order for the world to change. So for example, we have our foundation, Eckhart Tolle Foundation. I got together with the board members of the board.

We talked about what action can be taken now. We can't wait until everybody's enlightened to take some action now. So we selected some organizations that do great work with black people in the United States to help them on various levels.

And so we've donated a quarter million dollars to those foundations in order to alleviate the effects of human, as I call it, the effects of human unconsciousness. So action is taken and we are here to interact with the world, to take action, to bring about a better world, but we need to be careful that the action does not become, so to speak, hijacked by the ego in ourselves. So as we take action to remedy certain situations, to change certain structures, that's very important, we're actually acting against unconsciousness.

We're acting against the effects of human unconsciousness. And yes, action is necessary, but we need to have some awareness while we act. We don't need to be fully enlightened, but in order not to see our actions reflect the unconsciousness that we are fighting, we need to be aware.

We need to have some degree of awareness in our actions. There's a famous saying by Nietzsche. He said, if you're fighting monsters, beware that you do not become a monster, that you do not turn into a monster.

So whenever you fight human unconsciousness, you need to stay aware, you need to have some awareness, because then without the awareness, if you address the unconsciousness in other human beings, it's very easy for this to draw you into unconsciousness yourself. I've been saying for years, not with reference to this particular topic, racism, but more generally, I've been saying for years, you cannot fight the ego. You cannot fight the ego in yourself, and you cannot fight the ego in others.

As I said, you can, to some extent, alleviate the negative effects of what the ego has

created, but you cannot fight the ego itself, neither in yourself, nor in others. If you fight the ego in yourself, you create an enormous amount of inner tension, and you create a split within yourself. You have an inner enemy that you're fighting against that would keep you trapped in a terrible state of dysfunction.

So as anybody who takes action in order to change things in the externals needs to have some awareness so that they do not, you can take effective action without increasing the divisiveness and antagonism in this world. So that is very important. You always need to see what is your contribution, even on a simple level of interacting, many people on social media, what is your contribution to the discourse that people are engaged in?

Are you attacking other human beings and call them evil? Or are you actually addressing something and pointing certain things out, disseminate information so that you can help people to become more aware and to awaken? So it's in any action that you take, stay aware so that your action does not become contaminated with ego, because if otherwise, that which you are fighting, you will amplify.

Many things when we fight things, the fight against drugs, we haven't addressed the root cause of taking drugs. We've said we need to fight, we're talking about the war against drugs, the fight against drugs. Now, where has that led us?

The fight, has it been successful? Not at all. If anything, it's made things worse.

So it requires a certain amount of wisdom to be an effective agent for change in this world. And that wisdom can only arise in you if you have a little bit of access within yourself to the unconditioned being, the unconditioned consciousness. These are very, very huge challenge for humans to stay conscious at this time, but that is your challenge to take action, but stay conscious while you take action.

It's vitally important. Then the action actually much more empowered. So it's very easy when you fight unconsciousness, as I said, unconsciousness in other humans to be drawn into unconsciousness yourself.

Very subtle thing. Nietzsche added when he said, be careful when you fight monsters. Monsters means, as I interpret it, egoic dysfunction, human unconsciousness, which creates all kinds of dreadful evils in this world.

If you fight that and you're not careful, he said, be careful. It doesn't mean necessarily if you're not aware, that's my addition, you yourself become unconscious. And he added, if you gaze for long enough into the abyss, you will find that the abyss gazes back into you.

So this is the abyss of human unconsciousness. It's for example, to take an example of policing in the United States, it's a big subject, which has in time, and obviously changes are necessary in the way policing is done. It's a moment, there's a lot of brutality,

especially directed towards black people.

Not every policeman, of course, but some, and those are the ones that stand out. And the entire system needs to be changed, needs to be looked at. It's understandable to feel anger when you look at what's been happening there.

It's totally understandable to feel that. And there's nothing wrong with that. It is a normal human reaction.

But when there's lack of awareness, the danger is that the anger takes possession of you. Then you lose consciousness. When anger takes complete possession of you, it leads you to do things that are not ultimately not helpful.

It's completely understandable to feel the anger, but there's a huge difference between feeling the anger and being aware of it and accept it, that is a normal human reaction. Or not to be aware of the anger so that the force of the anger takes complete possession of you. That means awareness disappears and you then become the anger.

That means the anger has become incorporated into your egoic sense of self. And so, and then the ego, once this has happened, so ego is always when you identify with something, complete identification with something becomes part of your ego, egoic sense of self. Identify, you derive your identity from.

So in the absence of awareness, it's very easy for this to happen that the anger, which is a natural thing that many humans feel when they contemplate what's happening. But in the absence of awareness, the anger can easily possess you, take you over and completely control your thinking. In other words, as I said, it becomes incorporated into your, it becomes part of your ego.

Then you're, and the actions that you then take are no longer ultimately not helpful. You are, in Eastern terms, you create more karma for yourself and others. Karma is action and reaction, action and reaction.

So anger, the energy of anger can actually be transmuted and transformed when awareness is there. The energy of anger can actually, instead of taking possession of you and becoming you, the energy of it can be transmuted and it can become conscious action that you take. It's a transmutation of anger into conscious action.

The energy of it becomes transmuted when awareness is there. The anger is accepted. It's allowed to be there, but it does not take possession of you.

You remain aware that there is anger. Then there's a possibility for the anger to be transformed into action. But then it will be action that is not, that does not amplify the human unconsciousness in this world, very different kind of action.

So if you take action that amplifies human unconsciousness and there's just no end, then the abyss is gazing back into you and draws you in. So this, I hope it can be helpful. It requires a certain vigilance in you.

There's no need to say, I shouldn't be angry. Of course you should be angry, be angry, but don't be possessed by the anger. Know that the anger is arising, know when in the face of injustice, you feel it and that's fine.

You allow it to be there and you can feel the energy of it, but awareness remains and then it can actually empower action, the energy becomes transformed. That's can be, I highly recommend that so that I cannot emphasize enough to be careful so that you are not taken over by something like that. Because if you are, you strengthen, not only that which you are fighting against, you amplify the unconsciousness out there, you also strengthen your own unconsciousness.

You're really trapped. So it's a very, very subtle, subtle difference. The key remains is awareness, awareness, awareness, presence, what's going on inside me right now.

What's to be aware of that. And the picture is not entirely negative when I look at the United States. There's a lot still that needs to happen, but quite a lot, I'm an external observer, but it does seem to me I have spent time in the United States since Martin Luther King, since the 60s, we have already come a long way, not to even to mention the time period before that, needs to acknowledge there is also, there is a lot of goodwill in the country of all.

There's a lot of goodwill and a willingness to change that is certainly there. So that is the positive aspect. The awareness of race that we have now would have been unthinkable in the 50s, just completely impossible.

So there is a gradual growth of awareness and a gradual transformation happening, but it needs to continue. The, and it seems to be continuing. The one obstacle I need to mention again, be careful that you're not being taken over by certain forms of reactivity like anger and lose yourself in that.

That's the, then what is now a great possibility for increasing awareness that we have now, we can go either way now. The awareness that had arisen is great. There's possibility of further awakening gradually also collective awakening of consciousness.

And if, but if we don't, if we are not careful, it could lead to a regressive movement. What was so promising at first to see that happening can lead to a regressive movement if we are not careful. But even if it were the case, ultimately every regression, when it results in a further step forward, eventually human consciousness evolves, not in a straight upward line, but in cycles, regressive cycles and step forward, back, forward, back.

It's a, it's a, it, the whole, it's a great, huge subject, but ultimately comes down to very simple, very simple, very simple foundation. It is stay conscious. And so the, so that you are a force for good in this world.

And continue to realize that your state of consciousness is the primordial reality. Everything comes out of that. There was a 19th or 18th century French philosopher who said, every nation has the government it deserves.

Interesting saying. So what that means, the way I see it is whatever nation has the government, it's not only the government or the institutions and so on that are created by this particular nation, it has the government it deserves, which means is there's a collective consciousness produces the external structures. So if the collective consciousness is deeply trapped in egoic, collective ego, it creates structures that reflect the ego, the collective ego.

And if there's some awakening in the collective, then the tractors will become transformed. Either they dissolve because they know that people realize they don't function anymore, or they, whatever happens to them, people take action in order to say this, we don't want that anymore. But there's a deep truth in saying that every nation has a government you have to think, oh, what do we have?

And it's not just the government, it's other institutions too. So this again, what I said at the beginning, no human being can manifest beyond their level of consciousness. Whatever action they manifest is a reflection of their level of consciousness that applies to the collective also.

So there is a change in the collective here. So let's, I feel there's a good chance that it will lead to a change in the externals, because more and more humans are awakening. I sometimes get the wrong impression because most people that I'm in contact with are awakening.

So, and sometimes when I turn on the, well, not look at the news and I say, oh no, this is so many are not awakening yet. I'm sometimes shocked. All the people I'm in contact with all seem to be awakening.

So it's slightly distorted view, but I do know that more and more people are in the process of awakening. Now, the important thing is it's not to confuse the dysfunction that many humans still manifest, egoic dysfunction, to recognize it as egoic dysfunction, but not to confuse that with who these human beings ultimately are. Because if you confuse that, that which the dysfunction, which is just, these humans are manifestation of a particular stage in the evolution of consciousness on the planet.

And they are not yet at a very advanced stage in the evolution of consciousness on the planet. So what they manifest is the egoic part, the egoic phase of the evolution of

consciousness on the planet. These are patterns that operate in these humans.

The danger is, and the fallacy is to take that to be the ultimate identity of these humans and not recognize that these humans are in the grip of unconsciousness or of egoic dysfunction. That's important because, and that's all expressed, for example, in Jesus on the cross, the final words, forgive them for they know not what they do. If they had, if he had spoken in the present age, he probably would have said, forgive them for they are completely unconscious.

Now, forgive them means, the way I interpret it, do not confuse their unconsciousness with who they actually are in the essence of their being. Because if you confuse that, you create enemies. And this means the moment you do that, you get trapped in egoic unconsciousness yourself.

So the forgiveness is to look beyond, to recognize it for what it is. It's like one could almost say they are ill. It's a mental illness.

There's a huge amount of mental illness still in human beings, in the collective. And yes, of course, if a mentally ill person comes running towards you to kill you, you might have to do something. You obviously, you would take action in those extreme cases, yes.

But the important thing is not to confuse the unconscious patterns that operate in those humans, not to construct an identity for them out of that. That is also, by the way, you can also do it for yourself, because sometimes people come and say, I've often heard people say, I've done something very bad in the past. When I was young, I did this or that, and I feel I just have this terrible burden of guilt in myself and I can't get rid of it.

And again, my answer is, at that time, these patterns operated in you. You were less, you were not conscious at that time. Now you can see that what you did was bad.

But if you had seen it then, you wouldn't have done it, but you were unconscious then. So sometimes you have to forgive yourself when you did something. Sometimes it's parents, they say how I brought up my children was, I can see now why I was so unconscious when I had my children, what have I done?

But again, not to make that into your identity and say, I am this bad person. No, there was unconsciousness in me that operated, because I'm never separate from the totality of humanity. And humanity is an evolving organism.

Humanity is slowly going through an awakening process. It takes time. It's accelerating now because in the past, it took just small transformations could take a thousand years.

But now there is an acceleration of awakening, but it's still, we're at a problematic stage. The awakening process is happening. So just remember not to transform other people's unconsciousness into an identity.

And that really is a deeper meaning of forgiveness, because then you recognize that's not ultimately who they are. There have been people in prison. Some people did the most dreadful, committed the most dreadful crimes.

And I've seen cases of people in prison who completely went through a complete spiritual awakening, having at this past of very, very dreadful crimes. And there was a complete awakening suddenly where the sense of identity completely shifted and came from a much deeper place. And they recognized their past self was like somebody else when they awakened.

Somebody else was, that wasn't, that was me. Can't even, it wasn't, it was certain patterns operating using me. You could look at the ego almost as an entity, yes, an entity that inhabits you.

And it doesn't want to go away. It wants to strengthen itself. It can use anything to strengthen you.

And racism is a great, oh yeah, I'll be a racist. That's, I feel stronger in my fictitious sense of self. So again, important thing, transcendence refers to the egoic unconsciousness and the awakening.

It does not mean that you cannot take action, but be careful so that you stay conscious while you act, which means not be taken over by some dark reactive mode that then operates through you. And then you notice, you can notice this when you see a particular thing, the enemies, you need to attack these enemies, the enemies. Jesus said, love your enemies.

That might be going a bit too far for many people, but there's a deeper meaning behind that. If you see that in isolation, it's hard to say, well, Christians have tried to do that, but not too successfully over 2000 years, but some perhaps managed, but ultimately of course, loving your enemies means have no enemies because if you love your enemy, who is your enemy? But that statement, love your enemies, cannot be looked at in isolation.

It was related to discovering the deeper dimension of who you are, which is the kingdom of heaven within you. And when you do that, then you can see every human being in their essential, not see, but sense every human being in their essential identity. And then you don't have enemies anymore, but you can still see, yes, he or she or they are in the grip of egoic unconsciousness.

They are crazy, ultimately. For a long time, I've been saying, I often say, normal means crazy. And if you look at human history, this, you can verify that, just read the history of the 20th century and what humans have done to other humans, the millions upon millions killed, not only in warfare, but also in killed by their own governments,

Holocaust, mass exterminations, come in Russia, China, Europe.

The most dreadful, this is obviously, and these are normal human perpetrated by so-called normal human beings, not criminals or something. Criminals have done relatively little compared to what normal humans in the grip of unconsciousness are capable of doing. It's nothing compared to what so-called criminals are doing.

This is why I often say normal equals insane. But we are awakening. So there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Of course, the light is within you. So in the meantime, it's the question of race or the problem of race is connected with our, it's an aspect of our awakening, something that we need to overcome. And it's also something that we're at a crossroads now, as I mentioned earlier, we could go one way towards increasing awareness and increasing transcendence of ego and the undoing of the external structures that reflect racism.

Or if the other way would be if the, it could increase the divisions in society and divisiveness. So in other words, unconsciousness could take over again, and that would lead to a regressive period in human evolution. And there have been already many regressive periods.

This is not impossible that this might happen, although there's a good chance it will not happen. I can't predict the future, but even if it were to happen, if we went to a regressive period, even leading to internal conflict, even civil war is not impossible if we are not, if we are drawn into unconsciousness, all kinds of even war between nations is still possible. I'm a long-term optimist as far as human evolution is concerned.

I believe even if we did have to go through a regressive period, eventually that also will become part of human awakening. And ultimately the moment will come and race will become completely unimportant. And that is, we're moving towards that.

Some people may still love their race, and that's fine, because race is to do with your form. I call it your form identity, your form identity, as opposed to your essence identity. You have the two dimensions.

Your form identity is the physical body, and your form identity is also the makeup of your mind, mental, emotional field, the conditioning of your mental, emotional field. This is the person that you are. The person that you are is your body and the conditioned mind, that's your form identity.

And your form identity is not to be totally dismissed. You say, you don't need to say, I'm not my body. I don't want to have anything to do with my body or this all illusion.

That's not quite it. It has its place. Your form identity has its place.

So while your body, let's say, has a particular color, you might even say, I like it. I like that color. It's fine.

But you don't derive your sense of identity from it. It's just something that you honor. You can also honor your cultural traditions, whatever it may be.

If you're African-American, you might honor your ancestors, the suffering of your ancestors, the cultural traditions of your ancestors. And so the suffering of your ancestors have led you to this point of awakening. So do not, I often say, don't waste your suffering in this life, but also don't waste the suffering of your ancestors.

So it's suffering ultimately brings about awakening of human consciousness. For a long time, it awakened suffering as your spiritual teacher for a long time. And a lot of suffering inflicted by humans on other humans, a lot of suffering.

And don't waste the suffering. Use it. Honor that.

You can honor your ancestors and still realize that's part of your form identity. Then there's a timeless being, there's a timeless self, the unconditioned consciousness that is the essence of who you are. And that's your, ultimately, you derive your sense of being, your sense of beingness, your sense of who you are from that dimension.

That Buddha called it sunyata, which is translated as emptiness. It just means formless, spacious consciousness. Emptiness is a traditional term in Buddhism, but it really means formless, spacious consciousness.

In Christian terms, Jesus said, the kingdom of heaven that is within you, heaven is the vast expanse of the sky. The kingdom is the dimension. So the kingdom of heaven is a dimension of vast spaciousness.

So he's pointing, he's using that analogy to point to an inner reality. Same as the Buddha. The Buddha said spacious consciousness, which is sunyata, emptiness.

Jesus said, the kingdom of heaven that is within you, which, what is the kingdom of heaven? It's an analogy for an inner dimension of consciousness. Heaven is pure consciousness, spacious awareness, like now, this moment.

You don't need to think, you don't need to affirm your form identity, but you can sense that within yourself, there is an essence that is, we could call presence, we could call awareness, we could call the realization of being, we could call the primordial I am, the I am. And that presence or beingness is an alive, it's alive. It's, it can't be defined or explained.

It has no age, no gender, no color, none of that, but become aware of yourself as an underlying quiet presence. Your historical self becomes unimportant, but something

that's left there is more vital and more essential. This underlying quiet, alert, calm presence, we could call it stillness too, inner stillness.

And that you might also notice that your thinking subsides and you don't have to affirm through thinking who you are anymore. And that spacious awareness can be there even in everyday life, to little spaces between thoughts, moments of just aware presence, while you listen to somebody, looking at the sky, looking at a tree, a flower, breathing, moments of spacious awareness. And then you use your mind again, and then you're aware again.

And after a while, the awareness remains even while you're using your mind.

[Speaker 2] (4:11:30 - 4:11:32)

Ah, so liberating.

[Speaker 1] (4:11:47 - 4:12:37)

Thank you so much for your presence, which is also my presence. There's only one presence. This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive.

To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

[Speaker 5] (4:13:10 - 4:13:30)

Good afternoon, Mr. Tolle. My name is Liz Bluestam, and I'm very grateful to be here today. I'm also very aware right now that I am so not in the present moment because I'm so nervous.

So I think I need to take a breath and be still for a second, and this is the perfect group to do it with.

[Speaker 1] (4:13:31 - 4:13:31)

Feel the inner body.

[Speaker 5] (4:13:36 - 4:16:01)

Thank you. I was fortunate enough to read The Power of Now when it was first published, and it had a tremendous impact on me. And I have followed your spiritual teachings ever since.

As I went through my daily life and my daily practice, the unimaginable happened. My husband and I lost our son two years ago this August. And suddenly, I seemed to go from The Power of Now to the nightmare of The Power of Death.

And as you talked about this morning, which I found so interesting, it's the first time I've heard you mention loss. One needs to recover and cry. And I absolutely believe that you have to go through the grieving process to heal your soul.

But here's the rub. I can't help but think about my son every day, human nature. But what that does is catapult me consistently into the past because all I have left of him are my memories, which are in the past.

And conversely, even though I know there is no future, I fantasize about what it might have been like for all of us had he lived. So my question is, can you help me understand and reconcile being in the present, creating space for consciousness as it relates to profound grieving with the death of a loved one that has done nothing but propel me into the past and to a non-existent fantasy future? Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (4:16:03 - 4:16:48)

If I may ask you another question. When you think about your son, apart from the activity of thought, which may be memories of the past, or as you say, fantasizing about what might have been future or fantasies, can you also feel your son somewhere within? Apart from the memories, can you somehow feel his essence in yourself?

[Speaker 5] (4:16:48 - 4:16:49)

Absolutely.

[Speaker 1] (4:16:53 - 4:22:19)

And that essence is not in the past, of course. It's in the now. And so what is required then is a greater focus on that than on giving attention to the thoughts.

Once perhaps the thoughts have a limited usefulness when the memory comes, it also brings up the feeling of his essence. The memories of the past, the feeling of essence is now, it's alive now. If you can then give that more attention than to the thoughts, directing more attention there, closing your eyes perhaps, directing more attention there than to the memories.

The memories were fine, but now they've taken you there. Or if fantasizing about future, possible things that could have happened, again, bring attention as a conscious choice, take attention into the sense, that feeling of the essence of who he is, because the essence is. And then what you, this enables you to connect with the formless essence that was actually the thing that you loved and still love in him, the indestructible.

And you can only find it through your own, so they come together really. When you feel him, you also feel yourself as part of that. And so as a conscious choice then, take more attention to that.

If you can, if it's an occasion when it's not dangerous to close your eyes, then close your eyes and go in there and feel that and realize it's alive and it's now. Then gradually your son, you retrieve, you rescue your son from where he has been the past two years in the past and the alive essence, you still, you feel within yourself. And so, and that means gradually the memories will not disappear, there will be memories, but the heaviness that's associated with the memories and the deep sadness gradually through that becomes transmuted into something else.

And there will be then, the memories will still, there will still be a gentle sadness with the memories, but there's a rising realization of that which is beyond death in him, that's what you loves. You love and loved and still love. Now the mind says, the object of my love is gone and that's the dreadful thing.

The mind says, so the love has no object, but the love, what you loved in him was never the form. What you loved in him and still love is the formless essence of who he is. And I don't want to go into any kind of belief that you need to have of survival, but I know, all I know is that there is an essence in every human being, I know it in myself, that is beyond death, I know that.

I don't want to go beyond and tell anybody that they should believe this or that about. I don't never step beyond my experience. I know the deathless as the essence in myself and in all humans.

And you need to, you know that too, you just need to go there more deeply. And I also, anybody who has been touched by death I also recommend, in addition, it sounds a little strange, to occasionally take a walk around the cemetery. I recommend it to anybody because you get a very distorted view of life if you never have the realization of how imminent death is for every human being, the so-called death of the form.

And then the personal, the excessively personal thing about death as it becomes, you see how universal it is. And I find it extremely peaceful to walk around a cemetery and just, the mind goes totally still in just amazement of all these lives that have dissolved, the forms that have gone. That's why Buddhist monks in some traditions regularly go to the morgue and they meditate for a few hours at a time there just with the dead bodies around them.

And so they go deep within to touch what in Buddhism is called the deathless. So that is, the freedom from what you've been trapped in lies there within you. Just go there, go there, there.

Don't go into the mind excessively. Conscious choice. And then the transmutation happens.

[Speaker 6] (4:22:34 - 4:22:38)

And so your mind is just absorbing whatever is playing.

[Speaker 1] (4:22:38 - 4:57:19)

It's the TV mind which is receiving stuff from wherever it comes from. It's going into your mind and you become no longer thinking your own thoughts. Occasionally your mind is saying, oh, this guy is so stupid.

And then you're watching again. What do you think about Facebook? Is it a healthy format?

It seems a bit egoic. Not a whole lot of transmission of connection, love, et cetera. Posting pictures of yourself and quantifying friends, likes, et cetera, seems like enhancing the ego.

Are we going down the wrong path with social media? Well, the questioner has a point. As even before the advent of Facebook and similar things for hundreds of years or thousands of years, people constructed for themselves an identity in their head.

That's me. Me and my story, as I sometimes call it. And that was partly inherited from what your culture tells you you are or your family and your culture.

And partly by choice, certain things you choose to identify with and then incorporate into your sense of self. Certain possessions, certain achievements, or the lack of certain possessions and achievements can all be cooperated. They become mind forms or thought forms, which you identify with.

So there's a mental image that forms and that's the essence of ego, a mental image that's me. So that's been going on for a long time. And then people live through that mental image of me.

They seek out things or people that can improve the mental image of me and try to keep away things or people that could weaken or threaten the mental image of me. It all means not being in touch with who you are beyond any mental image, which is why we are here to go deep into that. And now we got the technology of Facebook where you can externalize the image and you can create on the Facebook page, you can create the image of me and show it to the whole world.

And so many young people, and maybe not so young, I believe the oldest Facebook user, I saw a video clip in the States, the world's oldest Facebook user is 105 years old. And it is often used unconsciously in enhancing the image one has of oneself and the image one wants to show to the world. And then you read other people's images on their Facebook page and you think that's who they are.

And then you try to compete with that image and you try to polish up your image and

compete with them. Most people want to show off, it seems, I'm not that familiar with it, but most people want to show the good things. I'm having this great meal, here's a picture of it.

Why would anybody want to see what you're eating right now? But they do, it seems. Or I just bought this thing, do you want to see it?

And then you can connect people to a place where you bought it, it's another thing. And all kinds of things that I don't understand. So you can, in many cases, it becomes an artificial construct that you add to every day and everybody else has their artificial construct.

And it can actually strengthens the delusion of the false self. Doesn't have to, but often it does. Facebook can also be used in conveying interesting information and to connect with people at a deeper level or bringing about some spiritual knowledge.

So that's not impossible. I used to post occasionally things, I don't do it myself, but I would send it to Steve and he would post it. But I haven't, I must admit, I haven't done it in a while.

Although some things do get posted, quotes and so on, that's fine. Twitter is another one that is, there's a Twitter message coming in. No.

The last time I tweeted was when a few months ago in February, the Oprah Channel in the States, I don't know if you can get it here, it's called the OWN Channel, Oprah Winfrey Network. They showed a repeat of our webinar that we did a few years ago that I did with Oprah. They did a slightly shortened edited version over a period of 10 weeks, 10 Sundays, the new earth was shown again on this time, not on the internet, but well, also on the internet, but on TV on, and Oprah sometimes is an active tweeter.

And she said, it would be great if we could tweet at the same time while this program is being shown. And so I said, okay, I'll see what I can do. So I was on the phone with Steve while the program was running, and then I was watching it, and then people sent in these questions and they have to be answered immediately.

So I was attempting to dictate answers to Steve and his assistant to put in the answers. And my mind was quite, well, I felt almost dizzy afterwards because I tried to watch the program and at the same time, watch the incoming tweets and think of an answer. But Oprah must have realized it wasn't from me because she said, Twitter is the exact opposite of how you operate.

And before Oprah said it, Kim said exactly the same thing to me. And that's true. So I was glad when it was over, but while it was happening, I was surrendered to it, although I did feel dizzy afterwards.

So if you can avoid constructing some pseudo identity for yourself on Facebook and be more real, then you can avoid that trap of just the Facebook amplifying the human ego, which it does in many, many cases, especially for youngsters who have no idea what they're doing. Oh, yes. Can you speak about how to be in this world with this constant push for connectivity?

How did we get to the most profound things? Yes. From a relatively simple question.

Oh, yes, we talked about doing and being without feeling that being present is another thing to do. How to be in this world without this constant push for connectivity? Well, the first thing is you turn off your push notifications.

That's already a big step forward. And you need to be disciplined in the use of your device, your phone, whatever, tablet, phone, so that you can be in this world it doesn't take you over because it's simply an extension of the mind. And if it wasn't enough before we invented these devices, humans had already been taken over by their minds.

Even 2000 years ago, not as much as now, but even 2000 years ago, Jesus said, why are you always thinking about tomorrow? Why are you always worried about the next thing? Look at the flower, look how it lives in total alignment with the present moment.

And it's being sustained by the one consciousness. That's my translation of it. So already then, humans had been taken over by mind, but even more so since then, it's mind has proliferated.

And then the clever human mind came up with these devices said, let's extend ourselves into the realm of things. And then we can create this, which is an extension of the human mind. So when you, you might have noticed when you're with yourself, you have the voice in the head, unless you begin to awaken, in which case you're able to experience spaces of alert, still presence.

It's beautiful. But otherwise you have this thing, commenting, talking, arguing. And then this becomes a burden for many people.

Of course it is a burden because a lot of the stuff it says is actually not pleasant. And so you experience it as a burden. And since you derive your sense of identity from it, it becomes yourself.

This talking voice, you think that's you. It becomes the self. And you walk around with this burden of the self.

And in order to unburden yourself, one thing you can do, you think you can do, is you can watch the television or you can go on to watch, there are countless things that you can watch on the little screen. The entire world's knowledge at your fingertips. And the moment you watch the screen, whether it's television or a screen, you might have

noticed that your own, your so-called own thought processes come to a stop.

So to some extent, you're free of the self. This is why people sometimes find watching television relaxing, say, okay, I just need to relax now, just turn it on. By this they mean, while they watch the television screen, they are not burdened by their self-induced thought processes.

What they do, however, they replace their own thoughts with the collective thoughts. So they just, you're in a state, you're not in a state of thoughtless awareness when you watch television or you watch something on the screen. You absorb the thoughts from there into your mind and you link in.

So for people often in a state of semi or hypnosis when they watch and it kind of paralyzes you, can also happen with the screen, with television already started, of course. I don't know when, whenever, 60 years ago, whenever television started as you go. And so your mind is just absorbing whatever is playing.

It's the TV mind, which is receiving stuff from wherever it comes from, is going into your mind and you become a, no longer thinking your own thoughts. Occasionally your mind is like, oh, this guy is so stupid. And then you're watching again.

And then another thought, why am I watching this rubbish? Half an hour later, this is so awful. But you can't, you can't turn it off.

Here's the, here's the remote. Let's, let's just try one more channel. There might be something else there.

Oh no, that's stupid. Try one more. This is, this is how an addict behaves.

And the device is even more addictive. You go, cause you have to carry them with you. And you have to admit, you may have to admit that you, there is an addiction in you.

Not everybody here, but quite a few. It would be almost normal to feel this draw towards it. And you use it even when you don't need to use it.

That's the amazing thing. When you're standing at the elevator waiting, so another person is standing next to you and he or she is pulling out the phone and then you pull out yours. You don't know why.

And, or anywhere you're in a, you're waiting, you're ordering a tea or coffee somewhere and you're standing in line. And if you look around, there's almost nobody and probably nobody who is not looking at this little thing. This is scary.

30 years ago, it was just radio and television and you would, people would sit there for hours. But nowadays you have countless sources of stimulus for the mind that draws you into continuously thinking about what's your next Facebook post? What's it going to be?

And you look at the ones that are coming in. All these people are doing these fantastic things. And me, I'm just sitting here.

And then you have to pretend that you're also doing fantastic things. And usually it involves taking a nice selfie. And then you project yourself image, which has existed for a long, long time before in humans.

They have a, they have a part of ego is to have this image of who I am. But in these Facebook, now we have the opportunity to project that image into the world and it'll reach hundreds or thousands of people all at once. And then you construct your life.

There are many people alive these days who without knowing it, they partly live for their Facebook image. And they're just looking for the next thing that they can project out into the world. It's Narcissus, you might remember the myth of Narcissus, the Greek, ancient Greek myth.

There was this young man who had never seen himself before because they didn't have mirrors at the time. But one day he happened to look into a little pool of water and he saw himself and he realized that he was extremely beautiful. He said, oh, that's me.

And if the story goes, he fell in love with himself, not in a good way, not by becoming one with who he is, but the separation happened. This myth shows the beginning stage of the egoic sense of self expressed as a story. The image that he saw of himself in the pool is the mental image of the ego set and stories are part of that image.

That's me, I'm me and my story. So you have the image of me and then, oh. So this guy, Narcissus, he experienced that separation.

And then I think something bad happened to him, but I don't remember what. So, and then you have other divine things that continuously stimulate the mind that almost designed for you not to become still. It's like the civilization has made a great effort to come up with as many things as possible to prevent people from becoming still and spacious and taking a moment of, ah, looking at the sky and feeling the inner spaciousness arise and becoming aware of the leaves of the tree or the branches and the wind blowing and the noise of water, the simple thing, becoming still, alert, sensing that stillness within. And of course, a minute later, another text message is coming in.

Of course, you have to look at it immediately. And then I'm told, I didn't know that when I first started using texts, Erin told me that the etiquette is that you have to reply immediately. And emails are coming in too.

Oh dear, I must be very important. I'm getting all these messages. Please talk about spiritual bypassing.

Sometimes it feels like I'm using presence and awareness as a way to deceive myself

and avoid the muddle of unresolved pain within. Awareness or presence is never avoidance. In awareness, you allow yourself to feel whatever it is that you feel.

It's not repressing it in any way. There is a fundamental misconception, an unconscious misconception in human beings, and that misconception is this. They believe that the world has the ability to make them happy, but this is being withheld from them.

And they regard that as a personal insult by life. It's doing, why is life withholding happiness from me? Why all the things always happen to me?

Because it's not happening to others. You read their Facebook posts and they're all happy. They're eating meals.

You see pictures of meals. Look, I'm eating this, oh, okay. And then you see their happy faces.

And not only are they happy, they're also so good looking. Everybody's good looking. That's the technology of filters and stuff.

Everyone can look beautiful, even I, they did it to me too. So people watch that and say, wow, these people's lives are so great. What am I, so awful.

And then you maybe, then you also pretend because everybody else is pretending. Okay, like go to a restaurant, take a picture of a meal. I mean, this is what I'm eating right now.

Oh. So the misconception is the world is here to make me happy, but it's not doing it. And this is a very serious misconception because it makes your whole life miserable because that really means that something that should be happening is not happening in my life.

Something should, it's just not happening. But of course that misconception is that the world is here to make you happy and it can't do that. It's not here to make you happy.

It's here to make you conscious, to awaken you. Oh, I see, I was wrong all along. I've been complaining uselessly for 40 years or whatever your age is.

I've been complaining uselessly for 40 years that there's something wrong with the world and my so-called life, but there wasn't anything wrong at all because the world is here to awaken me. If humans are not challenged or not just humans, any life form only grows through being challenged, which means encounter obstacles and difficulties in their process of growth, even plants and animals, they all encounter, every life form is precarious. Its existence is precarious and it encounters obstacles to its unfoldment.

And that ultimately is how evolution happens through encountering difficulties, obstacles, challenges. Because as you encounter the obstacles and challenges, they

seem to block you. And you think life would be much better if I did not have these challenges, but it wouldn't because you would go to sleep even more.

So you have the challenges and that brings about an influx of energy on whatever level, even if it's physical, every organism already encounters challenges on a physical level. And then it grows, it gains new strengths by attempting to overcome these limitations. I sometimes mention, example, if you want it, because it operates on every level.

If you want to become physically stronger, you have to exercise unless you have a job that is already physically hardworking, forces you to exert yourself physically. Otherwise you have to exercise. And you have to start doing, if you want to grow stronger, you have to lift weights.

I'm not doing it anymore, but I'm just demonstrating. You lift weight. Now, how does that feel at first?

What are you doing? The way I put it is this. You are making life difficult for your body because your body is not going to grow stronger unless you make the body's life difficult.

The same with jogging. The body doesn't really want to do it, but says, no, no, you have to do it. Why are you making life difficult for your body?

Your body would be so relaxed sitting on the sofa and watching Netflix. But it's not growing stronger, it's actually getting weaker because it's not being challenged. But challenge it, and then there is a demand for added energy.

And this just operates on the physical level. And this demand for added, there's a moment when there's a gap. You're exerting yourself and the energy isn't there yet, so it's very hard.

But at some point, the energy comes flooding in because there was a demand for it. And at that point, you may actually begin to enjoy the physical movement because there's added energy, and suddenly, ah, strength is increasing. And this is just on the physical level.

There's a demand and it comes. Also on a psychological level, it can operate. And on a spiritual level, when you become very unhappy in your life, then there is a possibility that the unhappiness causes you to awaken because at some point, you realize, either because you've had a spiritual teacher or teaching, or even to some people, it happens spontaneously, the suffering, the psychological suffering that humans undergo can, at some point, bring about an awakened, when you just can't stand it anymore. And something snaps, and suddenly, you, whoosh, it dissolves, and you're, oh, suddenly, an awakening has happened. But it would not have happened if you hadn't gone through those, sometimes, years of suffering.

Quite often, I have encountered people who tell me, I would never have come to you, or understood the books, or been open to anything spiritual if I had not experienced, in some cases, it's a serious, very serious illness, or an accident, or some deep loss in their personal lives. And they come, and perhaps some of you, with some of you, that is also the case, there would not have been an opening if you had not gone through that suffering. And at some point, the suffering awakens you, and that is really the ultimate purpose of suffering, is to awaken.

And then you realize that most suffering is actually unnecessary. It's actually created by the conditioned entity. I'm talking about real, there's physical pain, physical pain isn't suffering.

Suffering is a psychological phenomenon. So, and this suffering can be transcended. If you awaken, you transcend that suffering.

In other words, you transcend unhappiness. You are no longer unhappy. The mind loses its power to make you unhappy because most of your unhappiness is created by unconscious thought processes, not situations.

Most of unhappiness is created not by situations, difficult situations that you encounter, but what your mind is telling you about the difficult situations. The situation itself is as it is. Then you impose an interpretation on it.

The interpretation says this should not be happening. This is awful. Why always to me?

Why did he do that, et cetera, et cetera. Interpretations, what causes the unhappiness and strengthens the fictitious self is the commentary, the interpretation. And that is an amazing realization that most of your unhappiness is created by your mind.

And that's an amazing thing. And then as you become more present, unhappiness disappears from your life. Now, am I saying that you will then always be happy?

No, it's not. Happiness is a little bit superficial to the way I use the term happiness because it usually means, yeah, oh, it's so great, it's wonderful. It feels a bit superficial, although there are some spiritual teachers who use the term happiness and point it to something deeper.

For example, Ramana Maharshi says happiness is your true nature, but he's using it in a different sense. Obviously, there are situations, even as your unhappiness leaves you and you become more present, situations arise where you cannot say that you're happy. Somebody close to you dies.

Your father, your mother, or even a child, or somebody, or something very bad, an accident happens to someone, and you can't say, oh, I'm still happy, I'm so happy, he died. No. Sadness will come if that happens because that's the human on you, still the

sadness comes.

And yet, you are not consumed by the sadness when it comes. You are not consumed by it. It comes as a wave, and you may weep because your father died, your mother died, your child died, or somebody close to you is going through suffering, and you may weep.

And yet, underneath that, there's still a substratum, this is a geological term, there's a substratum of peace underneath it. I don't call that happiness, but it's deeper than that. There is an all-abiding peace underneath it, although there may be tears on the surface, but then they disappear, and you don't perpetuate emotional pain by continuously thinking about it for months and years, and years pass, and you're still unhappy for years.

[Speaker 2] (4:57:20 - 4:57:30)

No, it comes as a wave, and then it subsides, and even when it's there, there is still a presence that you can sense underneath it.

[Speaker 6] (4:57:35 - 4:57:39)

Sometimes people try to exercise willpower,

[Speaker 1] (4:57:40 - 4:57:45)

and they try to manifest that, I really want this,

[Speaker 2] (4:57:47 - 4:57:55)

whatever it is, that is not necessarily a good way to manifest,

[Speaker 1] (4:57:58 - 4:59:35)

because by saying, I want it, you're also saying that you don't have it yet, but the most powerful way to manifest is the feeling that it's already here, and that can only arise out of the fullness of being, of presence in the present moment, because then you merge the image of what you want with a sense of fullness, the fullness of being, so the image and the fullness of being come together, and that is a powerful way of manifesting it, which means you don't need that thing for your happiness anymore, you don't need it for your ultimate fulfillment, the most powerful way to manifest is to regard it as a play or a game, the game of life, the play of life of manifesting, then there's also a sense of detachment from the outcome, an excessive attachment to the desired outcome is also an obstacle to manifesting, if you desperately need something, if you are unhappy, if you don't get it, then there's something wrong, so if you're unhappy, when you don't achieve whatever you want to manifest, then you didn't do it right,

[Speaker 2] (4:59:40 - 4:59:55)

so there needs to be a detachment, so to speak, from the desired outcome,

[Speaker 1] (4:59:56 - 5:02:37)

so that you don't project this, whatever you want to manifest doesn't become a future projection, but whatever you want to manifest needs to be realized as already existing on some level, in the unmanifested, that's why Jesus said, I want to go back to Jesus, because whatever you want to learn about manifestation, just read what he explained it all, in very simple words, he said, whenever you pray for something, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours, that's the entire secret of manifestation already there, and the importance of the words are, not believe that you will receive it, because then there would be too much wanting, I want this, I will get it, no, he said, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours, and it will be given to you, so believing that you have, in other words, it's already there, and how does that happen?

How does that happen when you know, when your senses tell you that it's not there, let's say you live in a trailer, there's nothing wrong with living in a trailer, I love trailers, but let's say you live in a trailer, but you want a nice house, okay, your preference would be a nice house, but are you unhappy in your trailer, or are you appreciating a trailer, and you can hear the pitter-patter of rain on the roof, well, I can hear it now, I'm not in a trailer, I can still hear it from the window pane, so in a trailer, but you want a nice house, okay, where's the house, because you look around, it's not here, are you creating some kind of dissatisfaction by telling yourself a story, this is what my life has come to, I've reduced to living in a trailer, I need to get out of here, is this all disempowering, all those narratives,

[Speaker 2] (5:02:37 - 5:02:48)

telling yourself stories that are not good enough, all very disempowering, yes, your senses are telling you

[Speaker 1] (5:02:48 - 5:05:44)

that you're not living in a nice house, you're just in a trailer, but that's fine for the present moment, so where's the house, the house is in your imagination, in your mind, you can, maybe you visualize it, or maybe you have certain verbal affirmations that you have a lovely house that you live in, and then the visualization and the verbal affirmation, you bring it together, allow the visualization of the verbal affirmation to be empowered by that sense of presence, so that it meets the presence, so that house merges with the sense of presence, and then inside you feel you already have it, and the weird thing is when you finally, when you do get it, let's say next year, or in six months time, or in two years time, or in three years time, when you do get it, the nice, and then suddenly you sit in your nice house, it makes no difference to your inner state anymore, because when you were in your trailer, you were already in the same state of fullness of

life, when you're in the nice house, and you sit in a nice house, and say, okay, it's fine, but you're not, you say, yes, a certain amount of satisfaction may be there, but basically, your inner state is the same as it was before, because you already touched the fullness, you already rooted in the beingness, the dimension of being, the fullness of life. In other words, when it does manifest, you don't suddenly become, oh, I'm so happy, I've got it, oh, finally, I've got, no, it doesn't happen anymore, you say, oh, it's good, but your inner state is not, it's the same as it was before, no matter what you achieve, you already have the foundation for everything, you've already rooted in that, this is why Jesus called it, all these things will be added unto you, it's no more than that, an adding, or use the expression, icing on the cake, and when you have an enormous sense of freedom, of liberation,

[Speaker 2] (5:05:45 - 5:05:52)

because you're no longer, your inner state is no longer dependent on external conditions,

[Speaker 6] (5:05:58 - 5:06:04)

whatever you want to manifest in this world, people want what they want,

[Speaker 1] (5:06:06 - 5:06:39)

better, more abundance in their life, perhaps material abundance, there's a shortage of money, you want to experience an expansion on this dimension, fine, or they want to find some companion in their life, or they may want better health, or a better way of contributing to this world, as the expression goes,

[Speaker 2] (5:06:39 - 5:06:59)

to make a difference in this world, or they want to be a positive force in this world, these are all wonderful things, but the primary thing is to touch that,

[Speaker 1] (5:07:00 - 5:07:54)

to not touch, but to access that dimension within yourself, and stay rooted in that dimension of being, presence, that in itself is so fulfilling, that anything you can manifest becomes the English expression, if English is not your native language, I don't know if you've heard the expression, the icing on the cake, the icing on the cake is the stuff you put on top of that you have a cake, icing on the cake is the stuff you put on top of the cake, little ornaments to make the cake look nice, it's the icing on the cake, but it's not the cake itself is more important

[Speaker 2] (5:07:54 - 5:07:55)

than the icing on the cake,

[Speaker 1] (5:07:55 - 5:08:02)

so the icing on the cake is the step of the realization of being,

[Speaker 2] (5:08:03 - 5:08:04)

that is this,

[Speaker 1] (5:08:05 - 5:09:25)

sorry, that is the cake, no, the icing is whatever you manifest, Jesus said the same thing, he didn't actually use, he was not familiar with English, and the expression icing on the cake didn't exist, I don't know whether they even had cake at that time, but Jesus used the expression, seek only the kingdom of heaven, everything else that you may think you, that you need will be added unto you, seek only the kingdom of heaven, everything else will be added unto you, it's only an addition, it's not the main thing, so whatever in this life, whatever you may want to achieve, it's an adding on to the main thing, the main thing is the kingdom of heaven, which is the realization of being, the realization of that which transcends the personal personality, the realization of being,

[Speaker 2] (5:09:25 - 5:09:43)

see, I am, without adding anything to it, presence itself, and so then, that's the foundation for all manifestation,

[Speaker 1] (5:09:44 - 5:09:53)

then out of that power, maybe some people like to visualize the situation,

[Speaker 2] (5:09:53 - 5:10:05)

others may want to use verbal affirmations, and that's fine, but as you use those things,

[Speaker 1] (5:10:05 - 5:10:09)

you stay connected with that dimension,

[Speaker 2] (5:10:11 - 5:10:16)

so that means when you want something in life,

[Speaker 1] (5:10:19 - 5:11:11)

the wanting is very different from the egoic wanting, because you no longer, you don't need it to be fulfilled or happy, so it's the different kind of wanting, you don't need it to be fulfilled, the fulfillment you have to find in the present moment, you have to go deep enough into the present moment, so you find, and again, quoting Jesus again, because

he talked about it, in the present moment, you find what he called the fullness of life, that's actually the expression that Jesus used, he said, I want you to have the fullness of life, in some translations, it's called abundant life,

[Speaker 2] (5:11:12 - 5:11:35)

I want you to have abundant life, in other translations, it's I want you to have the fullness of life, and that fullness of life does not mean many things, it means that the essence of life itself,

[Speaker 1] (5:11:36 - 5:11:58)

that is the fullness of life, then all those things that you may want will be added, well, maybe not all of them, but many of things will be added unto you, so that is the essence of meditation,

[Speaker 6] (5:11:58 - 5:12:00)

the state of manifestation.

[Speaker 1] (5:12:09 - 5:19:55)

So if you focus on the awakening, whether you are conscious at any moment, the important thing in any situation that you encounter in your life is the state of consciousness with which you meet that situation, what is the state of consciousness in which you face whatever situation arises in the present moment, that determines the next thing, how it's going to go on in the next moment, in the next, how do you, what is, how do you perceive, react to this, whatever is arising in this moment? So whatever is arising in this moment, the situation that arises, they come and go, different situations arise, this is always maybe important, but it of secondary importance, more important is your state of consciousness now.

If you could remember only that and live that, that's really all you need, so whenever you encounter any situation, realize what's my state of consciousness right now, and there's a situation that perhaps you need to deal with, perhaps you need to take action right now, perhaps you, there's nothing you can do and you have to leave it alone, we don't know, but what is your state of consciousness in the present moment, vital question, and in order to answer that question, and it doesn't really have a conceptual answer because you immediately know whether you are present or not, that question can help you become present, what is my state of consciousness right now?

Maybe, are there certain thoughts that are happening that are telling you that something is very wrong? Emotions that are telling you that something is wrong, there are certain thoughts that are telling you you'd rather be somewhere else, very common thing, it's so common people don't realize it, some people live almost continuously as if they were

longing to be somewhere else, but not here and now, to get away from here and now, this isn't right, there's something not right, never, and occasionally it seems right, ah, I have arrived, whatever it is that makes it right for a moment, it's an illusion, I'm in love, this is the completion of my life, I've fallen in love, there's a person who's going to complete me, when you go to a restaurant and observe other people sitting at various tables, you can tell if they're a couple sitting at a table, you can tell whether their relationship is relatively recent, they haven't known each other for very long, they're in that state that they call falling in love, the way they interact is very different from those who have been in a relationship for longer or are married, the ones that have just met, they've fallen in love, they are in a kind of state of delusion, you can see it in their eyes, everybody's playing their part in it, it's a theatrical performance but they don't know it, and that comes to an end at the latest when they start living together, so this, then the essence of all this is awakening, the awakened state of consciousness, and as I mentioned earlier, not surprisingly, this term awakening has been used over thousands of years since the time of the Buddha and before, the essence of the teaching of the Buddha is to awaken, the word Buddha itself means to be awake, the one who is awake, this is a Sanskrit root of the word is to be awake, Buddha is not a, it's not a name of a person, it describes a state of consciousness, and then go to Jesus and there are quite a few parables that talk about not going to sleep, about staying awake, and these are not, these are parables, they're not to be taken literally, obviously, literally you cannot tell a person stay awake because eventually, of course, you'll go to sleep, so we are just using this analogy of awake and asleep in order to point to something that most humans are not yet familiar with, to quote Jesus again from one of the gospels, he said, and this is quite a bit of what we read about Jesus' teaching, may not be quite what he said or distorted, but a few things I can sense are absolutely, literally what he said, a few things here and there, for example, he said, and what I say to you, I say to all, stay awake.

Huh, was that the Buddha or Jesus? No, it was Jesus. Oh, no, he's not talking about the normal state of wakefulness, nobody could stay awake for that long because there's something that pulls you into sleep, so we are not talking about that, we are using that as an analogy.

Everybody knows what it means to awaken in the morning when you've been asleep, which is a particular state of consciousness, you're asleep, and in sleep you have dream state and you have dreamless sleep, you have those two, and then you wake up, you awaken in the morning, and there's a huge difference between the state of sleep and the state of being awake. Everybody experienced that every morning, and you go, suddenly you open your eyes and go, oh, completely different world, you've just awakened. It's a different state of consciousness.

And so this analogy is used because there is something in ordinary consciousness, normal human consciousness, which really should be called unconsciousness, normal human consciousness could also be described as a kind of sleep because it's totally

conditioned by the past.

[Speaker 5] (5:20:02 - 5:20:14)

I wanted to ask, what is the role of being in service to others in one's spiritual development? And I guess you can say it, in the overall evolutionary impulse of the universe, to borrow a phrase from your book.

[Speaker 1] (5:20:15 - 5:31:37)

Okay, thank you. It can be a wonderful spiritual practice if it arises from the right place inside you. And it can also be a strengthening of your ego if it arises from a different place inside you.

Jesus talked about that when he talked about giving arms. Some people, he said, like to be seen when they give arms to the poor. They want to be seen.

And he says, those people are not going to get a reward in heaven. What that means, we'll look at in a second, because they have their reward already. And of course, what their reward already is, is that it's a feeding of the ego.

That's their reward. So now there are two ways of being seen when you give service. Either you give something to somebody.

It could be help, providing active help, or giving something that you have away to somebody to help them, whatever it is. One needs to be able to look at the motivation and there are two ways of being seen. One is to talk about it more than is necessary, or to just make sure that others see what you're doing or aware of what you're doing.

Then you have your reward through that, which is the feeding of the ego. But there's another interior way of seeing it when you have your own self image and you're in service, because it makes you feel better about yourself. It improves your self image.

That is still fine. It may help somebody, so it's a good thing to do, but it doesn't really help you to become free internally. So there's a self image that some people need to feel that they are giving to others.

And there's this image of, I am giving to him, you're the doer. You see yourself as the doer of good and you see yourself as sacrificing something that you give to another. So it improves your ego, really, how you see yourself, because what is ego but an inner self reflection?

Ego is like an inner mirror, where you are not yourself. You have an image of yourself and you live through this mental image of yourself. And the image of yourself is usually not satisfying.

So every ego tries to improve the image of oneself and it can do it in many, many different ways. But, and then you have the image of me, the doer of the good deed, and that really strengthens the image. And then there's another way of giving I think the expression is where the left hand doesn't know what the right hand does or something like that.

The right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing, which means you don't have the self image as you are giving of something that you own. You are helping the other. There's an outflow of energy in whatever form and it's not yours.

It's not yours, you're not giving anything that is yours because ultimately nothing is yours. You're giving energy because that energy in whatever form comes from the source of all energy. All energy derives from one source.

And so you give, you allow yourself to be a vehicle through which this energy flows out into the world. And then the sense of me, the doer isn't there. And the sense of there's a poor person that I am helping isn't there either, these concepts.

So I simply, the process that happens through you and that is the non-egoic way. And then to be of service is a beautiful spiritual practice too because the ego is out of the way, dissolves through that when you realize you are not, you don't own anything ultimately and the energy is not yours. It's universal energy that comes through.

So to be a vehicle for that and in that way you are a help really when that happens, you begin to live in that way. You're always in service to others. You're even in service to others in ordinary situations that would not normally be recognized as service to others because you recognize the other in their essential being, which is the greatest service that you can give somebody far greater than anything material, although there's nothing wrong with that either.

But the greatest service is to recognize the essence or the reality of the other person. Everything else passes away. Everything else is transitory.

But that recognition of the other as God, I don't use that word very often, and one with who you are, to see that that is the greatest service you can give, which this is the realization of who that person truly is beyond the form. Not to come from form, not believing this form is helping that form, but realizing there's something here that is beyond form. So if you're only in form, then you can also very easily deplete yourself.

I'm trying to be helpful. I need to, there are many people who are social workers or therapists, and after a few years, they experience a burnout because they're continuously trying to give and help, and then they need, they can't do it anymore. So in The Power of Now, I believe I wrote that whenever you help people, there needs to be a balance between the, maybe I didn't write it there, there needs to be a balance between

the doing out there and being rooted in being.

And so that's, no matter where you are in life or what you do, otherwise you will lose yourself in your service to others very quickly, and then you're not of service to anybody anymore. Then you'll need therapy yourself, or you'll need charity yourself. So to stay, be rooted in being while you do is essential so that the energy can continue to move through you.

So you're addressing, you can address the causes of human suffering in the external world, sorry, the effects of human suffering in the external world, but the cause of human suffering is in the consciousness, in the human consciousness. So that is vital to be rooted in yourself, not be part of the unconsciousness that produces the dysfunction that is in this world. There are people who try to do their best, even organizations often try to do their best to help others, and they become part sometimes without wanting to, they become part of the mess.

There's infighting in the organization itself. It's amazing how many institutions and organizations, the enormous amount of infighting that there is, they are supposed to help people. Sometimes they are even religious organizations.

The enormous amount of conflict in there, and there's, stop, stop, stop doing. Just connect with the spaciousness that is within you. Stay rooted there and then do.

Never lose the rootedness in this. Remember, I use this and this, the two modalities or dimensions. This is the world of form and doing.

This is the formless and being. So when you help others, the two need to be there also. Always the balance between doing and being.

You cannot solve the problems of this world through doing only, because if there's only doing and you try to solve the problems of the world, you will contribute to the problems of the world. Hence the expression, the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

[Speaker 5] (5:31:43 - 5:31:44)

Thank you very much.

[Speaker 1] (5:32:09 - 6:37:34)

Just making sure that everybody is present. Almost everybody is. I can sense it in the energy field.

Wonderful to be back here after quite a few years in time, but it's still the now, it seems. Strange. Can't get away from it.

Although many humans try very, very hard to get away from it. It's part of the inherited

collective mental patterns, is the compulsion to get away from the now. And that's at the root of a lot of dysfunction in human consciousness.

So here we are, the main purpose of being here. Well, both here in this space at this time, but also the main purpose of being here on this planet, incarnated as a so-called human being. The main purpose is to inhabit the world the now, well, everybody inhabits the now, but to inhabit the now, to be in the now consciously.

And we could call that the awakening of consciousness, learning to be present, which seems to be a process that happens in time. Although presence itself is a timeless state of consciousness. So a slight paradox, perhaps, the ability to live here and be present, develops over time, which means you're present for a while, and you lose it, and you're present again, and you lose it, and then you're present for a little bit longer.

This is the awakening of consciousness, we could call it. And you're all here because something in you is awakening to this dimension of consciousness. There's no, it's no surprise that this term awakening has been used in many spiritual traditions for thousands of years, awakening and to be awake.

That's the most important thing that could happen to a human being here. In fact, it's the only thing of absolute importance in your incarnation here. The only thing of absolute importance is the awake, whether you represent or embody the awakening of consciousness, that is the evolution of consciousness on this planet through you.

And on a larger scale, it is the evolution of consciousness throughout the universe. It is an awakening universe, and you are an essential part of the awakening universe. In fact, you are inseparable from the awakening universe.

You look like a person, but you are the universe in the process of awakening, disguised temporarily as a little person with its problems. And so much going on in my life. I have no time for presents.

Maybe when things are going better, I'll be present, but not now. Got too much on my plate, as the expression goes, English expression. I have a lot on my plate, they say, which means a lot of problems.

Of course, there's no end to the problems. But, so there's only one thing of absolute importance, and that is whether you embody the awakening of consciousness. All the rest is secondary, I call it.

It may be relatively important. All the things that make up your life, what people call my life, this very problematic thing that you call my life, that is all maybe important. Yes, there are things that are important.

Your health is important. Your relationships, of course, situation, important. Your home

situation, your professional work situation, important.

All those things, whether you have money or not, not enough money, all these things are important, relatively important, but not absolutely important. So you have the two levels. I don't deny the relative importance of all these things that make up your so-called life, but what humans neglect and do not realize that there is a transcendent dimension to your life, and to encounter that, to consciously awaken to the transcendent dimension of your life, that is the only thing that is of absolute importance.

Most humans go through life only knowing themselves and knowing the world in one dimension. There was a man that many of you have heard of. Some of you read some of the teachings, Socrates, he lived roughly 2,400 years ago in Greece.

He never wrote anything. His disciples later wrote down what they remembered, and his main disciple was Plato. And Plato then wrote the Socratic dialogues.

We don't know, of course, whether what Plato wrote was exactly what Socrates taught. In a way, what Plato wrote in Plato's writing, Socrates is a literary character. So the characteristic of Platonic dialogues is that Socrates asks questions, his people who come to him for teaching.

He doesn't seem to immediately have the answer. He asks questions, and then the person answers, and he gradually leads the person to the answer. Now, in the dialogues, which some of you may have read, some of them, not perhaps many people these days read, Plato, in the dialogues, the impression is given that Socrates kind of manipulates a little bit the people who come to him, and the impression is given that he already knows the answer.

He just pretends not to know the answer. That's what comes across in the dialogues. And I think that is the character that Plato created, but I believe, and I have evidence for this belief, that that's not actually what happened.

I believe, and I'll tell you in a minute why, that Plato actually started every teaching session from a place of not knowing the answer. And so unlike the impression we get if you read, the Platonic dialogues, that he already knows, he's just pretending not to know. No.

How do I know this? Plato said, I'm sorry, Socrates said, they call me the wisest of all men. And the reason why they call me the wisest of all men is that I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing.

So, and again, when we read it retrospectively, after having read the Platonic dialogues, we think, oh, he's just, again, it's some kind of affectation. He's saying, I know nothing. No, I believe that his genuine starting point was the ability to go into that state of not knowing.

Rather than coming from already having accumulated knowledge just waiting to come out of his head. And this is why he was able to think creatively. He actually taught, one could say, almost he taught humanity how to think for the first time, to think rationally, but his thinking is creative.

It's fresh and new. And it was a process between him and the people who came to him. There was an energy field that arose and out of this energy field, the answers came.

Sometimes they came through him. Sometimes they came through the people who came to him. Another interesting thing he said that's not reported in Plato, but written by another disciple of his called Xenophon.

And he said that Socrates frequently pointed out that he received counsel from a divine voice. And again, that's something that the Western rationalists try to ignore. To them, Plato is the absolutely clear, rational, analytical, conceptual thinker.

And they don't see, because they don't know that dimension within themselves, they don't see the depths out of which his thinking actually came. So he said frequently, as reported by Xenophon, that he received guidance from a divine voice, Socrates. Not in the sense, one doesn't get the sense that some entity spoke through him, but obviously he was referring to inspiration from a dimension within him that was beyond thinking, beyond conceptualization, beyond the rational thought.

So the impression we get of Socrates is really we see half the story. We see only the upper half of the iceberg. Well, it's the iceberg, actually you see far less than half of it.

You see only a tiny fraction of it. And that was when these things are taught at universities and so on. The more important dimension is actually completely missed.

They only look at the upper. What's he saying? But where did all that come from?

What was the state of consciousness out of which such a creative teaching, such creative thinking could arise? And so it is that most these dimensions the dimension of conceptualization of thinking is in everyone, but the dimension of non-conceptual intelligence is also in everyone. But in the same way that we only see one half of the whole or less than one half of the whole when we look at Socrates through the eyes of Plato and through the eyes of Western interpreters, in the same way, most humans go through life only knowing themselves and knowing the world in one dimension.

And that's the, we could call that the dimension of form. And so let's bring it now after having gone to Greece, let's bring it to a very immediately verifiable place here and now. As you sit here, you are aware of yourself as a form identity, obviously, because you are aware of your body, which is a physical form.

You are aware of, although you may not remember your past, you have vaguely, you

know that you have a past, you have a name, you have an address, and you have a life situation that may not be happening right here now unless you're thinking about it, but you have a life situation, your whole personal past is there. And you have thoughts going through your head, perhaps. And this is what most people identify with and know, that's all they know.

They know themselves as that form-based entity. And what else is there? There is that in you which is continuously overlooked because the world of form, which includes thinking, thoughts that continuously arise, the world of form has such a hypnotic pull, it's so seductive that you follow it.

First, you have the senses, the outer senses, but more importantly, you have the seduction of continuously arising interpretations of what the senses, the sensory input. If you look at your consciousness, your state of consciousness, the sensory input plays a relatively small part in what goes on in your mind. A much greater part of what goes in your mind is either an interpretation of the sensory input that's immediately interpreted through the conditioning of your mind, the filter, or it is ignored completely and you are totally absorbed in the stream of thinking.

In other words, totally unaware of your surroundings because you're absorbed in the seduction of thoughts arising and drawing in the totality of your attention, your consciousness, and so you become an entity that is entirely, consists entirely of thought, the me, and you know no other dimension in you. It's all, and anybody else who says, even if you're totally identified with that, even the suggestion that there may be another dimension would immediately be ridiculed or the mind-made entity feel threatened by it. There is a fundamental misconception, an unconscious misconception in human beings, and that misconception is this.

They believe that the world has the ability to make them happy, but this is being withheld from them. And they regard that as a personal insult by life. It's doing, why is life withholding happiness from me?

Why all the things always happen to me? Because it's not happening to others. You read their Facebook posts and they're all happy.

They're eating meals. You see pictures of meals. Look, I'm eating this, oh, okay.

And then you see their happy faces. And not only are they happy, they're also so good-looking. Everybody's good-looking.

That's the technology of filters and stuff. Everyone can look beautiful, even I, they did it to me, too. So people watch that and say, wow, these people's lives are so great.

And mine's so awful. And then you also pretend, because everybody else is pretending, okay, let's go to a restaurant, take a picture of a meal. This is what I'm eating right now.

How? So the misconception is the world is here to make me happy, but it's not doing it. And this is a very serious misconception because it makes your whole life miserable because that really means it's something Something that should be happening is not happening in my life.

Something should, it's just not happening. But of course that misconception is that the world is here to make you happy and it can't do that. It's not here to make you happy.

It's here to make you conscious, to awaken you. Oh, I see. I was wrong all along.

I've been complaining uselessly for 40 years, or whatever your age is, I've been complaining uselessly for 40 years that there's something wrong with the world and my so-called life. But there wasn't anything wrong at all. Because the world is here to awaken me.

If humans are not challenged, or not just humans, any life form only grows through being challenged, which means encounter obstacles and difficulties in their process of growth. Even plants and animals, they all encounter, every life form is precarious. Its existence is precarious.

And it encounters obstacles to its unfoldment. And that ultimately is how evolution happens, through encountering difficulties, obstacles, challenges. Because as you encounter the obstacles and challenges, they seem to block you, and you think life would be much better if I did not have these challenges, but it wouldn't.

Because you would go to sleep even more. So you have the challenges, and that brings about an influx of energy on whatever level, even if it's physical. Every organism already encounters challenges on a physical level.

And then it grows, it gains new strengths by attempting to overcome these limitations. I sometimes mention, for example, if you want it, because it operates on every level. If you want to become physically stronger, you have to exercise, unless you have a job that is already physically hard-working, forces you to exert yourself physically.

Otherwise, you have to exercise, and you have to start doing, if you want to grow stronger, you have to lift weights. I'm not doing it anymore, but I'm just demonstrating. You lift weights.

Now, how does that feel at first? What are you doing? The way I put it is this.

You are making life difficult for your body, because your body is not going to grow stronger unless you make the body's life difficult. The same with jogging. The body doesn't really want to do it, but says, no, no, you have to do it.

Why are you making life difficult for your body? Your body would be so relaxed sitting on

the sofa and watching Netflix. But it's not growing stronger, it's actually getting weaker, because it's not being challenged.

But challenge it, and then there is a demand for added energy. This just operates on the physical level, and this demand for added, there's a moment when there's a gap. You're exerting yourself, and the energy isn't there yet, so it's very hard.

But at some point, the energy comes flooding in, because there was a demand for it. And at that point, you may actually begin to enjoy the physical movement, because there's added energy. And suddenly, ah, strength is increasing.

And this is just on the physical level. There's a demand, and it comes also on a psychological level, it can operate, and on a spiritual level. When you become very unhappy in your life, then there is a possibility that the unhappiness causes you to awaken, because at some point, you realize, either because you've had a spiritual teacher or teaching, or even to some people, it happens spontaneously, the suffering, the psychological suffering that humans undergo can, at some point, bring about an awakening when you just can't stand it anymore. And something snaps, and suddenly you, it dissolves, and you're, oh, suddenly an awakening has happened. But it would not have happened if you hadn't gone through those sometimes years of suffering.

Quite often, I have encountered people who tell me, I would never have come to you or at least understood the books, or been open to anything spiritual, if I had not experienced, in some cases, it's a serious, very serious illness, or an accident, or some deep loss in their personal lives, and they come, and perhaps some of you, with some of you, that is also the case, there would not have been an opening if you had not gone through that suffering, and at some point, the suffering awakens you, and that is really the ultimate purpose of suffering, is to awaken. And then you realize that most suffering is actually unnecessary. It's actually created by the conditioned entity.

I'm talking about real psychological, there's physical pain, physical pain isn't suffering. Suffering is a psychological phenomenon, and this suffering can be transcended if you awaken, you transcend that suffering. In other words, you transcend unhappiness, you are no longer unhappy.

The mind loses its power to make you unhappy, because most of your unhappiness is created by unconscious thought processes, not situations. Most of unhappiness is created not by situations, difficult situations that you encounter, but what your mind is telling you about the difficult situations. The situation itself is as it is.

Then you impose an interpretation on it, the interpretation says this should not be happening, this is awful, why, always to me, why did he do that, et cetera, et cetera, interpretations. What causes the unhappiness and strengthens the fictitious self is the commentary, the interpretation. And that is an amazing realization that most of your

unhappiness is created by your mind.

And that's an amazing thing. And then as you become more present, unhappiness disappears from your life. Now, am I saying that you will then always be happy?

No, it's not, happiness is a little bit superficial, the way I use the term happiness, because it usually means, yeah, ah, it's so great, it's wonderful, it's a bit superficial, although there are some spiritual teachers who use the term happiness and point to something deeper. For example, Ramana Maharshi says happiness is your true nature, but he's using it in a different sense. Obviously, there are situations, even as your unhappiness leaves you and you become more present, situations arise where you cannot say that you're happy, somebody close to you dies, your father, your mother, or even a child or somebody, or something very bad, an accident happens to someone, you, and you can't say, oh, I'm still happy, I'm so happy, he died, no, there's, there's, sadness will come, if that happens, because that's the human on you, still, the sadness comes, and yet, you are not consumed by the sadness when it comes, you are not consumed by it, it comes as a wave, and you may weep, because your father died, your mother died, your child died, or some recourse is going through suffering, and you, you may weep, and yet, underneath that, there is still a substratum, this is a geological term, there's a substratum of peace underneath it, I don't call that happiness, but it's deeper than that, there is an all-abiding peace underneath it, although there may be tears on the surface, but then they disappear, and you don't, you don't perpetuate emotional pain by continuously thinking about it for months and years, and years pass, and you're still unhappy for years, no, it comes as a wave, and then it subsides, and even when it's there, there is still a presence that you can sense underneath it, so in English, we don't have a word that applies to both men and women, I don't know if in Swedish, in German, you have the word mensch, which means, could mean, it's man and woman, but the English language doesn't have that, so you have to say human being, human being, and that's great, I like that, because I realize that, that points to the two dimensions that constitute your reality, you are a human, undoubtedly, which means you have a past, you have mental-emotional conditioning that makes up the person, the ego, the personality, you have a life situation, just, you are a human, and you have your desires as a human, you have your goals, and so on, all the things that you experience as a human, right, okay, but what about being? The being dimension is overlooked by most humans, they are lost in their human nature, they are completely unaware of that transcendent dimension of consciousness that actually is the essential reality to who or what they are, I sometimes call it your essence identity, the essence, your essence identity is the being of you, and the being is timeless, the being is consciousness itself, and then there's a human, and the two are together, and if you can awaken to the beingness of you, then of course you continue to be a human until you are no longer, until the body dissolves, but in the meantime, your task, your mission, your purpose, is to, as a human, to also embody the being, then you have both dimensions in your life,

the limited dimension of here that is temporal, inseparable from time, and you have the transcendent dimension to who you are in the timeless realm of consciousness itself, and that is a continuous realization. At first, it may only come to you as glimpses in brief moments, and you feel suddenly a sense of lightness, and very peaceful, but very intensely alive, and you go, oh, and you may realize you're not thinking in those moments, thinking has subsided, but you haven't fallen asleep, you're awake, and then you may remember those moments, this was so wonderful, sometimes it happens when you go into nature, if you can really be there, nature can help you in your awakening, if you can really be there with all the senses, and be aware of the awareness itself when you are out there in nature, and sometimes it can happen to some humans almost accidentally, they're out climbing a mountain, or they're swimming, or somewhere in nature, and suddenly the person subsides, and just an awareness arises, and they go, oh, oh, and they think it's been caused by the beauty that they see, but it's not really that, it's been caused by the cessation of thinking, and you can have that in the middle of a city, and that's a, this is your continuous practice, is are you able to, as much as possible, let go of habitual, especially habitual, useless, self-serving thinking, thinking that only feeds the fictitious self, the ego, the entity, that loves, actually loves its problems, whether it's, it says, no, I don't love my problems, yes, you do, because you talk and think about them continuously, in fact, you create them continuously, through unconscious thinking, you create them, no, no, I don't, yes, you do.

And that this entity then becomes, as you, at first you have glimpses, sometimes accidental, they may only be a few seconds, and then perhaps a little bit longer, and then the two, gradually, the being and the human kind of merge, the being seeps into the human, and so the human, the conditioned entity, the human becomes less and less obnoxious, and less and less dysfunctional, and less and less creating completely unnecessary and absurd suffering for yourself and others, completely unnecessary and absurd suffering, created unconsciously by the ego, this entity, in its attempt to strengthen itself, it loves its problems and its enemies, oh, I feel much bigger, anger is great, and really, and you can revive, talk about it all the time, this is completely asleep, completely asleep, and so, as the awakening happens, the presence begins to sometimes completely replace the person, and at other times, it kind of shines through the person, in the same way that a light shines through the lampshade, the light shines through the lampshade, and the person still, yes, the person still has its conditioning, to some extent, and can never be totally free of the conditioning, there's always certain ways in which you behave, that's part to do with how you were brought up, your environment, all the conditioning, the country, even the language that you speak is the form of mental conditioning, all those things, they are still there, but the most dysfunctional and unhappiness-creating patterns, they subside more and more, certain patterns remain, as long as you are a person, a human, certain patterns remain, but not the heavy, deeply unhappy and obnoxious patterns, they gradually dissolve, and all is left are certain idiosyncrasies in your personality, and so on, that's okay, so that, the

person remains, but it undergoes a substantial transformation, it no longer creates suffering, even in the face of challenges, because they continue to happen, even as you awaken, the universe will continue to present you with challenges, new ones, no matter what situation you go into, at first you, oh, this is great, I'm in a new situation, and before you know it, oh, it comes up from behind, another challenge, it won't, the universe won't leave you alone, even, but the wonderful thing is, if you're not undergoing the awakening process, every challenge that arises will make you more unconscious, it will strengthen the self, the self that is reacting, is reactive, and complaining all the time, and reacting, so the challenge will make you more unconscious, if you are not awakening yet, and that is, you can verify that in your, perhaps in your own experience, when things go wrong, there is a reactive entity there, that gets, works itself up, either you become angry, or despondent, or whatever the reactivity is, people like, in professions such as lawyers, often encounter people in their most unconscious states, because they tend to go to lawyers when things go wrong, they're being sued, or the divorce is happening, divorce lawyers, to be a divorce lawyer, potentially, could be a very enlightening job, because you encounter deep human unconsciousness, which most people, when they, in a conflict situation like that, become more unconscious than they are normally, deeply unconscious, and so that's, when you're being challenged by life, the challenge will create a reaction, and the reaction will, you become completely identified with the reaction, and you can even more unconscious in your normal state, which is unconscious enough, but it's now, it's more unconscious.

Oh, I can't stop thinking about it, and now, as you're awakening, challenge comes again, and then you suddenly see the possibility of actually being more intensely present when a challenge comes, and you go, it's like a, you know what a dimmer switch is on an electrical switch, you can turn up the light, a dimmer switch, so when a challenge comes, something goes wrong, so to speak, a difficult person arises, a difficult situation arises, some kind of loss arises, whatever kind of loss it may be, and instead of reacting, and becoming more unconscious, you suddenly sense you're becoming more present in the face of a challenge, and that is when the challenges of the world are becoming helpful to you, rather than make you unconscious, they can intensify the awakening process. Dear Eckhart, if you had to name the moment, achievement, accomplishment, of which you are most proud, what would you say? Well, some of you know it already, because I have spoken about it once or twice, I don't have to think anymore when I don't want to think, I can stop thinking, just like that, that's my greatest achievement.

It's a good thing I'm not in a position anymore where I have to fill in and submit a resume, list your accomplishments, I might get a job at an enlightened company, I don't know if they exist, I did meet somebody at Google, who is responsible for the spiritual dimension of well-being of Google, I might get a job there if he doesn't want it anymore, the job title, which is official, his job title is Jolly Good Fellow, it's on his card, I don't remember his name, he's written some books too, so that's a great thing for a company

to have somebody who is responsible for the spiritual well-being of the company as a whole and the employees, not a professional therapist or anything like that, although that's not bad either, well, depending what kind of therapy he practices, yes, and if that is your achievement, then your life is a success story, if you are in prison and you've messed everything up in your life and you're in prison or whatever, wherever you are, a homeless shelter and suddenly you're able to enter prison, your life is a success story, well, it's not even a story, it's just a success, it's a success because there's no story anymore, why is it a success?

Because the shift in consciousness has happened into awakening, which is the very purpose of human existence here, I want, as you mentioned yesterday, and it's also the question here, I want to know the mind of God, the rest is details, said Einstein, well, that's basically what it is, the mind of God is in you, the mind of God is, your consciousness is the emanation of the mind of God, as I said, in the same way as the sunlight is an emanation of the sun, so if you know your consciousness, you know the mind of God and you realize you are an aspect of the mind of God and then knowing that is the fulfillment of human existence, the universe suddenly knows itself and the rest is details, what happens then in your life doesn't matter that much, but the likelihood is that there will be a great improvement because when you live in that connectedness, that even affects the externals of your life, it affects the way in which you relate to people, the energy that you emanate on a daily basis and the energy that you emanate on a daily basis is reflected back to you as certain events and people you meet and how people relate to you, how people like you or dislike you, that is the energy you emanate comes back and so if you live in that presence, if you're able to access the awareness dimension, then it changes very much how you relate to things, situations and people and that in turn determines how things, situations, people relate to you, so the tendency is for the universe to become, to be experienced as more helpful rather than antagonistic, not meaning though that it will be free of challenges, it will continue to challenge you one way or another also, so challenges come in mixed in with many helpful things and suddenly there, there you have another challenge and the challenge will just take you deeper again or it'll pull you out of presence and then you'll notice it and then it'll take you deeper. And so as the adult builds up a, see the identifications that form the identity and unfortunately it's never quite enough, there's always something missing and quite often it is painful to compare yourself to others, the more am I, do I have more or less than the others, so the ego is to do with what I can do, how I look, what I have, my possessions, abilities, playing an instrument, sports, good at this, good at that, whatever it may be. For a long time I struggled with an identity because I had an unhappy sense of identity, I couldn't identify with possessions because my parents didn't have any possessions or just basic ones and I didn't have any, I couldn't identify with a great, strong, good-looking body, I didn't have that, so I was struggling, I felt diminished, let's say compared to others I felt diminished and it's been very painful and so after many years I suddenly realized, ah, I got it, I know what I can do, I can be

more knowledgeable than others, I can read books and then I can talk about these books intelligently and I can show others that I know more than they do. It worked, but it didn't make me happy, I was still very insecure and basically unhappy, trying to show off how, what a great intellectual I was, dropping names of famous authors, I just dropped Kafka but that was for another reason, that was not for egoic reasons, I can assure you, and so you live in a precarious way, feeling, my identity is not complete yet, I need something, there's something missing that's a very fundamental feeling for humans who are trapped in their own ego, there's something missing, there's something not right and so they are seeking, seeking, seeking and they are seeking to add something to who I am or who I think I am, it's always conceptual and so the ego also needs boundaries, the ego needs a boundary, it needs to say this is I, me and this is the other, without the boundary it cannot sustain its sense of identity, so it needs to feel better than or superior to somebody else, the boundary around the ego needs some kind of enemy, the other, people have, I forgot to mention an important part of conceptual identity for many people is also collective identity, it's not just personal, you also take things from the collective, the country where you live or your religion, whatever it may be or your political persuasion and that becomes part of your identity, your conceptual identity of a collective identity, it could also be race, if you are a racist then you identify with your race as superior than another race, another conceptual identity, religion can be an important part of your conceptual identity too and what it usually means, my religion is the only one that is true and all the others are false, when you hear that, it's a clear sign that it is the ego speaking, the ego has adopted, identified with the religion and it needs to pronounce all the others as inferior, only ours or mine or our religion is the only true one, all the others are going to hell, we are the only ones who are going to heaven, well that's very satisfying to the ego, wow, I'm one of the few chosen ones, look at me, wonderful, but then you need others that disagree with you because without the others you cannot sustain your conceptual identity, if the others don't disagree then your identity becomes fluid and dissolves, so you need the others who have opposite interpretations of your same religion or some other religion and they are your enemy because they are probably controlled by the devil, and so there, that's them, politically you can do it too, you have a political system that pronounces the other as not just inferior, as actually evil, that's all kinds, collective identities, any kind of prejudice that people have is to do with conceptual identity, race is one that many people have, if you don't have much else in your life you could identify with your race and say okay, our race is the greatest and all the others are inferior, and then that gives you your sense of identity, now you can see how you need the other, let's, in an imaginary scenario, let's say a person is a racist, one morning he or she wakes up, not having become a beetle as in Kafka, no, one morning he or she wakes up, suddenly finds himself on another planet and then begins to realize that everybody on this planet is exactly the same race as me, there is no other race, in fact, on this planet where this person suddenly finds himself, the word race does not even exist, because if everybody is the same race and the same skin color, you will not even have a word for race, so the entire identity that was built up

on race would collapse immediately, without the other, it cannot be sustained, you could also say, you can take any example, let's say you have a noisy Italian sports car, because Italian sports cars are meant to be noisy, to attract attention, so you have a Lamborghini and it's painted red to attract even more attention and it gives your ego a boost, look at me, everybody looking because it's so noisy, and then in another imaginary scenario, the next day you wake up in another dimension and in this dimension every human being has the same red Lamborghini or whatever it is, immediately your ego cannot use it anymore, it becomes totally meaningless, so then your conceptual identity would then collapse, without the other, the egoic identity desperately needs the other, who is not the different me, the enemy, it loves its enemies, that's actually how many wars even start like that, you demonize an entire group of people, make them into an enemy, and then you feel a much stronger sense of identity, another identity is for people to identify even with their gender, male or female, I'm not sure gender has become a problematic thing, I'll put that aside for a moment, let's just say there's male and female, and in older cultures or still in some cultures now, an important part for a person's identity is actually their gender, if they are male, for example, they are male, that becomes a very important part of their conceptual sense of self, because it is implied that male is automatically superior to female, so you already have 50%, you can be a very stupid man, but you have superiority over 50% of the population that is female, no matter how stupid you are, you're a man, in some countries that still operates more or less, so I'm a man, and in some countries also females are conditioned to identify with and act out a particular way of behaving and speaking, female, they don't know it's totally conditioned, it's part of their identity, so I've been talking about the ego, the human ego, one could talk for hours, but I won't go on and on, you're all familiar with the ego, because at some point, before you went through a spiritual awakening, you also had an ego.

So, it all comes back to conceptual identity, is that who I am, is that all there is to me, or is there maybe a dimension to who I am that I have never known, I'm not aware of at all, is there more, or am I just this ego entity, the I, and that's why we are here, we need to, part of awakening to this dimension that exists in every human being, the possibility of realizing that there is in you the potential of a deeper dimension of consciousness in every human, and the discovery of this deeper dimension of consciousness in every human is the most important part of your life journey here on this planet. It is probably not possible to eliminate difficult humans completely from your life, challenging humans, unconscious humans, of course there are degrees of unconsciousness, there are some very extreme forms of unconsciousness, such as humans who are so unconscious that they perpetuate violence and so on, so extreme forms of unconsciousness, and then

[Speaker 2] (6:37:35 - 6:37:40)

less extreme forms of unconsciousness, but it's still unconsciousness.

[Speaker 1] (6:37:50 - 6:49:11)

So, as far as extreme forms of unconsciousness are concerned, yes, it would be probably advisable not to associate with humans who manifest extreme forms of unconsciousness, so not to live with a violent partner, or it could also be just emotional violence or somebody who's getting the grip of deep negative emotions or pain bodies that almost never leaves, but then there are other more regular forms of unconsciousness that most humans that you meet will manifest.

First of all, there are family members, everybody has family members, and that in itself is challenging. Family can be a very loving and wonderful thing in some cases, and in other cases family can be extraordinarily challenging, and sometimes even both. You can have a parent and you can love them, but they can also be very challenging.

That reminds me, it's very funny, well it's funny or maybe not, when I was a child I had a dream once, one night, and that was such a remarkable dream that I remembered it all my life. I must have been about 11 or 12. Before I tell you the dream, I have to add my dad was very much in the grip of his ego and prone to outbursts of extreme anger.

Not directed, fortunately, not directed towards me, but usually directed towards my mother and sometimes other people too. So, living with him was like living with an unexploded bomb that could go off at any moment. So, I had this dream.

I had just killed my dad and I had cut him into little pieces and put him into a sack and I hid the sack under the bed. And after I had done that, the door opened and my dad came home from work and I ran towards him and I gave him a hug. Into such amazing dreams, so it means I both hated him and I loved him.

Both emotions existed because there was a real being there behind the anger and his ego. There was a being and I loved the being of my dad, but then there was the ego which I hated and so these ambivalent emotions were there at the same time. And often it is the case that humans, especially family members, you may have a very conflicting relationship.

You feel drawn to them and yet they're so difficult. But now, unless these are extreme forms of unconsciousness, they're family members, you just have to accept that these are family members. Maybe you don't live with them anymore, but you see them occasionally or whatever, you have interactions.

And that is a good way of practice, unless they are, as I said, unless they display extreme forms of unconsciousness, it is better to continue with and use them as challenging humans that help you become more conscious. Because you become more conscious of your reactions towards their challenging behavior. So that your reactivity is for you to, you awaken by becoming conscious of your reactivity, whatever, so that

you're able to accept them as they are without resistance.

And that is a great shift that happened to me after I went through the awakening when I was 29. After that, the relationship with my father, of course, I was no longer living with him. I left at 18.

One of the happiest moments of my life when I left home, not just my dad, it's also his second marriage. And so I left wonderful, but I was still at this ambivalent emotions towards him. At 29, after the awakening, I was able to accept him totally.

It was easier because I was not a child would not be able to do that, a child living, but was able to accept him totally allow him his ego. When whenever we met come together, it was fine. And he changed a little.

His ego was not less, less and less extreme, it was still there. But chunks broke off his ego. So in some areas of his life, he was actually quite conscious suddenly.

And then in other areas of his life, the ego was still there very strongly. But that was the life that was a wonderful liberation when I was able to accept him, instead of demanding that he should be more conscious. That is a demand that that nobody couldn't meet.

If you demand of another human, they should be more conscious. They can't because nobody can display behavior that is beyond their level of consciousness. So whatever this behavior they display is a reflection of their level of consciousness.

And many humans have still have very little choice, because they are totally in the grip of their conditioning, the mental emotional conditioning. And so that applies not, of course, not just to family members. There are also then other humans that you interact with in daily life, in your work, usually.

Most people go, many people go to work, and then you interact with other humans. And then you don't have much of a choice, you have to interact, or you leave, you have to leave your job. But then you go into another job, and you get other unconscious humans.

So you might as well do it there. Unless again, there's extreme forms, some companies are totally toxic, then it might be better and more wise to leave. But unless they're extremely unconscious and toxic, then you might as well practice there.

So you practice with difficult humans. And you practice by, first of all, dropping the demand that they should be different. It doesn't mean that you put up with everything that they do.

Sometimes you may have to state clearly, your behavior is not acceptable. And I don't want not having it. If you're able to do that, probably can't do it.

If you do it to the director of your company, then it has to be associated with giving in

your notice that you want to leave, then you can tell him that your behavior is unacceptable. But if you're not ready to leave yet, then maybe better not to tell him that. Unless you want to be sacked, that's another possibility.

But seeking out other humans who are more conscious, that kind of happens more naturally. As you grow in consciousness, you more naturally will come into contact and attract other humans who are also more conscious, who are also awakening. And it could even happen that some people who are in your immediate environment begin to awaken because of you.

There's no guarantee. It's certainly not everybody. But it could be that some, because they may notice, maybe not even consciously notice, but something in them registers that you are not quite the same person that you were before.

And so, and you do not reinforce or feed their unconsciousness, because you're, you bring in more presence. And then you may be able to, but not by thinking that I need to make this person more conscious, because that's not how it works. It works in a more organic way.

If you do not contribute to unconscious interactions, then perhaps, let's say a friend of yours is very much almost addicted to gossiping about others. And the main thing when you get together is that he or she starts gossiping about others. And in the past, you perhaps participated.

And now as you are awakening, you no longer participate. Then it's possible that some of their presence that the stream of gossiping, which is a mind stream of a particular type, may not, because you're not feeling it anymore, it may begin to dissipate. Because it means it's easier with two people gossiping.

One feeds the other, they feed themselves mutually, feed each other. But it could also happen that this person begins to lose interest in you, and will then interact less and less, and you don't meet them much anymore. And finally, you don't hear of them anymore, or they say, you're no fun anymore.

So that could happen.

[Speaker 2] (6:49:11 - 6:49:21)

But also, as I said, more conscious humans will most likely also come into your life. So you have both.

[Speaker 1] (6:49:40 - 7:16:34)

But your happiness or fulfillment does not depend on any other human's acceptance of who you are, that would be a deluded thought. It sometimes happens that members of

the same family evolve at very different rates. So the sense of separation can come if one member of the family evolves spiritually much more rapidly than another.

And that is something that you cannot do anything about. You need to accept that your sisters, their viewpoints and their judgments of you arise because of the way in which they have been conditioned by their culture. So this is part of the mental conditioning.

There's nothing really personal about it. They have been conditioned in a certain way. To some extent, you have gone beyond your conditioning because anybody who begins to awaken spiritually goes beyond, also simultaneously, begins to go beyond their cultural conditioning.

And that applies whether you're from Somalia, whether you're from Australia or whether you're in the United States or anywhere. If you are not awakening spiritually, you are your behavior, your viewpoints, your opinions, the way in which you judge other people, the way in which you judge other cultures, all that is conditioned by the content of your mind, the culture and family and so on that you grew up in. So you are basically a conditioned entity.

And your opinions and viewpoints are not really yours. They are the product of your conditioning. And so that's the case with your sisters.

So sometimes the same thing applies to close friends. I've had many similar questions of people who had a close friendship with someone, and sometimes it's the case with a husband and wife. Often I've had many, in many cases, one of them, either she or he, began to evolve and awaken spiritually.

And a gap suddenly arose between the one that was still totally conditioned and the one that was beginning to awaken spiritually. In some cases, they can still live together. It depends on the nature and degree of the person who is not yet awakening spiritually.

Depends that the ways in which this non-awakened state manifests differs from person to person. Some you can live with, you can awaken, and you know your partner is not, and you can totally surrender to that fact that your partner is not awakening yet. In other cases, it will create a hostility, a growing hostility in your partner.

The ego objects to the other beings becoming so different and changing it. They don't understand you anymore. And so, and then a separation happens.

With husband and wife, then it sometimes happens that they do that different ways. In the case of a family member, there's a link that remains, so you cannot just say, we go our different ways. There's always a certain bond between you and your family members.

But the first thing is, you ask me what I would do. What I would do is, first of all,

understand why. And this is what I've just been talking about.

If you understand, then already it is a helpful thing. If you don't understand why is this happening, but if you understand that these people act out of their, your sisters act out of their conditioning, you have begun, already are in the process of transcending your conditioning. Whether or not they will also awaken or begin to awaken spiritually, we don't know.

So in the meantime, all you can do, or all I could, if I were you, all I could do was continue to recognize the limitation in them. It is, they are conditioned in their responses. Recognize that that is what happens, not to blame them for it, not to feel guilty because you make them angry, because you don't.

It's their conditioning that makes them angry. So you don't feel guilty because you are different from them. I wouldn't.

I'm talking about, I would not feel guilty. I would simply recognize compassionately what it is that makes them say and do the things they say and do towards you. And you cannot even explain to them.

You can't, you, it would be futile to say to them, I know why you're saying that to me because you're totally conditioned. What? They wouldn't know what you're talking about because they know nothing outside of their conditioning.

So compassion arises, compassion and acceptance of a person's limitations. You can still hold them in your heart and realize there is an essence in them that is lovable. And you can continue to be connected to that essence of who they are.

If they refuse to talk to you, then you have to accept and surrender that you can hold them in your meditation. You can even sometimes look at their photo, look beyond the surface appearance of who they are, and the photo can be a little help to establish the inner connection. Then you don't need the photo anymore to establish the inner connection, feel the inner connection with their innermost selves.

And even if they don't talk to you, that can still be there. And then you send in the conventional new age language, you send loving energy to them. There's some truth in that.

So there's a loving, still a loving connection, even though you don't talk. So recognition to summarize, recognition of why this is happening, accepting their, your family member's limitations and not judging them. They judge you, of course, because their judgments of you are part of their conditioning, but you don't need to judge them.

You simply see that this is a limitation of their state of consciousness at this present time. They will awaken too, in time, eventually, this lifetime or the next. So then you can

begin to feel peaceful about it so that it does not become a source of suffering, continuous source of suffering at the back of your mind.

So if you can be in a loving relationship, even though you might not meet them much anymore, or at all, you can stay in a state of love towards them, compassionately accept their limitations, and then see what happens. Sometimes in that way, a healing does happen. It may be that at some point, there's a crack in their conditioning, and they're suddenly able to accept you, who you are for who you are now.

But your happiness or fulfillment does not depend on any other human's acceptance of who you are. That would be a deluded thought. You think you can only be happy if these people accept and understand you.

Some people have that with their parents. They say, my dad, my father, they don't understand me at all. It's terrible, terrible.

I'm trying to explain what I'm at. Of course, they cannot understand you. It's beyond their comprehension if you have awakened spiritually, and they haven't.

So compassionately accept that they cannot understand you. Instead of trying to explain yourself to them, just be there in a loving way with them when you meet for Christmas or Thanksgiving, and you hear all the judgments coming at you from them. You should have, why don't you, look where it's taken you, look at your sister, she married a millionaire, and you are into that weird kind of meditation stuff that's not getting you anywhere.

Whatever judgments come, say, okay, I know that this is what you think and feel, and I think and feel differently, that's all. So you don't need to justify accepting people's limitations and suddenly realizing whether or not your father, your mother, your sister, your brother, or anybody else close to you accepts you for who you are is really not, you become free of the need to be accepted, but you can nevertheless have a deeper connection, keep that deeper connection and connectedness with them. And the other is, another great thing you want to practice is, and this is so important, awareness of sense perceptions without labeling.

You can do it anywhere, in the middle of the city, in the country, on the beach, at home, in the office, in the restaurant, in a cafe. Let's take, let's take cafe as an example. You sit, you're having a cup of tea or coffee, and you sit in a cafe and use it, instead of going to your phone, use it as a spiritual practice.

It's a cafe practice, but you don't have to drink coffee with it, you can drink anything. It's a public place, and you sit there for 10 minutes, let's say, looking around at all, what's happening around you, all the people and what they are doing, and sitting, most of them will be on their phones, that's okay, but you are not. And you look, and there's the room,

and you might see what's happening in the street also.

And as you sit there, you get in touch with your presence, the sense of presence and beingness. Maybe feel the inner body, and feel your own presence, the presence of consciousness, you as consciousness. And then you look around, and you listen, there are sounds, and you look.

And your practice is not to label your sense perceptions mentally. In other words, you're just looking, and as you look, feel the presence of yourself. And then look around in thoughtless awareness.

It's a wonderful practice. And you will love what you see, because every human is an expression of the one life, in their own way. Every human is quite lovely and lovable, but you don't have to say that in your mind.

It's a realization of the aliveness of every human. But you cannot sense the aliveness of every other human if you cannot sense your own aliveness. So your own presence or aliveness is the basis for sensing the aliveness of other humans.

And by doing that, you love them, in a way. Not the clinging love that says, oh, I want you. You're quite happy with them doing what they do.

You don't need to want to interact, necessarily. You just be there. You just love them.

They're all manifestations of the one, the one life. And they're all so different. Isn't that amazing?

Not a single human is the same. Out of billions, they're all different. That's wonderful.

And yet, the essence in each one is the one essence that is one with your essence. And you can sense that if you don't label them. So that's a lovely practice, to enjoy the aliveness of things in a limited space.

If you sit, I mean, you're in a relatively passive situation when you sit in a cafe, there's a coffee, you might be tea, whatever you are drinking, but you're not doing much. So it's relatively easy to be there as the presence. And you don't have to do it in a way that people necessarily notice, or they probably won't notice anyway, because they're on their phones.

They don't see anything. But if they happen to be looking up from their phones, it might look a bit weird that you are not on your phone. There's something wrong with you.

So that's one place. Another place, of course, is in nature. And that's a wonderful way to practice also.

Choose a spot where you stand or sit somewhere. And lying is not immediately advisable

if you lie down, because that can easily take you below thought. You want to remain above thought.

So you stand or sit, and then nature. That might even be easier than in a cafe, because in a cafe, there's lots of things still happening that stimulate thought, because people are talking, or the general energy field is mind. If you go into nature, you're in no mind.

And then the same way you perceive, in that alert awareness, the miraculous life forms around you that have no name, if you don't give them names, have no name. And if you don't obscure things with names, you can sense the inherent aliveness. They speak to you.

So there's another dimension that reveals itself to you that is everywhere in nature that you don't know when you're stuck in your mind and label things. And that's a beautiful way of practicing presence. Don't destroy nature by getting...

I mean, dreadfully, you're sitting under a tree in this miraculous place, the same place where the Buddha found enlightenment, sitting under a tree, and you get out your phone. It's such a wonderful opportunity under this... Trees are wonderful beings.

And you sit under the tree, and there's the vastness of the sky and nature, and to just be there in that moment as, not as a person, but as a conscious presence. And don't overdo it. Even if you just do it for 10 minutes, just be there.

Watch. So the practice is sense perception without mentally labeling them. It requires an alertness.

It's a choice. You make that choice to... And that's a shift in consciousness.

And every time you do that, you are not there as a person. The person is kind of temporarily disappeared. You are there as a conscious presence, as the deeper presence of life itself.

And that's beautiful. So that's a practice. Same thing, practice nature, practice in a public place.

You can practice at every traffic light, if you're driving. Every time the light is red, practice presence. Red light, presence.

And look at the beauty of that red light. It's not an... Ultimately, everything is natural, because that's energy, too.

It's a manifestation of energy, the red traffic light. It has an aliveness, too. It sounds weird, but it does.

And so there's a light, and it's telling you to be present. People have worked out... I don't

know who did it.

Somebody reaches the age of 70, and they start driving at the age of 20. Somebody worked out how many... Unfortunately, I don't retain a lot of information in my mind.

So you would have spent a year or so or more of your life sitting at traffic lights. And for most people, that is something they don't like. But why not choose that?

Be present. Also, another thing I mentioned, little activities, washing your hands, be there completely, takes you out of your mind, sensory perception. Ah, water, beautiful.

Maybe scent of soap. And you give it complete attention, which means you're not thinking. You're just experiencing.

Elevator, lift, elevator, you're waiting for it. You can either get out your phone, or you can just be... choosing presence.

And the more you choose it, the easier it gets, and the deeper you go into presence. And then you realize after a while, you didn't really choose. Presence chose you.

Presence wanted to come through you. Because sometimes people ask me, well, who is choosing presence? Well, it's just one way of looking at it.

Presence, when you get out of the way as a person, presence is there. That is... So use all those things to transform your life.

Use the opportunities of obstacles when they arise, seemingly obstacles. Accept each moment as if you had chosen it. That's vital.

So I've given you these portals into out of the mind and into presence. And of course, a primordial portal into presence is the present moment. So that is always there.

Coming into the present moment is an aspect of every practice that I have given. It always involves coming into the, whether you go into the body, whether you're aware of your breathing, whether you practice sensory perception without labeling, it always involves being more conscious and more fully in the present moment. So therefore, an associated practice is to simply become aware of the present moment.

And that's an amazing thing too, because, and it's so vital because there is nothing else. So if you never fully acknowledge the is-ness of this moment, you miss the whole thing, which is called your life. You miss the whole thing if you're not aware of the present moment.

But how to become aware of the present moment is, encapsulates all that we have spoken about. First step, it has first level of being aware of the present moment is to be aware of your sense perceptions. That brings, it's the first step into the present moment.

Then perhaps you're aware of your breathing and your inner body and sense perception at the same time. So first you become aware of where you are, what's around you, or what you're doing. And then you go deeper into the present moment, and the essence of the present moment is you.

So if you get the essence of what we call the present moment is consciousness, and consciousness is the space in which everything happens. Consciousness is, the one thing that never changes is the present moment. It's always now, it's always now.

And what is the present moment in essence? In essence, the present moment is not what happens in the present moment. The deeper essence is the present moment is the space for whatever happens.

And there's the space like the canvas, however you want to call it. So you are aware of yourself ultimately as the present moment. And this realization that ultimately you are the present moment, those words had not come to me when I was writing the power of now.

So it never got into the book, because the words came to me after I'd already written the book, said, oh, I should have put that in. Oh no, why didn't I put that in? Oh, you're no good.

I didn't do that. So you can, you sense the essence of what present moment really means as consciousness. The one thing that is beyond any doubt that you are right now conscious, and that's not the right way of putting it.

If I say you are conscious, you are consciousness is better. You are consciousness. Everything else could be a dream or an illusion, including this room and me talking.

Am I dreaming this? He's talking, he's saying, I may be dreaming this. Okay.

Maybe you are, maybe all of sensory perceived so-called reality is a kind of dream. It's a way of looking at it. Certainly everything dissolves quickly.

And then where was it? Where is it gone? It's gone.

And the dream dissolves too. But what remains beyond any doubt, even if it is all a dream, there needs to be a consciousness for the dream to be perceived. And you are that.

But what scientists don't look at is their own consciousness. So you have the two realms, the two mysteries, the outer space, and then the macrocosm, and you have the microcosm for most fundamental mystery. The fact that the universe is conscious, that is the most amazing miracle.

[Speaker 3] (7:16:58 - 7:17:28)

Our goal is to reach as many people as possible with this new program, and that there's a generous scholarship fund that's available as well, because we want to make sure that all of the people that are interested in a spiritual guide to conscious manifestation can attend. And now it is a true honor to bring forward the renowned author of The Power of Now and a New Earth, Eckhart Tolle.

[Speaker 1] (7:17:29 - 7:17:42)

Eckhart, welcome. Thank you, Tammy, and hello to everybody, wherever you are in this present moment.

[Speaker 3] (7:17:49 - 7:17:52)

Are you ready, Eckhart, for our first question?

[Speaker 1] (7:17:53 - 7:17:55)

I suppose I'm ready, yes.

[Speaker 3] (7:17:57 - 7:18:13)

You're always ready. Here we go. I've heard different things about manifesting, and I'm curious to know what Eckhart's approach is and what makes it a spiritual approach versus other kinds of approaches.

[Speaker 2] (7:18:17 - 7:18:18)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (7:18:40 - 7:35:47)

Perhaps the conventional approach to manifestation, we could, before I go into that, we could talk of manifestation, conscious manifestation, and spiritually conscious manifestation as a temporary division. Manifestation happens continuously, whether you're aware of it or not. It simply means that there's a correlation between your state of consciousness, which we may also call vibrational frequency, and the way in which you experience reality or the world.

There's a correlation between your reality, your world, and your state of consciousness. That is undoubtedly true. Now, for most humans, most humans are still not aware of that.

They believe that the world they find themselves in, their reality, is a totally separate thing from their inner being. They've been put into this reality. Everybody is born into a particular set of circumstances.

Then humans grow up, and they become conditioned. In some way, they're already

conditioned when they are born, although there is a belief that every baby is a blank slate, but that is not entirely true at all. Every baby already comes into this world with a certain baggage, which in Eastern terminology, we could call karma.

Obviously, the baby is not a blank slate. Even if you don't believe in karma, you can see that genetic, your genes play a particular role. As far as the person that you become is concerned, your genes have a lot to do with it.

Even the time you spent in the womb of your mother already is a form of conditioning. We all know if a mother indulges in alcohol, that can negatively affect the life of the fetus and the embryo, and then has negative effects for the rest of his or her life. Certainly, there are two factors when you look at external circumstances.

There's the conventional expression of nurture and nature. Nurture and nature, that means nature means who or what you are is your conditioning. Nurture is the external circumstances of your life that contribute to who you become as a human being, the world you're born into.

We all get conditioned in a particular way through our upbringing. I would suggest we're already conditioned through past lifetimes. The emotional state of our mother even before we were born, et cetera, et cetera.

Everybody comes into life with a particular set of mental-emotional conditioning. This mental-emotional conditioning determines how you perceive the world. It determines the way in which you respond or react to the circumstances of your life, what you say, et cetera.

You manifest your life unconsciously through the mental-emotional conditioning that you are born into. There's no freedom in that. You don't really have a choice because in that state, there's a lack of awareness.

You do not realize that you perpetuate the circumstances of your life according to your conditioning. Often, you find that the same dysfunction that were already manifested in the parent's life and the grandparent's life are then repeated and perpetuated in the child's life. Then that child has children and similar dysfunctions operate again because you inherit them.

The conditioning of your thinking mind that you identify with when you're trapped in the egoic consciousness determines how you respond or rather react to what's going on around you in your life. And you can see with very unconscious people, they always blame the circumstances of their life for what's wrong. It's always somebody else's fault that there's something not right in my life.

There's always somebody else to blame, whether it's actual human beings or fate or God or the politicians or the social conditions. I'm not denying that social conditions often are

an important factor, but people then put all the blame outside. They never look within into their own conditioning.

And so, they manifest the circumstances of their life unconsciously, often in a very negative way, because that's all ego. This unconscious identification with the mental emotional conditioning is ego. And so, they manifest from their ego.

They react to circumstances. And let's say something challenging or negative happens to you, a person or whatever it may be, and you react in the same old way. And by reacting against something challenging, you amplify it through your reaction.

You can see it when you react to an unpleasant or unconscious person. If you react, you amplify his or her unconsciousness. And you even amplify your own unconsciousness through your reaction.

If you react to difficult circumstances in your life, like lack of money, unpleasant living situation, problematic relationships, if you react against the circumstances of your life, which always manifests in the present moment, you amplify those circumstances through your reaction. And so, people don't realize that. So, they become trapped in a vicious circle.

Something negative happens, and they react negatively and amplify that thing and make it even worse. And that then becomes a confirmation that they have always been right in assuming that the world is doing it to me. So, you become the victim of the world in your own perception.

You become the victim of other people. You're the victim of the world. You're complaining constantly.

And by doing that, you perpetuate all those things that are happening to you. And not only that, you amplify them. That's karma.

You're experiencing, you're manifesting through your karma and create new karma. You make other people unhappy. You're already unhappy.

You make more people unhappy. You create new, in Eastern terms, that is karma. So, everybody's manifesting without knowing it.

Then a moment comes when you become conscious of the conditioning of your mind and emotions, your mental emotional conditioning. And then you become, you realize that it is possible for you, to some extent, step out of the conditioning of your mental emotional field. And this means awareness has arisen in you, a vital part of awakening.

You begin to become aware of your own conditioning. And then some freedom comes in. Choice comes in.

The possibility of choosing when you become conscious in certain situations, that you no longer need to react in the old conditioned way. You become conscious of what your mind is doing. The self-talk that everybody lives with, the voice in the head.

What kind of self-talk are you experiencing in your mind? Is it very negative? What is the running commentary in your mind when you go through your life every day?

What is it saying about certain circumstances and people that you encounter every day? What is that? And suddenly, you become aware of that running commentary, the voice in the head.

And that awareness is the beginning of your awakening. And when that awareness arises, you can begin by changing dysfunctional mind patterns as you discover them. For example, you may discover that you do a lot of mental complaining, both internally and externally, about other people and situations.

There's always something to complain about. And suddenly, you become aware of it. And that awareness gives you some degree of freedom.

And you can then detect the pattern and say, I'm going to let go of that. And instead, you can welcome circumstances as they arise. Instead of treating every circumstance that arises and every challenge as an enemy, you can begin to welcome it.

That's the beginning of conscious manifestation. So, you realize there is an important correlation between what your inner being and your outer circumstance. And then slowly you realize, as you change the way in which you respond to situations, the situations also begin to change.

And that's at first in a very subtle way. That first, I realized that first time in my life, when I was 17 years old, somebody left some books with us. And for the first time I read about that there is your state of consciousness and your life experience are linked.

And that was my first awakening. It wasn't the deepest awakening yet, but it was an awakening. And then you can begin to consciously manifest by making positive statements, instead of negative statements, by manifesting gratitude towards whatever arises in the present moment, appreciation and gratitude instead of complaining.

And then things actually improve slowly, you notice a definite change, you let go of the patterns of resistance, which are loosely linked to the egoic consciousness, and gradually experience positive change in your life. So, that's already the beginning of conscious manifestation. So, when you look at conscious manifestation in conventional terms, and the assumption is that you realize that you can bring about circumstances, more positive circumstances in your life.

And the assumption is that the goal is to that when you get, you can get what you want.

And when you get what you want, that will be the fulfillment of your life, the satisfying fulfillment of your life is getting what you want. That's often the assumption behind conventional ways of manifesting.

That, however, has certain limitations. Because even if you become very good at getting what you want, you will find at some point that even that is not ultimately satisfying. You will find no matter what you get, and what you achieve, whatever new set of circumstances arise in your life, you will find there too, it is not in the long term, not ultimately fulfilling, there's always still something missing.

And often, the wonderful thing that you manifested can easily turn around and create suffering again, turn into its opposite. I've met many people who were able to manifest great fame and wealth, I've met quite a few of those people. And so they were poor, then they manifested.

One person I know wrote himself a check, a fictitious bank check with $10 million with his name on, put it in his wallet. And every day, every time he took out his wallet, he saw the check written to himself. He didn't have any money written to himself $10 million.

And for I don't know how long, three years, four years, every day he saw this check of $10 million. And four years or so later, he received a check for $10 million. Well, he happened to be an actor, and a good one.

So that we need to look into that also. But that's how it worked. And the next stage of the story is great success.

And then in the midst of this person's successful story, in the midst of the mansion that he then lived in, deep depression overcame him. Periods of despair and depression and darkness. How is that possible?

He got what he wanted. And that's not an isolated case. That is very common.

So getting what you want is not the ultimate aim. It will not be the ultimate fulfillment. It can be a byproduct of something deeper.

[Speaker 2] (7:35:48 - 7:35:51)

A byproduct of something deeper.

[Speaker 1] (7:35:51 - 7:39:15)

And this something deeper is realizing that in life, there are two dimensions. There's a dimension of doing and activity and action. And there's a dimension of being.

Being and doing. If there's only doing in your life, and manifesting has a lot to do with doing, because the first doing is having a thought. It's already a doing.

You create a thought. And then the thought, if done rightly, may create an external reality. But it still operates in the realm of doing.

That's fine. We need to do here. But we are also here to awaken to a deeper dimension of who we are.

We are here to awaken to the dimension of being. And the foundation, then, for whatever you do in your manifestation practice, the foundation is not something that you create at some future point. The foundation is going more deeply into being.

It's the realization of being. And that only can be realized in the still. And you realize of the presence within you.

You could call it the consciousness, the light of consciousness. You realize that you are. There's suddenly a depth that you discover within yourself.

And that is the depth of being. And that is true spiritual awakening. It's realizing the essence of who you are, which is not the person.

The person is here to do things, but there is something deeper, a source of who or what you are. And that's being. So, you realize your own beingness.

I am. In that moment of stillness, you realize the beingness of you without any thought or reference to your personal history. There's only the realization that when you forget about who or what you are as a person, when you forget about your age and your gender and your problems, what is left?

Forget about all that. What is left of you without that? There's only this moment.

And you realize that there's something essential that's left. That's the sense of beingness, of being.

[Speaker 6] (7:39:15 - 7:39:16)

I am.

[Speaker 1] (7:39:17 - 7:47:11)

That is the realization of being. And that becomes the foundation for everything. When you once you're rooted in that, from there you can manifest.

But it is whatever you you manifest in your life, it will come from a deeper level from that realization of being rather than from egoic consciousness. Because the only way to transcend ego is to discover that which is beyond the mental emotional entity that you usually call yourself, that you think you are. The only way to transcend ego is to go to that deeper place within yourself.

Then that deeper place has a vast intelligence in that depth of being that is connected to universal intelligence, not your personal intelligence. There's a vast intelligence and that intelligence can use your mind. It can flow into your mind and through that this intelligence can then create and manifest in your life whatever it wishes to create.

In order to bring more goodness, more harmony, more love, more abundance into this world, it can create through you and use your mind. And that is spiritual, that is what is spiritual way of manifesting. No longer from ego, but from the deeper level of being.

And so that's, one could say that then whatever it is that you create in your life, what you manifest in your life, is always a byproduct of something deeper. It's always, whatever circumstances arise in your life, they are important, but not absolutely important. They are relatively important.

All these things, your health, your financial situation, your relationship, your, whatever you do for work, activities, they're all important, relatively important, but not absolutely important. But only one thing is absolutely important and that is your connectedness with being, the realization of being, to be rooted in that deeper level of who you are. And so the ability to manifest is not the ultimate spiritual realization.

It is a lovely thing and for many people it's an important thing in here as, because you live in two dimensions. You live in the dimension of this world of doing activity, thinking, doing, but you are also connected to the transcendent dimension, that spiritual dimension. Now, that connectedness with the spiritual dimension is most vitally important thing in your life.

All you need is to discover that. Then if you have enough time, then from there you can manifest. I'm saying if you have enough time, because it could be that you discover that dimension when you are 80 years old, or maybe you are very ill and you discover it just a month before you die.

There's not much time to manifest anything externally. It's no longer necessary for you in those circumstances. But the most vital thing, however, has already happened.

It's the realization of being. So manifestation is important, but not absolutely important. They go together, the being and the doings.

But the rootedness in being is the foundation for spiritual manifestation. So always go back to being. So whenever you begin to use affirmations or visualizations of what you want in your life, go into stillness first.

Connect with that, the depths of stillness within yourself. Become aware of yourself as the being rather than the person, the presence, here and now. So all power resides in the present moment, because that is, you access the power of the present moment.

From there, you can manifest. And that we could call spiritual manifestation. And what it is that you want to manifest from that level also will no longer be egoically motivated.

It comes from a deeper place. So I could talk about that for a long, long time. But it's vital to realize where the power actually lies.

The power lies in the presence, in the present moment. The point of power is always in the present moment, but the present moment is ultimately the essence of who or what you are. And so that's the most vital thing in your life, that realization.

And that then changes the vibrational frequency of your entire being changes. And even if you never used any affirmation, you would still manifest certain life situations and circumstances around you because of your vibrational frequency. If you did not have any desire to manifest anything in particular, you would still manifest a reality around you that corresponds in whatever way to the vibrational frequency of your being.

So you're always manifesting, even if you're not really interested in manifesting, the vibrational frequency of your being will still determine the way in which you experience this world, your reality. So this is a very deep thing. One could talk about it for a long time.

I've already spoken for too long. Let's go on to the next question. They're all connected anyway.

[Speaker 3] (7:47:14 - 7:47:23)

The next question, Eckhart, is why is teaching on conscious manifestation at this particular time important and relevant for you?

[Speaker 1] (7:47:24 - 7:47:32)

Yes. No, we're living in a very interesting time. Interesting.

[Speaker 2] (7:47:34 - 7:47:47)

We are moving into a time of, collectively, of, I would say, turmoil, perhaps even chaos.

[Speaker 1] (7:47:48 - 8:00:15)

There is always, in the world, on every level, there's always the play between order and chaos. There are periods of dissolution, things breaking apart, and there are periods of time when things come together again. So one could say, well, isn't this a particularly difficult time if you want to manifest something growing, something new coming into this world?

But the collective around you is manifesting dissolution and chaos and decay. Well, it's

doubly important in these circumstances to pay particular attention to the, what I just called the vibrational frequency of your being, because there is a gravitational pull around you in the collective towards unconsciousness. Because that is, many people, when things begin to fall apart, in many people's lives that manifest this, their level of consciousness goes down.

They become very reactive. There's conflict between groups of people, enemies, within countries even, not just one country against other countries, even within countries, there is and will be increasing turmoil. And there's a gravitational pull of that that could draw you into unconsciousness also.

So you need to stay awake and then you manifest. Your contribution could be very important so that you manifest to a greater or lesser degree a certain field of light around you so that you don't get drawn into the collective darkness that's descending. So there is, even if you don't manifest anything in particular, although you may do, you are connected with the depths of being or presence.

And that not only protects you to a great extent, it protects you, but it also alleviates the effects of the surrounding unconsciousness. It counteracts the collective unconsciousness. So if a sufficient number of humans are able to stay conscious, that will also manifest in their outer environment.

And perhaps the chaos will not be as extreme as it would otherwise have been, because your state of consciousness affects the world. It's a correlation between your state of consciousness and your surrounding reality. So at this particular time, it's very important to stay conscious.

And then if you stay conscious, that will have a certain effect on the world. So it becomes a manifestation of what happens around you. Whether perhaps where you live will be less affected by the turmoil that's coming, or if it does touch you, if the turmoil does come to you and touch you from the external, internally, you will be still be free.

Internally, you will be at peace. Even if it does come, there is a transcendent dimension within you that you're aware of. And nobody can predict how or to what degree the turmoil in this world will affect you.

But what we do know is your vibrational frequency is of utmost importance here, not only for yourself, but also for the totality. Let's see as many humans as possible. If they stay conscious, not being drawn into the collective unconsciousness, which manifests everywhere, even on the internet and social media, it's everywhere, the collective.

Don't get drawn into that. Stay conscious so that you manifest a more conscious world, even though the totality around you may be drawn into deep unconsciousness and turmoil. And another important thing is, it is at a time of collective, whether individual or

collective, suffering, because when this turmoil comes, it brings about suffering for humans.

It's a time of suffering that the possibility arises for more humans to awaken out of their egoic consciousness. Many will be drawn into unconsciousness, yes. But for others, the possibility arises of awakening out of the egoic and through the suffering.

Suffering is the great awakener. Suffering can make you more unconscious. Often it is the case.

Suffering can also awaken you. The ultimate purpose of suffering is to awaken. It doesn't always happen.

You may have to wait another lifetime, and another, and another, and suffer more, and more, and more, and finally it happens. Or it could happen in this lifetime that the suffering comes, and it brings about an awakening. I've met countless people who have only become interested in awakening, or not interested in it, have come to realize that what this is about is extremely important, because they have suffered.

And this brings me to another point connected with manifestation. Sometimes you don't get always what you want to manifest. Now there can be, I think we may have another question about that, but let me already say this.

Sometimes people say, I'm trying to manifest and it's not working. I'm not getting it. Well, there can be various reasons for that.

I may go into these reasons a bit later. But one reason can be that, let's say, I met somebody years ago who told me the story. She wanted to become, help people through spiritual teaching.

And she'd read many books and been to many workshops. And she knew all the basics about spirituality, and she wanted to manifest being a teacher, and helping many people. And money was coming in also, all the abundance was manifesting as she was helping more and more people.

But it wasn't happening. And nobody came. Very few people came.

And then not only that, then very bad things happened. She fell ill. She developed a potentially life-threatening illness.

She lost her job and her home. Everything was collapsing. The total opposite of successful manifestation.

Everything was collapsing around her. But she just managed to survive that illness. But in the process of losing many things, even a possible approaching early death, a deepening happened within her.

A deepening happened. The ego dissolved. And when she realized she might die, because she just had a serious illness, something happened within her.

And she realized the depths of the being of the presence within through surrender. And suddenly she realized she became healed, and suddenly she realized that the best thing that ever happened to her was losing all that, her home and her job, and being ill, because that brought about the deepening. And then she became a true spiritual teacher.

So, she didn't get what she wanted, because there was something deeper that was necessary to happen. And so, that can be the case. Perhaps what you want is not ultimately what it is that you need.

So, sometimes when you are not able to manifest, that may be the reason that the universal intelligence knows more than you, your limited intelligence, or you may have some connectedness, but not enough to know what it is that you need. And you would never want to manifest anything negative, nor do you need to. But when it does happen, use that to go deeper.

When a period of turmoil happens in your life, a period of suffering, use that to go deeper, live in acceptance of the present moment. And then you emerge again. And then your powers will be greatly enhanced, their powers of manifestation, because they will come from a deeper place.

So, it's a very complex matter. I believe we may have a question, Tammy, about people not succeeding and wondering why it's not happening. Is that right?

[Speaker 3] (8:00:17 - 8:00:39)

That's exactly right. People say things like, I've done everything I was supposed to do, and still things haven't turned out the way that I hoped they would. Various aspects of my life continue to be really hard.

I'm disappointed and frustrated, and I'm not sure conscious manifestation works, or at least it doesn't seem to be working for me.

[Speaker 1] (8:00:40 - 8:27:52)

Yes, that's not uncommon to hear that. There are many possible reasons. I just mentioned one, you need to suffer a bit more for deepening to happen.

But realize if that is the case, make sure that the suffering does not make you unconscious through reactivity, and resistance, so that whatever challenge arises in your life, you're able to use it to go deeper. But there can be many other reasons why it's not working for you. For example, you're not doing it right.

That's one. You're not doing it right. You are not fully, there's not enough energy flowing into it.

Or you're confusing energy that flows into your manifestation, you're confusing it with willpower. Willpower is wanting to make something happen. And that is counterproductive.

That is not how true manifestation works. Now, willpower is something that, in some cases, it can work, but then it works for other reasons. And willpower, when you create something through sheer willpower, force rather than power, I would call it force.

But what we call willpower is that, let's say you want abundance in your life. I'm going to make it happen. Abundance, I have kind of agreed, let's say, yeah, okay, you already know that you should use the present tense rather than the future tense for manifestation practice, for affirmations.

Never the future tense. Okay. By the way, if you ever use the future tense, I am going to be successful in this.

I'm going to be healthy. I'm going to be living in a nice place. Whatever it is, that never works because you put into the future, then it remains in the future.

Every affirmation needs to be in the present tense. As Jesus already said, when you ask for something, when you pray for something, believe that you have received it and it will be yours. Believe that you have received it, he said, and it will be yours, which means he did not say believe that you will receive it.

Jesus said, believe that you have received it. So that's a little secret for manifestation is to feel that it is already a reality in your life. You visualize it, but that feeling of fullness comes from the depths of being.

So whatever it is that you want to manifest externally, the feeling of already having it comes from the connectedness with being because being is the, being is the, I sometimes call it, it's a little, it's a strange analogy, that's the cream, but whatever, the rest is the skimmed milk that is part of that. So you connect with the essence of it all, the essence of all life. And then you bring a visual image or also verbally, a verbal affirmation and or a visual image, and at the same time, you feel the power of presence within you.

You feel that, and then you bring two together. And there you have it, you're ready. It's already, it's a reality already.

And so you're manifesting from the fullness of being, not wanting something to happen, pushing and wanting. No, you are not doing it. You're simply putting it out so that the universal intelligence can bring it about.

It's not, you are not doing it. So willpower could be an obstacle if you think you need willpower. That's not it.

In fact, you need, yes, intensity, yes, intensity, the energy, there is an energy behind your manifestation practice, but it's not willpower, there's no force. It's a relaxed energy that flows. And you feel the fullness of being is a lovely expression.

Jesus, by the way, also used that expression. He said, I want you to have the fullness of life, the fullness of being. In some translations of the New Testament, it's translated as abundant life.

I want you to have abundant life. I want you to have the fullness of life, he said. And another thing, he was a master of manifestation, but he said, seek only the kingdom of heaven, which is the transcendent dimension within you, that is within you.

And all the things that you need will be added onto you. Added on. This is exactly what I said a little earlier.

Whatever it is, anything that you manifest is a byproduct of something deeper. It's not the ultimate thing. It's a byproduct of something deeper.

So, Jesus called it, seek only the kingdom of heaven, and all else will be added onto you. It's very profound. And then you can also have a playful attitude towards manifestation rather than a desperate need to make something happen.

If you have a desperate need to make something happen, you're already sabotaging yourself through that. Manifestation needs to happen out of the fullness of being rather than a sense of lack, a sense of neediness. That doesn't really work very well.

Through sheer hard work and determination, yes, you could still achieve things, but you'll be very unhappy doing it. The action won't make you happy, and the end result won't make you happy. So, that's not where we want to go.

What is the point in achieving anything if on your way towards achieving it, you're in a continuous state of stress? And when you achieved it, it doesn't make you happy. You still feel there's something missing.

So, there's no point in any activity or endeavor if it induces stress within yourself. Any stress that arises while you are engaged in any activity is counterproductive. You would be sabotaging your manifestation practice through stress.

The moment stress arises, you're sabotaging yourself. You're making yourself unhappy and everybody around you, too. It's horrible.

And there are many people who conduct their whole life like that, continuously in the state of stress. And nothing to do with true manifestation practice. So, for manifestation

to be powerful, we need to be aware that a very dangerous obstacle to successful manifestation is the arising of stress while you're engaged in any activity towards that desired goal.

Are you stressed out? Stop. That's not how to go about it.

If you're not enjoying the activity, your manifestation cannot be powerful. You need to enjoy the doing of it. And you enjoy the doing by continuously being connected with the dimension of being while you do.

And connected with that is excessive attachment to a result can be a great obstacle to manifestation. And you desperately want this particular thing to happen. But in the meantime, you disregard if you're not stressed.

Perhaps you're stressed, too. But you disregard the present moment because you really want to arrive there already. So, while you're engaged in this and that, it's regarded as not really important.

You don't really want to be here because you haven't arrived at this thing that you want to achieve yet. So, you're doing things with resistance, reluctance, don't really want to be doing it. All that is counterproductive.

So, we have to be really alert continuously. What is your state of consciousness in the present moment? So, there needs to be an enjoyment of the doing towards that.

But not an excess. You know what your goal is. But the doing is as important as the arriving.

One could say more important because everything is a journey. Your life is a continuous journey. The doing is more important than the arriving.

Enjoy the doing. And even if you never arrive, at least you enjoy the journey. It makes no difference because you're already connected with the essence of being.

Whether or not that thing happens or not, whether or not you arrive or not is secondary. It doesn't really matter. The more you're connected with the essence of being, the more you can treat the activities and the world around you as a play.

In India, they have the term Leela, the divine play. You participate in this play of forms that come and go. And so, you can treat your manifestation in a playful manner that is most powerful.

In that way, yes. Energy, yes. But also detachment from the outcome.

You don't need a particular outcome anymore to enhance your sense of identity, which is the ego says. When I'm wealthy, then I will be somebody. When I'm wealthy, somebody

will recognize me for who or what I am.

I will get recognition. People will envy me. Ego stuff.

And so, all these things are unhelpful and counterproductive. If you're looking for an identity in some particular outcome, it's not going to work because nothing external, no achievement or possession can actually show you your true identity. Your true identity is inseparable from the present moment, has nothing to do with any circumstances in your life.

You have to become still, present, go within and realize the beingness of you. You are. The rest is just a play of form.

Einstein said, I want to know the mind of God. The rest is details. To me, what that means is Einstein had a strong mystical part to him.

And the mind of God is that. The mind of God is the consciousness that you are. It emanates from, it's an emanation of source, which is God.

So, the rest is just details. Whatever you manifest is the details. It's fine.

And adding onto, as Jesus said, and adding onto. So, all these, not realizing that, they can all be obstacles in your manifestation practice and prevent you from manifesting. So, especially remember stress, etc., excessive attachment to outcome. Another reason why manifestation may not be working for you is time scale. Some things come very quickly. They can come in a matter of a day or two.

Some things take weeks or months. It depends what your manifestation is. In some cases, it can take years, three, four years, and suddenly it's there, depending what it is.

So, also give it enough time. Do not, another thing, obsessively engaging in manifestation practices also is not helpful. Don't overdo it.

There's a time when you do it, and then you let go of it. Just come back in the present moment. Do it, and then you let go.

There may be a time period when you practice intensively, and then for a little while, for a few days or a week or two or three, you leave it, except perhaps for little practices at the beginning and end of each day. So, not overdoing it. Intensity, yes, but not obsessively engaging in it.

Another reason why it may not be working for you is, well, let's put it bluntly, you have a stupid goal, a totally unrealistic goal that you want to achieve. Of course, miracles are possible. Miracles do happen in this world.

There's no doubt what we call miracles. However, there is such a thing as a totally

unrealistic goal, and you need to know that. I could give countless examples.

Let's say, if I could be deluding myself, okay, I'm very, very present. I can feel the presence, and it's great, which means, okay, I'm going to become a great golf player. I'm going to play golf now, and I'm going to succeed because the presence is manifesting through me, and I become one of the greatest players of golf in the world.

Then you start. Now, the question is, are you practicing? How long have you been playing?

How old are you? The body has something to do with it, too. Are you enjoying it, or do you just have this idea of you as the greatest golf player, but you're not even totally enjoying it?

This could be anything. Golf could be a substitute for anything. Are you practicing every day for five hours so that the vehicle is ready for presence to flow into it and use it?

If the vehicle is not ready, presence cannot flow into it and use it, no matter how much time you spend with your manifestation practice. Is the vehicle ready? Could be anything.

I want to be a great musician. Okay. Are you good at it?

Okay, you may not be good at it right now. That doesn't necessarily mean you cannot be a good musician, but do you enjoy playing? Yes.

Do you play every day? Yes, I play every day for 15 minutes, and I like it. Okay.

The vehicle cannot be ready for presence to flow into it and power it. A good musician practices every day for hours, but the question is, are you enjoying it? If you're not enjoying it, why do it?

Are you only thinking of the desired outcome? When I reach this outcome, then I will enjoy it. This is not uncommon, dysfunctional thinking.

You're not enjoying the journey towards it, but when you get it, then you'll be happy, you tell yourself. That brings me to an important point that's connected with that. You may have heard the impression, I think the impression is deferred gratification, so-called postponed satisfaction, postponed gratification, which usually what it means is here's one person who is indulging in sensory pleasures and enjoying drinking and watching Netflix and hanging around, not hanging around with friends, whatever, just not pursuing any.

Next door, there's another person, let's say it's a young man or woman, there's another person who wants to go to university and study to become this or that, works every day, studies. So, one person is continuous sensory gratification every moment in conventional

terms. The other person is deferring gratification and saying, well, I need to work hard because I want to achieve there.

And usually what you are told is deferred gratification actually is preferable to indulging in low-level sensory pleasures and enjoying a low-level sensory enjoyment of this or that. So, for a successful life, you're usually told you need to be practicing deferred gratification, postponed gratification or fulfillment. On the surface, this is very true, but I would suggest it's not the whole truth.

It's also dangerous because if you continuously defer gratification, which means deferred gratification, you're not gratified in the moment, but you're hoping that you will achieve your goal. But after practicing deferred gratification, postponed gratification for several years, it becomes a mind pattern within you. And even when you reach your goal, you won't be gratified because the mind pattern is you're always doing this.

Then there's the next goal that you need to achieve. It's not enough. Now is the next one.

So, you're continuously deferring gratification, never finding gratification. So, what you need to do, you need to let go of inner resistance to what you're doing in the present moment so that you can enjoy the doing of it. Be aware of your inner state while you're engaged in your activity towards a particular goal, yes, but why not enjoy the doing while you're doing it instead of hoping that the enjoyment will come when you finally achieve your goal?

Because it's most likely that the enjoyment will not last very long at all. So, that's part of successful activity is, yes, I would not say delay gratification, no, learn how to be gratified, so to speak, in the present moment while engaged in the activity. So, let's go back for a moment to unrealistic goals.

You need to make sure that you enjoy the journey towards your goal. You also need to enjoy that you take appropriate action so that it's not just the affirmation that you use, there needs to be also appropriate action towards it, then it becomes much more powerful. At the same time, if there's not appropriate action, it may still work depending on what it is, or it may not.

It's certainly usually more powerful as action behind it. So, again, unrealistic goals are many. Make sure that your goal is not whatever you want to achieve is not unrealistic.

I gave the example of golf playing, I could say almost anything if I can. At my age, there are many things that I can no longer do, because of the age of the body. So, no matter how many affirmations I use, thousand times a day that I'm going to win a gold medal in the Paris Olympics that are coming up this summer, in whatever capacity, it's not going to happen.

I cannot think of any sport that this aging body would be good at and achieve a gold medal, no matter how I'm giving an extremely absurd example, but it's easy to delude yourself. I haven't watched cable television for a long time, there used to be this thing on television about American Idol, where people would come hoping to become famous, they had a talent. Later, other countries copied it, I think in England it was called Britain has got talent, or something like that.

And so, these people, they're all performing, given two or three minutes to do their performance. And sometimes you would say, some of these people are so deluded about their abilities that it's quite funny. They were so dreadfully bad, and they thought they could be the greatest singer in the world, but they were just dreadfully bad.

True, true. Yes, it's quite funny, discrepancy between why not do something that you might succeed in. Having said that, it's also true that sometimes people who seem very unlikely to be successful in one particular thing, prove to be successful.

For example, there was this famous singer, I think Louis Armstrong, I believe it was, he had this croaky, deep voice. I can't think of any songs, but he had this, nobody would have thought that he could be a singer. I mean, if he had gone to American Idol and done, please, your voice is not suitable to be a singer.

But the miraculous thing is, despite the fact that in conventional terms, I would say his voice is not, there was an essence that moved into this voice that otherwise would not have been considered suitable, that was enormously powerful in his songs. So that can happen too.

[Speaker 2] (8:27:57 - 8:28:00)

But that's an exceptional case.

[Speaker 1] (8:28:07 - 8:29:24)

So at some point, we'll talk more about these obstacles. I've mentioned quite a few obstacles in your manifestation practice. All these things are, one learns after a while, if you make a few mistakes, you don't succeed and you rectify.

But really, I can't summarize it all, but the journey is the most important thing. It makes important that the present moment becomes enjoyable, whatever it is. The present moment is the portal into the spiritual dimension.

So never lose touch with the power of the present moment. And then that power can flow into whatever it is that you do. Then you achieve the balance between being and doing.

And that is a skillful life, a life that is of service and brings harmony into this world, loving

kindness.

[Speaker 2] (8:29:25 - 8:29:36)

And all this comes to you when you are in balance between being and doing.

[Speaker 1] (8:29:37 - 8:30:57)

And then the being, the power of being flows into what you do. And that is the power that is behind manifestation. I could go on for many hours, but I won't.

So I believe we have explored quite a few interesting aspects of manifestation and deeper things that lie behind manifestation. And so it's now a question of, before we conclude, I invite you to, right now, here, become aware of yourself, not of yourself as a person, but of yourself as a being behind the person, the presence. Nothing to do with your personal history.

Nothing to do with how old you are.

[Speaker 2] (8:31:00 - 8:31:02)

Nothing to do with your gender.

[Speaker 1] (8:31:11 - 8:31:13)

Nothing to do with your life history.

[Speaker 2] (8:31:24 - 8:31:53)

The power of presence. The mind becomes still for a moment, but something remains. You can call it stillness or presence.

And it's very simple.

[Speaker 1] (8:31:53 - 8:32:23)

That's the essence of who or what you are. And once you have that, the rest is an adding onto, or as Einstein said, it's details. Or we can use the conventional expression, it's the icing on the cake.

That's all.

[Speaker 3] (8:32:33 - 8:34:05)

Thank you so very much, Eckhart, for this session that covered so much ground. And I want to thank everyone for joining us, our studio Zoom room audience, all of you on YouTube and Facebook, and who joined us on the player page. And a special thank you to our friends at Eckhart Teachings.

Also, as I mentioned earlier, this session is something of an introduction to the upcoming program, The Spiritual Guide to Conscious Manifestation. It's a four-month immersion in the practice of conscious manifestation from a spiritual perspective that begins on May 30th with a four-day online retreat. And you can visit EckhartTolle.com for more information and to register. And again, I want to repeat that we have a generous scholarship program available. We want to make sure that all of the people worldwide who are interested in The Spiritual Guide to Conscious Manifestation can attend. So please come join us.

Once again, Eckhart, thank you so much. And I hope to be with many of you as part of our four-month online immersion program, if it sounds true. Thank you.

Thanks so much for being with us, waking up the world together. Thank you. Thanks, Eckhart.

[Speaker 7] (8:34:06 - 8:34:07)

Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (8:34:10 - 8:34:11)

Thanks, friends.

[Speaker 7] (8:34:57 - 8:34:57)

Bye.

[Speaker 5] (8:35:20 - 8:35:22)

Thank you so much for joining us. Thank you, Eckhart.

[Speaker 2] (8:35:23 - 8:35:24)

Thank you.

[Speaker 5] (8:35:25 - 8:35:27)

Wonderful to be with you all tonight.

[Speaker 2] (8:35:27 - 8:35:28)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (8:35:35 - 9:06:32)

So here you practice being. And one of the very helpful practices here in order to avoid adding to the clutter of your mind and in fact letting go of the clutter is practice awareness of the simplicity of the present moment, the sense perceptions of the present

moment. Acknowledge the is-ness of all things.

Give it attention and refrain as much as possible from labeling your sense perceptions. That is not impossible. It is, of course, a deep-seated habit to continuously have to label your sense perception, what you're seeing.

Oh, look at that. Isn't that nice? Oh, this was something I saw last year.

My aunt had that. Oh, I wish I had that in my book. Where can you buy that?

I wonder. Oh, isn't this interesting? I wonder what the tree is called.

There's nothing wrong with finding the names of trees, but don't lose yourself in that. There is another way of being in the world that is non-conceptual, that awakens the non-conceptual dimension, the non-conceptual intelligence in you. Because there is a vast intelligence waiting to be awakened, and I call it non-conceptual intelligence.

It cannot be measured in IQ tests. So you might have a high IQ, doesn't mean you're closer to awakening. In fact, if you're identified with all the knowledge, then you're further away from awakening, if you're identified with it.

Practicing sense perception without labeling mentally, and this is a beautiful, and this is part of the beingness of the practice of being. Sense perception is visual, auditory, the birds, visual, sky, amazing things to see, vegetation, plants, even feeling the breeze on your skin, the warm air. Sometimes the wind can get quite strong here.

We had it on the first day I came here, there's a trade wind that sometimes blows across the ocean that can last for hours and days, and it's a continuous, and you can feel it on your skin. It's not unpleasant, and so you can feel that, and breathe whatever scent there may be in the air, all senses, and experience that. Be there as the awareness for the sense perceptions, and that awareness is the space, so you are the space for whatever arises, but knowingly.

Right now, here we can practice that. Sit here, aware of the room, the totality of it. Look around, ceiling, there's a man sitting on the chair up here.

Who is that? Body, okay. Quite pleasant, but I'm already labeling it, but you don't, there's no need to label it, just let it be.

So in this moment, there are your sense perceptions, mostly visual probably, and auditory, because that's the sound of my voice, sense perceptions. And yes, of course, you might feel the weight of your body on the chair, all that, yes. And what else is there?

That which enables the sense perceptions to be in, we could call that consciousness, but that is the essence of you, that is the deep I. So can you be aware of that deep I at the same time as you perceive through your senses, whatever is there? So you have, there

are two dimensions here now.

One dimension is the world, whatever it contains, and you take that in through sensory perception. And then you're aware of the awareness that makes sensory perception possible. You can, you feel that you are, you can sense the I am.

And here things happen, but in the depths of your being, nothing is happening. It's beyond any happening, because there's no time there. There's time here everywhere.

Time is the thing that enables you to do everything that you do. Time does that, and then it takes everything away. Time gives you all kinds of stuff, and it helps, it makes you grow, and they get stronger, and then it starts eroding you, and then in the end it kills you.

Oh my God. Time is killing me. Some people, I already realized that a long time ago, that time is killing, but the older one gets, the more you realize that time is engaged in killing you.

And that's scary. If all that you know of yourself is the physical body and the personality, then that's, there's great fear, because that's all you know. You've never gone any deeper.

Oh, so the timeless dimension, present moment, present moment is the portal into that dimension, transcendent dimension. Now, this is a beautiful practice, sense perceptions without, let go of labels. When they arise, just don't become too interested in the labels, they are thoughts.

Just let go. And then you are, while you're here especially, the practice is to be as present moment centered as possible, because your life, otherwise your normal, your life is usually, consists of your past, the present moment, and your future. Now, for most people, either future or past almost completely occupy their attention.

For younger, until you get old it's usually future. When you reach a certain age and you realize that you don't have much future left, then you become more interested in the past and you start thinking about it. Oh, that was then, now, oh, I remember that, yeah.

But the present moment is rarely fully acknowledged. It's always, it's just a stepping stone to the next moment, which is the future. Or you actively hate it, that's not uncommon too.

There are people who live in an antagonistic relationship with the present most of their lives. And sometimes older, some older people, they get, cantankerous old men, hey, don't talk to me about that, I know it all, it's all rubbish, nonsense. So here you practice living in the two dimensions, the deep eye and the surface eye is fine, it has its place, you acknowledge it, but practice present moment living.

You don't need to, the future and the past never, obviously everybody knows that, that they actually don't exist as such. One realization came to me first when I talked to a Zen monk, I happened to see a Zen monk and he, we talked a bit about spirituality and Zen, and he said quite simply, well he said, Zen is really quite simple, you stop thinking. I had expected a more complicated answer, but then I realized that's actually happened to me, I stopped thinking.

Especially overthinking, I could still think, and some thinking of course still happened, but there were long stretches, but there was just very peaceful awareness. And there was, and then what was building up was, out of that awareness came a deep joy. And that was very strange, not, sometimes the joy was so intense that it was incredible, and I was just sat there forever on my bench in the park for long periods.

That really is what's called bliss, and it's just, oh. That intensity of bliss that I had for two or three years, I don't seem to have anymore, I have peace. But the intensity of bliss, now I don't know what, it could be that when you get used to something, it doesn't stand out that much anymore, and it becomes quite normal.

And perhaps I experience, he said, bliss, because there was still the contrast, I remember my previous state of consciousness, and then I was that one, who knows. But this is the main teaching then, all spiritual teaching come down to this. Consciousness has to be rescued from where it's been, the conscience has been kidnapped by thought.

It's trapped in that, and this is, your task is to free consciousness from where it's been trapped. In involuntary compulsive thinking, that's always thinking that is imbued, we identify with, imbued, so every thought is imbued with a sense of self. And so that's the spiritual practice, is that the stepping out of the movement of thought, so that I is no longer confused with the movement of thought, that would be the super, the surface I.

So the cessation of thought, and when you practice present moment awareness, and make that the main, the central focus of your life, whether you're active or passive in that moment, it doesn't matter. If you're active, you give your attention to the doing, you honor it, you give it attention so that it doesn't become stressful, that sounds almost impossible, I know, to many people. If you give your fullest attention to the doing, it's not really stressful, unless your mind projects itself to some future point, or your mind, while you're doing something, thinks of several other things that you really should be doing also at the same time, of course you can't, you can only do one thing at a time.

Another definition of Zen that a master gave is, Zen is doing one thing at a time. Now, that's too simple, isn't it, too simple? One, so you give, if it's doing, you give your attention to it, then, as I said yesterday, high quality, it is a high quality, if inspiration is helpful in that particular activity, it will flow into what you do, because you're connected with the unconditioned consciousness, the presence.

With some doings, you don't need any inspiration, you just need to get it done, you do the dishes, or whatever it is, you don't need particular inspiration, all the while you do it in a place of giving it your attention, honor it, rather than do something, but would rather not be doing it, but I'm doing it anyway, that's how many people live all the time. If you have a work situation where you work for, your daily work, you need to decide, is it possible to honor the work that I'm doing, or even if it's something simple and may not be what I ultimately want to be doing, but right now, I need to honor the present moment, whatever it is, in whatever form it arises, my responsibility is to honor life by honoring the present moment, and if your work situation is so dysfunctional that the environment in which you work, for example, or the kind of work that is demanded of you, may be what is perhaps conventionally called soul-destroying, so that this is not a work that you could do and honor it, because it's just very unpleasant, if it's that kind of thing, then you need to remove yourself from that situation, even though you may be stepping into uncertainty, you cannot remain in a toxic situation like that, where the honoring of what you do seems impossible, because, for example, you might be surrounded by people who are in very negative states, there are many situations like that, but in other situations, you may be able to say, okay, this is not the ultimate thing that I want to be doing, but for right now, this is what I'm doing, and I'm able to honor what I'm, and I do it carefully and consciously, so only you can know whether you're able to do that, or whether you need to remove yourself from that situation, in order to seek something else that is more compatible, that is compatible with presence, many, many things are compatible with presence, and quite a few other things are not, so when you, your attention is in the present moment, let's say now, we've been talking about activity, then there are other many moments when you're not actively doing something, you're just sitting somewhere, or standing somewhere, or walking, and that is a more kind of passive state of presence, and that's very important too, are you the observing presence at this moment, as you're sitting on a plane, looking out of the window, or looking at the aisle, if you don't have a window seat, and you're sitting there, now you might say, well, this environment on the plane, maybe you don't have a window seat, but it's not particularly inspiring, and after you've looked at it for a few minutes, you say, okay, what else is there to look at, nothing, and then you might get drift off into something else, so it's important to realize there's not just, present moment awareness is not just the awareness of what is around you, it is more fundamentally the awareness of yourself in that moment, so it doesn't, your environment does not need to be particularly interesting, and if it's not interesting, like as it would be if you're going out into nature, there's wonders all around you, but if it's not particularly interesting, like you're trapped on, you're sitting on a plane, or on a bus, or wherever, or at the airport, then direct your attention to yourself, this is the essential part, the deeper part of being present, is to be consciously, to realize that you are, not to realize who you are, but to realize that you are, and that is the sense of beingness, or presence, present within, when you are conscious of your surroundings, you are present without, then being conscious of yourself as the presence being present within, one could say, it's a good thing to start

and end this by looking around wherever you happen to be before you close your eyes, so you just become comfortable wherever you are, and look around, very casual way, and you're beginning to step out of thought, you're just looking around, then you close your eyes, and what helps is to take a few breaths into the abdomen, so it is, because that can put you in touch easily with the entire energy field of the inner body, as you breathe in, the abdomen expands a little, then you hold it at the end of the in-breath for two or three seconds, feel the energy expanding then throughout the body, and then you breathe out, and in again, and you follow the breath with your attention, this is the ancient breath awareness practice, and you can't be thinking at the same time and follow the breath with your attention, that's why it's such a good practice, and you become aware of your body, the inner body, the aliveness, or gradually you feel that the awareness of the inner body, the aliveness of the inner body, and the inner body become a single thing, a single whole thing, so you merge with the sense of aliveness and stillness, instead of observing it, you feel you are it, remnants of visual image of the body, but it's not necessary anymore, you just focus on that sense of pervasive presence, and that is not other than you, that is essentially you, that is the essence of who you are, that is the I, before it becomes something, it's pure presence, meditation that starts with the question, who am I, the answer is not to be found in thought, or in words, the answer is this, the presence that you sense, you sense yourself as the presence, that's the answer to who am I, for success, sense of enchanted state is deep, sense of beingness of I, nothing needs to be added to it, any better than this to use a common expression, this moment, being conscious of being, listening to awareness on the surface of things, witness with the source of all life, from which the consciousness emanates, the consciousness that you are, that realization is the very fulfillment of your life in this moment, what is there to add to it, there's still nothing that you need to become, there's nothing missing, maybe things missing on the human level, the human dimension, but not on the being level, there's nothing missing, that's the fullness of life that Jesus talked about, or the emptiness he talks about,

[Speaker 2] (9:06:33 - 9:07:07)

spaciousness is a better word for it, spaciousness, and then as you open your eyes

[Speaker 1] (9:07:07 - 9:25:31)

and look around the room again, continue to feel the stillness or the spaciousness within, as you look around the room, and that is how you realize the possibility of being present within and without, and of spaciousness, no thinking is required at this moment, it wouldn't add anything to it, and be aware of yourself and what's around you, the consciousness that you are makes this possible, the light of consciousness, you cannot yet in your daily life step from thinking into awareness, freedom from thinking for a moment, and you just use one of the portals in our body, breath awareness, acute attention to sensory perception, and after a while you can just step out of thinking when

it's not needed, or reduce thinking to just a trickle, and then presence arises when you sense it with the entire energy field, and gradually this power grows in you, the power itself doesn't grow but its manifestation in you grows, presence power grows in you, at first it seems nothing remarkable and uninteresting, but first you notice it frees you from a lot of turmoil, mind generated, and then it deepens you, because it is the deeper eye, the deep eye that emerges, the deep self, the deep eye, don't wait for emergency situations to become present, don't wait for life to knock you, give you a jolt, a shock, choose it, in ordinary moments, then it grows in you, when life does something to you to intensify the presence instead of taking you out of presence into reactivity, you respond but don't react, reaction is on the conditioned mind, responding is out of presence, so when you realize that what's important is already here and not in the next moment, what really matters, that means you already have shifted to a different state of consciousness, very simple, just that realization, but it's so deeply ingrained, the illusion, the belief, the unconscious assumption, that the next moment matters more than this one, everybody inherits that mind pattern and that makes life very frustrating, you all know that, life consists only ever of this moment, so we're here to go deeper into this moment and not wait for something more significant in the next one, so we become comfortable with being here now and get rid of the illusion that there is something important missing from your life, or there's something not quite right that hasn't arrived yet, something, a very deep-seated illusion, there's something not right, but it's going to be right perhaps one day, earthly things believes it's going to be right when this or that happens or I attain this or that, and the spiritual seeker believes it's going to be right when I become enlightened, and in both cases it's future, the promise, continuously overlooking something vital that is very easy to overlook because moment of thought is so seductive and hypnotic, right individual presence that is essentially who you are and has nothing to do with your past or future, for you this moment here and to hear this and almost let's say to realize the truth of it, that means that's it, just a sense of goodness and brightness of being here, that means that dimension that has no form is already arising, so there's a huge difference between saying I'm angry and slightly, I feel angry or there's anger in me, I feel that there's anger in me, I feel angry, there's a somewhat a different when I am angry because then you equate identity with the emotion, so the letting go of any kind of complaining unless something can be done and you talk to somebody about it and again then not in a complaining way but in a factual way,

[Speaker 2] (9:25:32 - 9:25:43)

that's already a huge shift and then continuous self-observation is part of that also,

[Speaker 1] (9:25:44 - 9:25:59)

what are the thoughts that go through your mind and be the awareness of what is happening in your emotional field, as you're sitting here, are you carrying something in your emotional field

[Speaker 2] (9:26:00 - 9:26:27)

that is a residue of something that happened an hour ago, this morning, while you were traveling here, yesterday, some imaginary situation your mind is creating and the emotion reflects that

[Speaker 1] (9:26:27 - 9:27:34)

as if it were reality and again without the awareness it takes you over, you don't need to get rid of anything, you don't need to get rid of the emotion, without the awareness you don't have an emotion, the emotion has you and the emotion is an energy form, an energy field, a thought is an energy formation, everything is energy and this is emotion and thought are non-physical energy formations, so the thought then has you, you don't have it, you're not even there, you are spiritually speaking asleep and you're being run by the conditioned emotions, the mental, you're run by the mental emotional conditioning, the mental emotional conditioning says I and it refers to all that stuff, that accumulated stuff, I, everybody says I continuously,

[Speaker 6] (9:27:36 - 9:27:45)

everybody's favorite pronoun is I and what they refer to usually is

[Speaker 2] (9:27:47 - 9:27:56)

that entity, the problematic entity, the ego, that's the word, the egoic self,

[Speaker 6] (9:27:57 - 9:28:12)

I, there's a deeper I that is not the egoic self and that deeper I, this is why we're here,

[Speaker 1] (9:28:14 - 9:28:22)

to access that, to deepen that, most of you already have access to it but it may periodically

[Speaker 2] (9:28:22 - 9:28:47)

become obscured in this world, not surprisingly, when things go wrong that's a moment of

[Speaker 1] (9:28:47 - 9:29:00)

becoming more conscious, it's every, even the smallest things, if you don't react out of the conditioning, the mental emotional conditioning but be the awareness

[Speaker 2] (9:29:01 - 9:29:12)

and then oh, and you observe if emotions arise, you are there and you can say oh,

[Speaker 1] (9:29:12 - 9:30:02)

there's the anxiety again and then you know that there's anxiety without calling it anything, so that is a huge difference to know that anxiety is in you, anger is in you right now, for example, or anxiety, whatever else it may be, or some mood that suddenly gets a hold of you and you're suddenly in a bad mood, don't talk to me, don't say I'm grumpy, well to say I'm grumpy is already a little bit step forward because at least you know that you're grumpy, if you're totally unconscious, the grumpiness is you and you don't even know that you're grumpy, to say don't talk to me, I'm grumpy, that's already means there's a little bit of

[Speaker 2] (9:30:02 - 9:30:26)

awareness there, it's great, so there's a huge difference between saying I'm angry and slightly, I feel angry, or there's anger in me, I feel that there's anger in me, I feel angry,

[Speaker 1] (9:30:27 - 9:31:45)

there's a somewhat different when I am angry because then you equate identity with emotion, so it's not I am angry, that's a huge, you've fallen into a huge trap, if you equate emotion with your identity, or if you equate a thought with your identity, or a story in your mind, you equate that with your identity, or an opinion which is thought, the world is full of people who don't know the difference between their opinion and their identity, their opinion becomes their identity, and then they have lots of fights with other people, because they are totally confused about who they are, they derive their identity from a set of opinions, politics for example, you derive, it doesn't mean you cannot have opinions, everybody has opinions, but where does your sense of identity come from, does it come from the opinions, or do you realize that you have certain opinions which may be valid or not, you're on a human level, you have opinions, or viewpoints, or perspective, mental positions, you have them, they are there,

[Speaker 2] (9:31:48 - 9:31:59)

but do these give you your sense of self, or if they do, then you're continuously

[Speaker 1] (9:32:01 - 9:32:36)

arguing with other people, making other people into enemies, because when you contradict somebody who equates opinion with identity, unconsciously they believe that you are attacking their very self, because there's a confusion about who they are, they don't know who they are, so you attack the opinion of somebody who's totally identified with their opinion, and you become their mortal enemy, they might even try to kill you, in an extreme form of

[Speaker 6] (9:32:36 - 9:32:37)

unconsciousness.

[Speaker 1] (9:32:44 - 9:34:05)

So, this is why it's so important to transcend that, transcend doesn't mean you exclude it, it doesn't mean no more opinions, I'm now, I'm having no opinion about anything or anyone, no, that's not going to work. What do you think of the Republican Party, the Democratic Party? Nothing.

But there is a deeper level, if you can go to a deeper level, and your sense of I does not come from the movement of thought, it comes from a deeper place, your identity, who you feel or sense you are, does not come from the emotional field, or from the mental formations. And that is the awakening, that is to be awakened, is to discover, first of all, is to discover that dimension.

[Speaker 2] (9:34:07 - 9:35:07)

For some people at first it comes in little glimpses, perhaps sometimes in protected settings, environments like here, and I say, are you able to, at this moment, are you able to let go of thinking, without falling asleep, but remaining alert, in a gentle way, not through willpower, just relinquish conceptualization, no need to interpret compulsively this moment, what could you add to it? Interpret, you like it, I like this, I don't like that, yes, likes and dislikes still exist

[Speaker 1] (9:35:07 - 9:35:18)

on the surface of your being, but when you become rooted in the deeper presence, the being of you,

[Speaker 6] (9:35:20 - 9:35:39)

then you are suddenly free, and you can sense that in that stillness, if we want to call it

[Speaker 1] (9:35:39 - 9:35:43)

that, stillness just means the absence of thought, and what remains when thought goes,

[Speaker 6] (9:35:43 - 9:36:00)

but you don't fall asleep, is conscious presence, pure consciousness remains, and that is the deeper I, the deeper I am.

[Speaker 2] (9:36:15 - 9:36:28)

So a moment of presence or stillness, in that moment you have transcended the person,

the personal self.

[Speaker 6] (9:36:31 - 9:36:37)

Of course you go back into it after a while, and the question is, are you going to lose yourself

[Speaker 1] (9:36:37 - 9:36:52)

in it again, perhaps, and then you come out of it again, and after a while, this is your, the aim of spiritual practice, that your connectedness with the deeper dimension

[Speaker 2] (9:36:53 - 9:37:37)

is not lost, even when you are engaged in daily activities, or discussions, or whatever it may be, there is a, that connectedness remains in the background, which may be the case with you now, as you listen to this, and it's not this, something in you recognizes what the words are pointing to, and that's not the conceptual mind, that which recognizes it as true,

[Speaker 1] (9:37:38 - 9:38:30)

is the immediate realization of the truth of it, you don't have to think about it, you can't think about it, so you know immediately, yes, I know, there's a direct knowing, not conceptual knowing, conceptual means knowing through thinking, most people live through a conceptual reality, their identity is a conceptual identity, and they conceptualize everybody else, they meet, they immediately form judgments, they come very quickly, and you form a conceptual identity for the other, you trap the other person in this mental concept, but you do that because you've already done it

[Speaker 2] (9:38:30 - 9:39:21)

to yourself, so you live through a conceptual identity, me, and so we step, we go to a deeper place, or you could call it higher or deeper, it doesn't matter, I prefer deeper, well, you go to a deeper place, where the movement of thought ceases, and immediately you have transcended the self, the egoic self, if only for a few seconds, or a minute, and everybody is longing to be free of this problematic entity, unconsciously,

[Speaker 1] (9:39:21 - 9:42:26)

they want to be free, but they don't want to let go, there's a paradox here, they don't want to let go, and yet they can't stand it, they want to be free, so much drug-taking in this world, or they want to transcend this heaviness of life, experiencing life as this heavy burden, and their identity is very unsatisfying, so they're longing to be free, but they're going below thinking, the road that takes you below, you fall below thought, and to some extent, yes, you have become free of the self, before you go to sleep, there's a

transitional moment when you're in bed, and you're halfway to sleep already, and that moment feels really good, you feel, ah, it feels, you can feel the pull of sleep, and you can feel, you can't think about your problems anymore, your entire sense of identity isn't there, because you're too tired, and then you're pulled into sleep. We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, it is within and without, we are pervaded by it, it fills the entire space of the universe, we lie in the lap of immense intelligence which makes us organs of its activity and receivers of its truth, if we are open to it, it's true, if you close the shutters, no matter how bright the sunlight is, it can't come in, it doesn't mean the shutters are more powerful than the sunlight, it just means shutters are closed, and so if a human being is closed, the vast intelligence cannot operate, or can only operate as a trickle, everybody has a trickle of it, otherwise they wouldn't be alive, so everybody has a little trickle of that coming into their lives, but the full power of it in most people's lives is missing, so they live not knowing what vast power is available to them, or to put it more accurately, what vast power they themselves are, it's not available to you that creates a separation, it is, in essence,

[Speaker 6] (9:42:27 - 9:42:28)

who you are.

[Speaker 1] (9:42:40 - 9:49:49)

I could see a deeper truth being expressed than I had ever heard in church, in what Jesus was saying, and I immediately had a deep realisation of what he was talking about. There was a couple went to church, a wife and husband, and they came back from church where they heard exactly what you just said, the pastor was reading from the bible, and the wife says to the husband, you know, outside our bedroom we have this little hill or mount that blocks our view, what I'm going to do tonight, I'm going to believe that it's going to disappear, because if Jesus says you can move mountains, surely you can move this little hill, and the husband says that's a good idea, okay, so the next morning the wife opens the curtains and it's still there, and she says to her husband, oh you see, I knew it wasn't going to work, so that's not faith either, so just telling yourself I believe this is going to happen, probably not, unless you're lucky, but faith, the true meaning of faith is power, and if you have faith means if you access the power that lies beyond all phenomena, if you access the source of life, if you have find access to that, then that means you have faith, faith is sensing in yourself the power of life itself, which is not of the person, which is deeper, the power of consciousness itself, sensing that in yourself, and when you connect with that, you realize it's not so much that you connect with it, it's just that is the essence of who you are, so having faith really is being fully who you are in your essence, and of course the way to that, this is the entire, our entire teaching here is to go beyond the noisy mind, or the whatever the mind produces into the dimension of alive stillness, and that's you're touching the source, if you touch the source, so the personality needs to surrender, so that you can go deeper, otherwise the

personality which includes the thinking mind, or is primarily the thinking mind, stands as a closed door, with a heavy personality you cannot go any deeper, you're stuck, there's a closed door of the personality, so there's a, the Russian spiritual teacher Gurdjieff mentioned two aspects of a human being, which he called personality and essence, and he says some people, or most people in this world have a strongly developed personality, but there's very little essence coming through, so essence is who you are beyond the personality, and he said occasionally it happens that there's an enormous amount of essence in rare human beings, and very little personality, so most people you meet in this world have a fairly highly developed personality, especially in the western world, but the whole world is becoming westernized, so even in the east now, you can even with big personalities, but if the personality recedes, and this is happening to us, then something more vital and more essential can shine through, and that is essence, and that then, and that is our life purpose, the kingdom of heaven, somebody used that expression, my translation is, kingdom is dimension, heaven, sky, is spaciousness, so when Jesus talked about the kingdom of heaven, he's pointing to something in the sense-perceived world, in order to get people to sense what he's talking about on the inner level, so he chose the sky, or heaven, because it's the most spacious thing there is, and it is not, the sky is perhaps the only thing in this dimension where you, of sensory perception, the only thing that you can see that's not a thing, because the sky doesn't exist as a sky, there's no such thing as sky, you can never touch it, or be in it, or if you're going up in a rocket, you go through a cloud, but you can never say, I am now in the sky, because there is no sky, it's just a way in which we perceive spaciousness, and so he used that analogy in order to point to something within you, the dimension of spaciousness, the kingdom of heaven, the dimension of spaciousness that is within you, that is consciousness, pure consciousness, that is the only thing the most important thing, he said, the most important thing for you to be concerned about, find that within you, everything else will fall into place, it's a free translation of what he

[Speaker 2] (9:49:49 - 9:50:00)

said, everything else will fall into place, just your primary task as a human being here, is

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[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 28:55)

To find that dimension of consciousness in you. Then you have fulfilled your task as a human being. Not that necessarily your life will then come to an end because you can then be here in a much more beneficent capacity because something else expresses itself through you no longer the egoic, the limited ego identity.

And it can speak and act and do or just emanate through you into this world. You become an expression of the transcendent dimension. I don't usually, I don't use the word God very often because it's misleading.

First of all, it's because it's been misunderstood and misused over so many centuries. And also because the term itself seems to encapsulate it as if it were something that is a finite thing, God. Almost everybody imagines some kind of entity when you say God, where, where is he?

Oh, he, you see, most people still call him he. God is a slightly better pointer would be to say, for example, well, what I said just now, the dimension of the transcendent. And even what they used in Star Wars that became so popular, again, is a term they used that is not as encapsulated as the word God.

The force, may the force be with you. Okay, where's the force? It's everywhere.

It was, it's a kind of, there was a slight spiritual message in that. And this is why so many people loved, because they're all looking for it somewhere. They loved it.

May the force be with you. The divine, you could even say this is less enclosed than the term God. The divine is more of an open concept.

God is more of a closed concept. And inevitably, because of misuse, people inevitably imagine some kind of male entity still. You can't get away from that.

And a controlling one, a patriarch, or somebody who has not done a good job. I could have done better than God. Therefore, God does not exist.

You hear that sometimes. Doing God's will is an expression, been around for a long time, that has been misused a lot by the ego. And it was, in most cases, it was the ego's will.

And the ego called its own will, God's will. To the point of insanity, where people kill others and other groups of people and call it God's will. Different religions have done that.

In some, it's still happening. And for many other people who are not at such an extreme of unconsciousness, but nevertheless, there are people who are genuinely, genuinely

wanting to do God's will, but it's very problematic, because how do you know whether a thought that comes into your head is God's will, or whether just a thought, it's just a thought that comes into your head? So being in the present moment really is the only way of being certain that you are becoming aligned with God's will.

What is God's will? God's will is being one with the intelligence, the consciousness that pervades and underlies the world of form, being one with that. And you can only be one with that if you become present in the now.

So the entry point into God's will, the realization of God's will, is always the present moment. Your inner alignment with the present moment, and there you have it. Now, you could say that whatever happens, you could say, in some religions or many religious people do that, well, it's God's will.

They can't explain it, but they say, well, it's God's will. I don't usually use that terminology. All I say is, it is as it is.

That doesn't require any belief whatsoever, because nobody can doubt that the present moment is as it is, always. Now, this is something you cannot doubt. But if I say, this is God's will, of course you can doubt that.

There's lots of reasons why you can doubt that. So the statement, it is as it is, and I might as well say yes to it because it already is, is something that is beyond any doubt. It is so obviously true that no philosopher could come and question that this moment is as it is.

So this is an ultimate truth. I was visiting my mother not long after that, and she had on her bookshelves, my mother was not religious or even spiritual, but I found the New Testament there, which had been left there many years ago when my mom was still married by a Jehovah's Witness, because my father would always invite the Jehovah's Witnesses into our home and then involve them in discussions. He had a love-hate relationship with them, and this is just a, he respected them enormously because my father was German, so he respected them enormously because they were the few people in Germany who refused to, in the Second World War, who refused to participate in war.

So they were pacifists, and many were brought to concentration camps and died because they refused to take up arms. And my father respected them highly for that, but when they started talking to him, he would get angry. But he must have accepted this New Testament.

Anyway, I found that New Testament on my mother's books, and I opened it at that point. Of course, I had read it at school. I had a Catholic upbringing.

I had read it at school, but then I read it, and I said, wow, I could see a deeper truth

being expressed than I had ever heard in church in what Jesus was saying, I assume. And I immediately had a deep realization of what he was talking about, and realizing also that the New Testament is really fragments because nobody has a complete teaching of Jesus because people have the fragments that they remembered and they eventually wrote down. And I believe not all fragments are actually said by Jesus, but when they did, the ones that are actually uttered, but I knew beyond any doubt that certain things that I had read were actually said by someone who was deeply aligned with consciousness.

So I saw the truth there, and that shed light on it. And then you become aware of yourself as the one who is perceiving, but not of yourself as the historical person because if you were perceiving through the historical person, you would be labeling things mentally. No, you become aware of yourself as the underlying consciousness in which the perception happens, the light of consciousness in which the perception happens.

So you're aware of two dimensions, the dimension of form and the dimension of formless consciousness, the kingdom of heaven, the dimension of spaciousness, the emptiness, the spaciousness, the essence of all life. And it's not yours, it's not anybody's, it's the one. And now, as if you're thinking in terms of, well, how does that fit in with God?

You haven't mentioned God. Well, that's true. I haven't mentioned God because the term God has been misunderstood a lot over the millennia, not by everybody, but by most.

God, you cannot, obviously, you cannot understand God. It would be, it's just absurd to even make any statement because it's totally, I mean, language consists of just a few sounds, just a few sounds that are made by the vocal cords and air pressure. So you have the vowels, A, E, I, O, U, ah, oh, ooh, ooh, and then you add a few air pressure sound, psh, psh, psh, psh, psh, psh, psh.

Are you expecting to understand the secret of the universe? Through the combination of a few, ah, oh, psh, psh, psh, just, I mean, and you're asking God to explain God, but I'll carry on talking anyway. One can only give a, almost a poetic image or an analogy of what that is.

God is the source of all life, the transcendent source of all life. It has no existence in space and time. It does not exist because exist means to be manifested.

It is, God is the source of all life, that we perhaps can say. Now, we could compare that because we live in this sense-perceived universe in our dimension. We could compare God to the life-giving principle that we all share, which is the sun.

And there's no coincidence that many ancient cultures worshiped the sun because obviously, without the sun, all life would immediately disappear. The very warmth in your

body is ultimately derived from the sun calories. So the sun continuously emanates.

Almost, one could almost say, yes, it has a lifespan, but relative to our lifespan, it's eternal. So it's an analogy. The sun continuously emanates.

It emanates, and what it emanates is it gives life. The stillness, the presence, whatever we want to call it, and by sensing it in yourself and being it, then you recognize it in another. And that recognition, that in the space of stillness is true love, which doesn't need the other because the other only reflects to you who you are.

So the question you're basically asking, would you then love everybody equally so there would not be one person singled out as special as the Course in Miracles calls it special relationship, which the Course in Miracles says, of course, it's of the ego to single one out as special. Now, if you single one out as special and what you see in the other is the form only and you're attached to the form, which doesn't just mean the physical form. Of course, that's an important part of it because it is part of the sexuality and all that, which is part of the attraction.

But it also includes the psychological form of the other, who you think that person is, their psychological makeup, how they behave and speak and act. That is also a form, that's a psychological form. And there can be strong attachment to those aspects, both the physical come together with the psychological, which includes also emotions.

There's an emotional link also there. And those coming, when they all come together, you fall in love. And aptly, it's called fall because it's a fall in consciousness.

But that's okay. If that's what you experience, then that life wants you to experience that. It's part of your learning, that fall in consciousness.

Now, it's not immediately, of course, experienced as a fall. It's experienced as a high. And only afterwards do you realize, oh, that was a fall.

And afterwards can be after a year. It can be after three months. It can be after the honeymoon.

It can be soon after you move in together. And then the suffering starts. What before was the love now becomes the suffering.

And then for a while, it can happen that you fluctuate or the next year or two or three between still feeling the love and the suffering. And then usually it comes to an end after a while or you compromise and for some other reason, stay together. So that's the...

Now, if you are able to feel in the other, well, first of all, in yourself, that which is beyond form, the essence, the stillness, the presence, whatever we want to call it. And by sensing it in yourself and being it, then you recognize it in another. And that recognition

that in the space of stillness is true love, which doesn't need the other because the other only reflects to you who you are.

But even there, it can happen that the form of the other, because you are not just the formless. Temporarily, you're also the form. Temporarily, you are either a man or a woman.

Temporarily, you have this body and this form, this man or this woman and this body and the emotional field may find a certain resonance with on different levels, be it sexual, emotional, psychological levels, a certain resonance with the other form. And that resonance, that is what in the unenlightened romantic love makes up the entire relationship. But now, when you know who you are in your essence, all those factors are still there, but they do not make up the entire relationship beyond the resonance between the sexual or emotional or physical resonance, there's a deeper level present.

So you can go through the motions of romantic love with the transcendent level also present in yourself and recognizing it in the other. So romantic love may, after a while, of course, for the relationship to be truly deep in any relationship, some transcendent element has to be there because it's not going to last otherwise. It doesn't mean necessarily that people need to be totally awake already, totally awake knowing who they are, but some element of the formless must be there eventually in the relationship for the relationship to survive and be a true relationship.

Otherwise, all you have left in the relationship is your judgments about the other and physical attraction and just mind emotional. And that's ultimately, it's not enough, it's not enough. The added element, the transcendent element needs to be there.

And if the transcendent is there, you can be quite content even without the romantic relationship. You no longer say, I need that. It's when it's there, it's beautiful, but you don't need that.

A conscious conversation is basically a conversation where it's between two people. Each person is not identified with their viewpoint, their perspective, their mental position. They put forward their perspective, their positions, their viewpoints without any sense of self in it because they don't need that because their sense of self is derived from the presence that they can sense throughout the conversation in the background of their being.

And then they can play with concepts. They can play with opinions. They can play with words.

They can play with arguments even. My argument is this, and then the other person, well, and mine is that. There's the famous saying, we, what is it?

We agree to disagree or something like that. That sounds relatively conscious because if

at least you're not identified with your positions, then that's fine. We agree.

That's okay. It's interesting. Self-identification with mental positions is the unconsciousness because then you will be defending your mental positions, but you're really defending your sense of self.

And this is why these conversations become easily and very quickly become very unpleasant. They are unconscious. So in unconscious conversation and with very unconscious people, it can even happen.

I mean, you can probably read about it in the papers all the time. They get so defensive and aggressive about their respective mental positions, they start physically attacking each other. It even happens sometimes.

You can see it in certain parliaments in some places. And suddenly all these members of parliament start attacking each other. Washington sometimes gets close, but it probably hasn't quite happened.

That what it could happen there too, who knows? Okay, so if you love everybody unconditionally, how can you possibly decide who is going to be your partner? That's the question.

Because it seems then there's no preference anymore. Or if it's physical attraction, isn't there a contradiction? If you're in a higher state of consciousness, then shouldn't or not be physically attracted to anybody?

Is that the implication in the questions? Isn't it? Well, the love we're talking about, the unconditional love towards human beings and life forms, is a, let's see, what is it that you love in the other?

When you love unconditionally, you don't love their physical form. You don't love their psychological form, their personality. The unconditional love goes deeper.

It's a transcendent love that what you love is not the form, but the formless essence of the other. And you can only love that when you can sense within yourself a dimension, a formless, when you can be still and present enough, and then look at another human being, and then you can recognize something. What you recognize is, for lack of a better word, the consciousness, which is the essence of the other human, as it is the essence of who you are, consciousness prior to the consciousness being born into some kind of form, personality, which is there, and the physical form, which is there.

But in every being, there is still the dimension of consciousness that is prior to form. Although the human being has become form, consciousness has assumed form, has incarnated, so to speak. But that doesn't mean that the formless and timeless consciousness is lost.

It's still there as the essence. And when you can sense it in yourself, you can sense it because you are still and present enough. From that dimension in yourself, you can sense it in the other, and that is love.

It's basically a recognition that in essence, the other is the same as you. But then, of course, there's always, that is the transcendent dimension to every human being. In addition to that transcendent dimension, there is a form identity of every human being.

Every human being has a physical form and emotional form and a mental form. That's the inner, that's the personality. So the physical appearance and the personality consisting of mental, emotional, conditioning, and so on.

So there are the two levels. The unconditional love towards all humans is the transcendent love. You love the formless, you recognize the formless as yourself in the other.

But then you are still here as a form too, and the form may respond to another form. The physical, there can be physical attraction. It is not incompatible with a transcendent realization, although some ancient or not so ancient traditions may tell you that.

It is not incompatible. You can have physical attraction on the level of form. You can also have an attraction towards the mental, emotional form of that other human being because it resonates with something in your own form.

So that means you may be drawn to another human being physically or mentally, emotionally, because you resonate with that. And then perhaps you enter into a relationship. So different levels operate.

The transcendent remains. It can become obscured through excessive attachment, of course, to the mental or emotional dimension in the other. So in a relationship, the realization of essence identity, as I sometimes call it, can become obscured when form identity takes over completely, which could happen through the pain body, which could happen through this emotional, getting identified with arising emotions and losing touch with the transcendent.

Yes, that can happen, but it's not incompatible. Everybody's challenge is to balance the two in their lives, in their relationships, to relate to the other on the transcendent level. And at the same time, if it's there on an emotional, mental, physical level.

For a while, it can be helpful, but not to become dependent on either, or to use it as a tool to help you, yes. But don't become dependent on listening to music so that you can be present only when you listen to music.

[Speaker 7] (29:00 - 29:14)

What is music? Somehow it does stop our minds and why it is so important to us, maybe about art in general also. And what is your favorite kind of music?

[Speaker 1] (29:21 - 1:03:55)

Yes, it certainly stops the conceptual mind, although music exists at different levels. There's some kind of music that very much stimulates the emotions. That's not the mind, but the emotions.

The listening of music can be a wonderful meditation and practicing of music even more so. Do you play an instrument? But do you listen to music?

What kind? Classical mostly. Classical music, yes.

Yes, there were several years, I don't know how many, maybe 15 years when I listened to very little music. And why? Because the strange thing, I actually said that to somebody at that time who asked me the similar question.

And I said, no, I don't listen to music much that was at that time. And why not, she asked. Because it felt to me that all those things like music and art, they were all inside me, in their, the essence of whatever music can express, I could continuously sense, well, I still can, I can continuously sense inside me and so I can appreciate music, I said to her at the time, but I don't need it.

It's like I have the cream and everything else is the skimmed milk. But even nature I perceived as a skimmed milk. I remember often sitting in nature and in a state of sometimes closing my eyes, especially when I was still living in London, I would go on Hampstead Heath every day, sit there on a bench and close my eyes and such beauty and depths of the formless life itself or consciousness.

And then when I opened my eyes again, nature was still very beautiful, but it seemed like a diluted version of what I had within or even what I was within. Not that there's anything wrong with that. For many people, it can be an entry point into that so it can take you into that.

Now, then the time came when I started listening to music again as an enjoyment and I do now, perhaps not every day, but from time to time, I listen to music. More recently on my iPad. All the speakers are very small, they're about that size on the side.

But yes, and I actually enjoy some of the kind of spiritual kind of music, some new age music, some of it I love very much, some of it can be a little bit tinkly and emotional or superficial, but other kinds of new age music, I love very much. And I found this, the other day I found a station, I think Kim found it, it's called Calm Radio. And I believe it may even be Canadian.

And Calm Radio has many channels, but it's one station and you can choose the type of music you like and it'll play that classical, oriental music, home music, healing music, spa music, folk music, classical music, opera, so many channels. Just a wonderful, yes, the practice of an instrument also can be a wonderful meditation for many people because it really stops your mind. The important thing, however, can be helpful is not for presence to become associated with any particular activity.

The activity can be helpful, but at some point, you have to see, use it as a help, like playing an instrument, the flute, whatever it may be. If I learnt an instrument, I would probably take up the flute, it's a simple thing, although not easy probably to master. This is the, I'm now playing the soundless flute.

The equivalent of one hand clapping. Not to become dependent on a particular activity so that you can be present, although for a while it can be helpful, but not to become dependent on either, use it as a tool to help you, yes, but don't become dependent on listening to music so that you can be present only when you listen to music. Don't become dependent on playing the instrument or dancing, beautiful thing too, moving your body.

Don't become dependent so that you can only be present when you're actually dancing. Well, at least it's a wonderful thing, you can be present when you dance, but you can't dance continuously. Well, unless you regard your whole life as a dance, then it might work.

Don't become dependent on climbing a mountain so that you can be present, because if you're not, you fall off. Don't become dependent on driving a fast car. Oh, really present, because, so that presence is not bound up with one particular thing that you do, but nevertheless, use those things as helpful ways of bringing you into presence, but then once more presence arises, switch off the music, doesn't mean you can't switch it on again an hour later or tomorrow, switch off the music, if music brings you into presence, the mind is not, there's just the pure act of listening. And you're aware that there's a pure act of listening and you are the consciousness, you know yourself as the consciousness that's listening. Beautiful meditation.

And then my next suggestion is, switch off the music and continue listening. To what? Nothing.

So when you remove the object of awareness, what remains is awareness itself. So this is how it can be a wonderful portal. The same thing, any activity that brings you into presence, once you feel presence is arising, it's there, stop the activity and just be aware of presence itself.

And then you can carry, if you enjoy it, then carry on doing, and then again, step out. So that's the, so that presence is not bound up with one particular activity or you can even,

you can look at the, you can look at a photo of a spiritual teacher who is present to bring you into presence. Ramana Maharshi, there's one particular photo of him that was, is a beautiful photo where you actually truly feel the light shining through his eyes and that was where the photographer took that photo of 1930 or so, and the photographer said, no, Ramana Maharshi said, is there enough light?

The photographer said, you are the light. And that's a beautiful picture and the amazing thing, some people have even used pictures of me to look and you look, as long as you know you're not looking at a person, that's not why you have the photo. You're looking at, to put you in touch with a particular state of consciousness, you're ultimately looking at yourself, the essence.

So then a picture can activate that in you. And then the next step is, again, similar to what I said before, close your eyes or remove the picture and continue to feel that presence. So you can use whatever is there to help you but don't become dependent on it.

Whatever it may be, use it, enjoy it, but don't become dependent so that that then exclusively becomes associated with presence. And then you can only be present when you put a little altar with Ramana Maharshi up and then some, but as soon as you go away. So it seems we are going to spend the afternoon together, most of us, that is.

For some of you, a few, it may at some point get too much and you might feel the urge to remove yourself from here and go to a more stimulating place. Such as the beach or even more stimulating, such as the adjacent expo. The primal urge will have been stronger than the urge towards higher consciousness.

But most of you will probably stay here and to the extent to which the, what I sometimes call the new consciousness, has already arisen in you, to the extent of that, you will actually enjoy being here and listening for the whole afternoon with a short break, listening to a man sitting on a chair talking. It seems a little strange. How could that be interesting?

There must be something extraordinarily important in what he has to say to keep you here. And that is true, but of course, there needs to be something in you that recognizes that there's something extraordinarily important, not in the person speaking, but ultimately in you. So that recognition needs to be there in you.

And that's nothing to do with how much knowledge you have, spiritual knowledge or accumulated education or PhDs or degrees. Nothing to do with that kind of mental faculty. There is another faculty in humans that in most humans on the planet is as yet dormant.

And in some, a growing number of humans has awakened. I call it faculty, something, a

dimension of consciousness that's different from the prevailing, ordinary dimension of consciousness on the planet. So that's a spiritual awakening.

That is the next step in human evolution because humans have not come to the end of their evolution. Humans are a work in progress. It's not finished yet.

It would be terrible, imagine that. Humans as they are now, a finished product, crazy. And that's why some people, because they have misperceptions about humans and they have misperceptions about God.

And then they say, how could God allow all this to happen? All this, this is based on two misperceptions that humans are a finished product, created by God a long time ago. And that God is a patriarchal figure controlling things from above or has lost interest completely and walked off maybe somewhere else because he didn't do a good job.

So our afternoon here works on two levels. There's the level of words and thoughts and that is necessary, but more importantly, there is that to which the words and thoughts that underlie the words point. And that is the essence of our gathering here.

And that to which they point is the essence of who you are. And the purpose of our afternoon is to either awaken or in the case of many of you, to deepen the realization or the connectedness with who you truly are. And when I say truly, I mean in the depth of your being, and I mean a dimension that is deeper than your personal history.

And most humans are completely unaware that there is a dimension of consciousness in them that is deeper than their personality, their personal self. So they are trapped on the surface level of reality. And that is not a pleasant place to be.

You are basically then trapped in your conditioned personality, the person, the egoic self, and you know somehow, you know that there is something not right. You know somewhere instinctively, you know there's something so important that's not here yet and that's missing in my life. There's something wrong.

And how humans interpret that mentally, what they perceive or feel to be wrong varies from person to person. One person might say, what's wrong is that all humans don't have the same religion that we have. There's something deeply wrong.

So we need to either convert them or kill them. Or other humans say there's something deeply wrong about society, they project it outward. Of course there's lots wrong with society, but what is society?

It's the sum total of the individuals. There's something deeply wrong with my personal history. It's so unsatisfying.

Why? Why did so many things go wrong in my life? Things that weren't supposed to

happen.

I imagined things going very differently. Not all these failed marriage and divorce and all this dreadful suffering and then there was the illness and then there was that and then there were great achievements and then there were all again the opposite. So something is looking for the next thing to feel fulfilled by possessions, recognition, something missing, there's always something missing.

What they don't know is that what is missing, what they look for outside or they blame others for preventing them from finding it. You can blame entire groups of people for making you feel unfulfilled. It's a very common thing these days and very satisfying to the false sense of self because if you can see yourself as a victim either on a personal level or a collective level, that gives you a somewhat satisfying sense of identity, satisfying in a completely non-satisfying way.

It's a paradox. You feel good about feeling bad. And the more you can complain about others, and the better you feel, but it's bad.

But the ego thinks it's better. And you feel now you know who you are more fully. It's a fiction.

So you can emphasize your victim identity on the personal level to give you some kind of stronger sense of self or you can emphasize your identity as the one who is victorious in the world, me. The ego doesn't mind which one. They're both equally strong and equally false.

Usually ego, the egoic self is interpreted by people as people who have a high sense of exaggerated sense of who they are, who think they're better than others. And that is one aspect of ego. But there's another aspect of ego, which is equally strong.

And that is people who have a self image, a self identity of being more of a victim than somebody else or others. Oh, that works too. So whichever is most convenient to you, you can use that.

So people use all kinds of things to create a more satisfying sense of identity for themselves, but it's all in the head. It's ultimately all consists of the structure of thought. And that is what I call to be trapped on the level of the person or the personality.

Another way of putting it is to be trapped on the level of form, the form of who you are, which is the physical and the psychological form of who you are, the me, me and my story, me and my personal history. And then all the conditioning, the opinions and viewpoints and convictions and through which you interpret everything according to the conditioning of the personality. Then you look at things and you immediately have immediately labeled things and situations and people as they come into your perception.

There's the immediate labeling and you think it's all true. You don't realize that you are looking at reality through a veil of your conditioned mind. And really what you're seeing is the veil of your conditioning and there's something there behind it, but you can't clearly see it at all.

It's a dreadful state to be in, but it's normal. This is why I sometimes say normal equals insane. So you, and this is not such a fundamental question.

The question of identity is the most important question in your life. Who am I? And you know that, you know that it's important, but you don't know where your true identity is because at school, nobody taught you, should be the most important thing that children are taught, discover your essence identity.

Is that a subject at school? I haven't heard of it, never come across it. So your form identity relies on external things.

You compare yourself to others and according to what is most appropriate, you emphasize those aspects of your form identity where you are a little bit superior to others and that's where the ego gets in and forms a mental construct. It could be the history of your family as you come from a family, not so much in the new world here, but in the old world to some extent, a little bit still in Europe, even more so in some more traditional cultures. You think back, you have your family history, your ancestors and you have this long line of your ancestors going back and they're all more important than the rest of the population.

And you have come out of this long line of ancestry and that gives you your identity. You might even have a title. In some countries, they still have titles.

So you grow up and your 10-year-old girl is told, oh, your name is Lady So-and-so. Oh, now if you're trapped in that to get out of that, not easy. You've been given that sense of specialness and so the main, the core of your identity lies then in your ancestry and it can have you in its grip until you're on your deathbed and you never know that you are trapped in an illusory sense of identity.

Now, most people don't have that, but they may have other things. They may have more possessions than others in their family or they may have achievements in that they came out of nothing and then they achieved this, that and that and then they identify with the material achievements and so on, possessions and that can give you a great sense of identity too, never satisfying for long, that's the thing. There's always this element of unsatisfactoriness, of something really important is missing and even if you have an aristocratic title, Lady Diana, for example, going back, she was not fulfilled by her title and her ancestry, which goes back hundreds of years and, but was very unhappy and so, and this is quite normal that you have that identity but you're, and you're trapped in it and you are, there's always in the background the unhappiness and

then, of course, you might have a body that's more beautiful than others then you can focus on that and that gives you a sense of superiority towards others.

So, and that's a temporarily a nice thing and then as the years pass, a day will come when you look in the mirror and something has changed. That beautiful body has shrunk or expanded, whatever the case may be. I see, I saw the other day in Sidney walking along the harbor front on a beautiful sunny morning, pleasant, not hot, less warm than it is here, people walking and there was one man who probably, who had taken off his shirt and he was walking through these crowds of people and the strange coincidence is that this man, of course, must have been so hot in this weather that he felt compelled to take off his shirt but by a strange coincidence, he had the most wonderful physique.

But, he was extremely masculine, just very impressive and many people looked and some tried not to look and just glance and you could see how satisfying it was for him to walk through there. So, he was lucky that he felt so hot that he had to take off his shirt. And of course, there will have been other egos ego identities walking and looking at him who felt diminished by looking, it's normal for the ego, it felt diminished.

And so, and then looked the other way, I'm not going to look at him. So, it's normal for the ego to feel diminished because it always compares itself to others and then the ego sometimes tries to compensate. Again, you have to arrange your identity somehow when he tries to compensate for this diminishment.

For example, by saying, just a few thoughts compensate for the diminishment of the ego and they're all, it's all unconscious thinking. For example, the thoughts go, oh, look at that beach bum there. I bet all he does is hang around the beach every day and surfing, not a thought in his head.

Okay, that makes you feel better for a little while. If you're in your big car, you can feel superior towards others and then others will look, but then there may be a man on a bicycle. He's looking at you in your big car and say, look at this materialist.

Whereas I am completely non-attached to these things. And I'm totally happy on my bicycle because I'm beyond these things. That's a very subtle, so-called spiritual ego.

You can feel superior because you're more spiritual than others, not realizing that also is a mind-made sense of self, a mind-made identity. Amazing. And many people carry a very unhappy or predominantly uneasy, unhappy, complaining, insufficient personality with them.

And that's who I think they are. And it's an awful way to be and nobody has taught them that that ultimately is not who you are. That's the conditioning of your mind.

And that is the emotions that also accompany the conditioning of your mind. And so the question arises, well, if I'm not that, if I'm not that, who am I? And that is the most

important question you can ask yourself.

Now, in our mainstream culture, they will tell you that that question makes no sense whatsoever because they believe obviously you are your past and you are who you are as a person. They deny that there is anything else. So as you are here, I would suggest that that which is beyond the personality in you has already awakened and that has brought you here.

And that goes far beyond a personal thing. That which is beyond the personality, a dimension of consciousness in you, in the human, that is deeper. You could say higher, but I prefer the term deeper than the personality and then the continuous stream of thinking, which is the basis for the personality, has already awakened in you and has brought you here.

But that goes something beyond the personal. That is something, what has ultimately brought you here is the fact that human consciousness is evolving and the evolving human consciousness through you has brought you here in order to deepen the awakening. With a few exceptions, there may be some who didn't come of their own free will.

Or they were dragged here by somebody and then they reluctantly agreed, okay, I'll come along and listen to this guy for four hours. Oh my God. And then they sit here and say, what's he talking about?

It's just, makes no sense whatsoever. And because the words are being perceived by this person, this imaginary person, which may not be imaginary, maybe. The words are being perceived, but they do not go beyond the clutter of his or her mind.

So they get trapped in the clutter of the mind. So you listen to the words, but there's nothing in you that recognize that to which the words point. And so all you have is they get trapped in the clutter of your mind.

And so it's completely meaningless. And so there needs to be a little opening in the stream of, in the mind stream, there needs to be a little opening, a little crack. And most of you, that's there.

And in some of you, there's more than that already. And in that opening, then the words can go in and then that to which the words point is recognized. So when I say, for example, the essence of who you are, when I say beyond the personality, beyond your personal history, there is a deeper essence of who you are.

And for a moment, you can sense the recognition within you of the truth of that.

[Speaker 6] (1:04:20 - 1:04:34)

I wanted to ask, what is the role of being in service to others in one's spiritual development? And I guess you can say it in the overall evolutionary impulse of the universe to borrow a phrase from your book. Okay.

[Speaker 1] (1:04:35 - 1:15:56)

Thank you. It can be a wonderful spiritual practice if it arises from the right place inside you and it can also be a strengthening of your ego if it arises from a different place inside you. Jesus talked about that when he talked about giving arms.

Some people, he said, like to be seen when they give arms to the poor, they want to be seen. And he says, those people are not going to get a reward in heaven, what that means we'll look at in a second, because they have their reward already. And of course, what their reward already is, is that it's a feeding of the ego.

That's their reward. So now there are two ways of being seen when you give service, either you give something to somebody, it could be help, providing active help, or giving something that you have, a way to somebody to help them, whatever it is, that one needs to look at the motivation. And there are two ways of being seen.

One is to talk about it more than is necessary. Or to just make sure that others see what you're doing or aware of what you're doing. Then you have your reward through that, which is the feeding of the ego.

But there's another interior way of seeing it when you have your own self image and you're in service, because it makes you feel better about yourself. It improves your self image. That is still fine, it may help somebody, so it's a good thing to do, but it doesn't really help you to become free internally.

So there's a self image that some people need to feel that they are giving to others. And there's this image of, I am giving to him, you are the doer. You see yourself as the doer of good, and you see yourself as sacrificing something that you give to another.

So it improves your ego, really, how you see yourself, because what is ego but an inner self reflection? Ego is like an inner mirror, where you are not yourself, you have an image of yourself, and you live through this mental image of yourself. And the image of yourself is usually not satisfying.

So every ego tries to improve the image of oneself, and it can do it in many, many different ways. But, and then you have the image of me, the doer of the good deed, and that really strengthens the image. And then there's another way of giving.

I think the expression is where the left hand doesn't know what the right hand does, or something like that. The right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing, which means you don't have the self image as you are giving of something that you own. You

are helping the other.

There's an outflow of energy in whatever form, and it's not yours. It's not yours, you're not giving anything that is yours, because ultimately nothing is yours. You're giving energy because that energy in whatever form comes from the source of all energy.

All energy derives from one source. And so you give, you allow yourself to be a vehicle through which this energy flows out into the world. And then the sense of me, the doer, isn't there.

And the sense of there's the poor person that I am helping isn't there either, these concepts. So there's simply the process that happens through you. And that is the non-egoic way.

And then to be of service is a beautiful spiritual practice too, because the ego is out of the way, dissolves through that when you realize you don't own anything ultimately, and the energy is not yours. It's universal energy that comes through. So to be a vehicle for that, and in that way you are a help, really, when that happens, you begin to live in that way.

You're always in service to others. You're even in service to others in ordinary situations that would not normally be recognized as service to others, because you recognize the other in their essential being, which is the greatest service that you can give somebody, far greater than anything material, although there's nothing wrong with that either. But the greatest service is to recognize the essence or the reality of the other person.

Everything else passes away. Everything else is transitory. But that recognition of the other as God, I don't use that word very often, and one with who you are, to see that, that is the greatest service you can give, which is the realization of who that person truly is beyond the form.

Not to come from form, not believing this form is helping that form, but realizing there's something here that is beyond form. So if you're only in form, then you can also very easily deplete yourself. I'm trying to be helpful.

There are many people who are social workers or therapists, and after a few years, they experience a burnout because they're continuously trying to give and help, and then they need, they can't do it anymore. So in The Power of Now, I believe I wrote that whenever you help people, there needs to be a balance between the, maybe I didn't write it there, there needs to be a balance between the doing out there and being rooted in being. And so that's, no matter where you are in life or what you do, otherwise you will lose yourself in your service to others very quickly, and then you're not of service to anybody anymore.

Then you'll need therapy yourself, or you'll need charity yourself. So to stay, be rooted in

being while you do is essential so that the energy can continue to move through you. So you're addressing, you can address the causes of human suffering in the external world, sorry, the effects of human suffering in the external world, but the cause of human suffering is in the consciousness, in the human consciousness.

So that is vital to be rooted in yourself, not be part of the unconsciousness that produces the dysfunction that is in this world. There are people who try to do their best, even organizations often try to do their best to help others, and they become part sometimes without wanting to, they become part of the mess. There's infighting in the organization itself.

It's amazing how many institutions and organizations, the enormous amount of infighting that there is, they are supposed to help people. Sometimes they are even religious organizations. The enormous amount of conflict in there, and there's, stop, stop, stop doing.

Just connect with the spaciousness that is within you. Stay rooted there and then do. Never lose the rootedness in this.

Remember, I use this and this, the two modalities or dimensions. This is the world of form and doing. This is the formless and being.

So when you help others, the two need to be there also. Always the balance between doing and being. You cannot solve the problems of this world through doing only, because if there's only doing and you try to solve the problems of the world, you will contribute to the problems of the world.

Hence the expression, the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

[Speaker 8] (1:16:02 - 1:16:03)

Thank you very much.

[Speaker 1] (1:17:11 - 1:33:12)

If you are a meditator, of course you can use whatever method you are familiar with, but ultimately don't confuse meditation with a method. This is very common. The method is designed to facilitate the state of consciousness.

At some point, every meditation method needs to be dropped so that you can be in meditation, which is state of presence, which is not a method. If you get too attached to your method, then the method, which was very helpful for quite a while, gets transformed into an obstacle. In some schools, such as Zen, they mostly use no method at all, and that is why they call meditation sitting.

So when you go to a Zen monastery, somebody may ask you, how long have you been

sitting? And if you're not familiar with Zen, you're saying, I'm not sitting, I'm standing. But if you are familiar with the jargon, you'd say, yeah, I've been sitting for 25 years.

And then you will be asked, and you still haven't got it? So if you can enter presence directly without a method, it's, of course, best. And ultimately, there's no longer meditation, and the rest of my life is, they come together.

The rest of their life becomes meditation. Whatever you do, wherever you are, body, presence. And no drifting off into thinking.

That's the Zen master speaking, without the stick. If thoughts arise, don't get involved in them. Just let them drift past, drift in and out of awareness.

Be the sky, not the thoughts, not the clouds, you're the sky. Occasional cloud doesn't matter. You are the space.

You are the sky. You may encounter, Boredom sometimes in meditation, because meditation is not interesting. So you encounter a little barrier inside.

And then you surrender to that and you go beyond boredom. And then impulses may come.

[Speaker 2] (1:33:13 - 1:33:18)

You want to get up, start thinking about something.

[Speaker 1] (1:33:25 - 1:49:15)

And you observe that. And then it arises and passes away. Many things in meditation you can practice.

The arising of feeling or thought or some impulse. You can watch it. And if you don't have a reactive relationship towards it, you don't give it excessive importance.

It subsides again. And then you're left with just you as spacious awareness. And then the next thing comes.

And you're still there as spacious awareness, even though the thought has come in. And then it subsides. And then the body gets restless.

And then the mind says, I need to get up. I can't carry on sitting here. And then you watch that.

You watch the restlessness. Everything is allowed in the present moment. Any external disturbance immediately becomes part of your meditation.

There's never anything outside. Unless you're physically attacked by a mountain lion.

There's never anything outside that can actually disturb your meditation.

Even a big, what they call in England, pneumatic drill, I can't remember what it's called here. Same thing. It starts up next door.

Imagine. And you say, I can't meditate in conditions like this. But the surprising thing is, you don't need ideal conditions for meditation.

In other words, every condition is ideal for meditation. If you totally accept the so-called disturbance, you surrender. It becomes part of the meditation.

You have transcended. If you want to overcome the pneumatic drill, you have to run out there and say, stop that. Then you have either overcome it or you are in an argument.

Transcendence is meditation. Whatever arises. And that becomes the way in which you live your life.

That you never oppose anything. Anything that comes in you. And then you go with it, around it.

You don't oppose it. It's accepted. The present moment is accepted.

So, and you can practice that during your meditation. All there ever is in your life, I think everybody must admit, be able to admit that, all there ever is is the present moment. That's how you experience life, as the present moment.

And if you disregard that and reduce it to a means to an end or actively dislike it, then your life is dysfunctional and extremely unconscious and you are a trouble to yourself. You create problems. You create conflict continuously.

It's insane. So the acknowledgement of the present moment is absolutely vital. So it begins with acknowledging whatever arises in the present moment.

Not internally resisting whatever arises in the present moment. And that's another practice here. As you let go of your habitual, the habits of your personality, they gradually recede, subside.

And you no longer argue with the present moment. Because for many people, there's a habit of discontent. They're not rooted in being, so they're discontent.

There's always a discontent somewhere floating around. And then they seek explanations for the underlying feeling of discontent. Easy to find explanations why you're not happy.

And they start even here. Various obstacles can arise here to the deepening of your consciousness. One of the obstacle is the patterns of your mind that travel with you, that

are part of your personality.

The patterns of your mind, and the same thing, they create a reactivity to things or to people. But another obstacle is, it's too nice here. It's too pleasant.

How can you awaken in paradise? Nobody would awaken in paradise. You're much more likely to awaken in hell.

But don't worry, even here, you will be challenged, either by external events, seeing significant things, but they'll bring up some kind of complaint. I'm not talking about complaint when something needs to be rectified, something can be done about it, but the other kind of complaining. Ah.

So watch your mind, observe patterns of reactivity and useless complaining if they arise, because complaining is an important part of many egos. For many egos, complaining is a very important part of their sustenance, they thrive on it. Criticizing, complaining, finding fault here and there.

It's all part of the underlying discontent of something, always a sense of something not being right, something not right, something is missing, don't know what, something missing, sense of not enough, even this is not enough, this wasn't what I was expecting, I was expecting something else, there are too many people here, I was expecting something smaller. I can't do it here, there's too many, this isn't right, oh, it's too touristy, I don't like it here, there are tourists around, tourists. Well, but according to the latest research, tourists are actually human beings.

So if you come to a place of living aligned with the is-ness of the moment, this is a beautiful spiritual practice until it becomes second nature, being in alignment with the is-ness of now, and that means also the thinking mind slows down the more you are aligned with the is-ness of now, and you acknowledge the now and whatever arises in the now, including and especially the small things in the present moment.

And you begin to enjoy just walking from here to there, a few steps, conscious of taking one step at a time, handling an object, putting on your shoes or your saddles, making a cup of tea, you come to acknowledge the aliveness of everything, even so-called inanimate objects, because ultimately nothing is inanimate. I want to go more deeply into that during this retreat. All the ancient cultures, ancient civilizations, including the Polynesian civilization here, but going back everywhere, they all had the primordial spirituality of all ancient cultures was what is called, sometimes called in anthropology, animism.

Animism means not just the belief, but the feeling or the sensing that everything in this world has a spirit, has a soul, anima from soul, Latin from soul. Animism underlies all ancient spirituality everywhere. The sensing that the world is intensely alive, there is a

hidden presence in all things, not just alive things, but also so-called inanimate things.

There is a hidden presence. And that is, we are returning to that realization now at a deeper level. Sometimes in ancient civilizations, they interpret it as everything has a little spirit.

There's this little spirit here and a spirit there. But of course, it's deeper than that. Everything is a manifestation of consciousness.

Consciousness is the intelligence that underlies the universe. There is a vast intelligence that is the organizing principle behind the manifestation of all life forms. There's a vast intelligence at work beyond sense perceptions.

And so everything has, the Romans believed it, Polynesians believed it, the ancient Europeans believed it, in Africa, everywhere, in China, in Taoism, all that, in Roman times, every house, they believed, had an energy field that they called the spirit of the house. And of course, in China, in Japan, you have feng shui, a similar thing, that still has survived from those times, since there is an energy field. Whereas for contemporary humans, the advanced humans, the world has become lifeless.

That started with scientific materialism in the 19th century. And the world has become, it's not really perceived as being alive. And even the natural world was regarded as a, they began to regard the natural world as a commodity.

So they lost, I think, that sense of the aliveness and ultimately the sacredness of all things that is hiding beyond the appearance. And that is a terrible loss, and this is why we have arrived at such a crisis point now. But that is a loss within the human, because through excessive conceptualization, the ego has grown and grown and grown, and this excessive conceptualization deadens the world around you, because everything is filtered through concepts.

Every human that you meet is called something, it's filtered through conceptualization. No longer, there's no longer the sense of connectedness, neither from human to another, nor from human to nature. And even the connectedness with an object.

I've had for many years, I've had this, people, when I mention it, people think I'm a little weird. Well, I suppose I am a little weird, but for always that sense of certain objects that I live with, they're kind of my friends.

[Speaker 2] (1:49:15 - 1:49:19)

It's not an attached, not an egoic attachment, just an acknowledgement.

[Speaker 1] (1:49:49 - 2:22:33)

The essence of meditation is, of course, stillness. Every meditation technique is designed

to take you into stillness. So one could say that whatever technique you use is not the meditation.

Although techniques can be helpful. The true meditation, of course, is stillness, and then we don't need to call it meditation anymore. Because to be aware of stillness is the arising of your natural state, we could call that.

Your natural state of connectedness. Connectedness with what? Something deeper than the person that you also are.

You are a person, but there is a depth to who you are where the person merges with something huge. And we could call it the intelligence that underlies the manifested universe. Intelligence that pervades and at the same time is beyond the manifested universe and you as a person are one aspect, of course, of the manifested universe.

You are the universe manifesting for a very fleeting moment as a person. But there's more to you than the fleeting person. The fleeting person exists in time.

And even if you reach 100 years or beyond, it's still fleeting. So the person exists in time and the depth of who you are is outside of time. Please, as you sit here and listen, stay alert and become aware, particularly of the spaces between the words or this is not really spaces, it's one space.

Let's call it like that for a moment. We could also call it stillness. Become aware of the stillness between the words.

And realize that the moment you become aware of the stillness between the words and also the stillness behind the words, the moment you become aware of that, you have become still inside, which means you're not thinking, but fully conscious and alert. And already at that, right away, you are connected with something deep and vast. Although from the point of view of the thinking person, it may look as if you had become nothing.

So when you look into my eyes, as I'm not thinking, the words just come. I'm not thinking about them. So the mind is, the mind does operate the moment I speak, but not before and not after.

So when you look into my eyes, because I'm not thinking, you're not looking at a person. You're looking at that which is deeper than the person, which is consciousness. Of course, you can't look at consciousness, but you can connect with consciousness.

And although on the surface reality, it looks as if you were connecting with somebody out there, you're really connecting with a deeper dimension within yourself. And that's, we could call it stillness. Now the person, if the person is not connected with the dimension of stillness, it's hard for the person to realize how important stillness is.

In fact, the person is more likely to be either uninterested in stillness or even afraid of it. But if you ask me, what do you think is the most important thing in my life? What is the most important achievement in my life?

I would say it's the ability to become still, to be still. And as I said in the little book called Stillness Speaks, it's only when you become still that you are really fully yourself. So in daily life, it's important to be able to constantly step back into stillness as you go about your daily activities.

And while you think, use your mind, not think continuously, not being dragged along in a stream of one thought after another, and another, and another, and another, and another, until finally you fall asleep and then have restless dreams. Fortunately, you go into dreamless sleep for a little while, become still, you merge with something vast. But as you wake up in the morning, you quickly lose it again.

The mind immediately starts up. And we live in this era of digital gadgets. When it's become even more important than it was before, to cultivate, so to speak, your ability to be still, because the gadgets that we have, the smartphones, the games, computers, bombard us continuously.

And stimulate continuously the thinking mind. It goes from one thing to another and another. Emails, text messages, the phone ringing, Facebook, Twitter, everything demanding your immediate attention, and then you go there.

You're at the mercy of these devices, well, many people seem to be, and get addicted to the continuous constant stimulus. You get pulled this way, that way, that way. Never having any kind of stillness inside yourself, nor inner space, just stuff.

Stuff without space. And then of course, inevitably after a while, you feel depleted, and still you can't stop. And youngsters finding it harder and harder to focus on anything for very long, more than a few seconds.

Because they've been conditioned to always look to the next thing. They can never stay with anything for more than a few seconds. And now they call it an illness that needs to be treated with drugs, attention deficit disorder.

What's the answer? Give them drugs. So at this time, it's even more important to have this ability to be still, even while you're thinking, in between your thinking, back into stillness.

When you talk to somebody, you talk while you listen, you're still. Present, alert, just that field of attention while you listen. When you look at something, nature, the sky, a tree, you're still.

And you know that you're still, but not by saying in your mind, oh, I'm still. No, you can

sense yourself as the stillness. So the most important thing in your life is to become familiar with stillness and have stillness as your constant companion, so to speak.

Your best friend. And that is spiritual awakening, which simply means not to be completely identified with every thought or emotion. That arises.

To realize there's something more to who you are than the continuously arising thoughts and emotions and also sense perceptions. There is more to who you are than that, meaning also there is more to who you are than your, what that in quotation marks, your life. There is more to who you are than what you conventionally consider to be my life.

What you think of as your life, your life situation, what's going on in your life, your relationships, your work, where you live, your finances, your health. Those things make up your life. They are the life of the person.

Are those things completely insignificant? No. They matter.

They have some importance. As I've said somewhere before, of course it matters whether you are poor financially or live in abundance, makes a difference. And most people would probably choose abundance except ardent spiritual seekers who believe that by choosing poverty, they might be able to discover, find God.

Or become spiritually awakened. Of course, there's no guarantee whatsoever if you choose poverty that will awaken you spiritually. It could.

It doesn't. In most cases, it doesn't for those people who practice it. Because true poverty is not to be identified with anything in the world of form.

Not to derive your sense of self, not only from things that you possess, but from any self image in your mind. So you may only possess a loincloth and a begging bowl and yet be identified with an image in your mind of who you are, a highly advanced spiritual being, infinitely superior to all these silly people who are still identified with possessions and other things. Of course, the moment this happens, you're not poor at all.

You are still rich in identification with who you are. And that's heavier than any external possession and mental image of who you are. And even, especially if the image is of spiritually highly advanced, is more of an obstacle than external possessions.

So this is why Jesus said the poor in spirit. That's what he really meant. And that somebody wrote it down correctly.

A lot of things were not written down correctly. I think a few people did take notes when he taught. Blessed are the poor in spirit, which means internally poor, no identification with anything.

So it matters whether you are rich or poor, healthy or not healthy, or have a nice job, or

a nice family, harmonious, or live in a nice place. But all these things are very unstable. There's very, almost never a time, and if there is, it's very short, when all the factors that make up your life situation are working perfectly.

Health, finances, work situation, family, relationships, living situation. So, and that's how it is. It's in the nature of phenomenal existence to be in continuous flux.

It continuously changes. Things come and go and disappear. Things may satisfy you for a while, and then they no longer satisfy you.

Things make you happy for a while, then they make you unhappy, because they lose their ability to make you happy, or they disappear. So there's something that is much more important than anything in your life situation, and that's the ability to be still. That's one way of putting it.

And in that, you realize that a depth, there's a depth to who you are, a presence that shows to you without any doubt that whatever happens in your life situation out there is of secondary importance. And when things are not satisfying in your life situation, whether it's to do with money, work, relationships, living situation, health, it is often precisely at those moments when things don't work in one or several of these areas that there's an opportunity for you to go deeper within yourself and find that realm of stillness or spaciousness or presence, whatever you want to call it. So you become, to some extent, free from external conditions, from the conditions of your life, including the physical body, even that's still external, no longer have the ability to make you really unhappy, really upset and frustrated and fearful and anxious.

On the other side, this may sound like bad news, but it's not. All these external things also lose their ability to make you really happy. Wow, yeah, I got it now, yeah.

You can still feel enthusiastic and enjoy life tremendously, whatever life gives you in the world of form. But there's always something, there's something transcendent in you and something from where you observe and enjoy the beautiful things that come into your life. There is an enjoyment there, but you don't give them an importance that they don't have.

You don't attach yourself to them. You allow them to be. It may be a possession that comes to you and it's lovely.

You look after it, whatever it is, a house, an object. You appreciate it. It's lovely.

You look after it without that strong sense of attachment of mine.

[Speaker 2] (2:23:02 - 2:23:15)

If you place excessive focus on the imperfection or areas of unconsciousness, you can no

longer meet this person in a space of openness.

[Speaker 1] (2:23:21 - 2:55:33)

I always start with not knowing what to say. That's the reason for the silence. And I recommend that you do that too before any creative activity or anything, just become comfortable with not knowing, which means not thinking, which does not mean you are going to sleep or unconscious, or it could happen that you suddenly drop below thinking.

It happens to some people here. Now, normally to sit in front of an audience and not know what to say could be a nightmare. In fact, some people have nightmares of that kind.

They're sitting somewhere and suddenly the curtain opens and it's a theater and they're all looking. I've forgotten my lines. Public speaking for many people is one of the most stressful things.

And that's because they can't go, become comfortable with not knowing. The big difference is becoming comfortable with not knowing and feeling, I don't know, but I should know. That's very uncomfortable.

Remember what the great philosopher, Socrates said, they call me the wisest of all men for the reason that I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing. Nobody really has truly understood what he meant. People thought he was just pretending not to know, but I'm convinced that he was referring to the state of not knowing, which is also, of course, the state of not thinking, but awareness out of which the whole philosophy emerged.

The creative use of mind emerged out of the space of no mind. If you have no access to the space of no mind, then your mind will not be creative in any way. In other words, it's just, you can only have to rely on what you have acquired and you will be moving within the conditioned realm of the mind, whatever the mind has been conditioned by.

That's all you have then. Another area where it's very helpful, this not knowing, is not to formulate conclusions on limited, insufficient evidence, to come to conclusions that become rigid thoughts in your mind concerning, for example, other people or yourself, or what you call your life. Such as, for example, let's say you have a relationship, a intimate relationship, then he or she betrays you in the conventional narrative.

And then you've immediately, the mind jumps to this conclusion. I'm never going to trust any woman or man again, never. That's a term you've just would have constructed a dreadful prison for yourself.

So you have a thought that suddenly dominates your mind in order to, I'm not going to suffer again in that way. This is no more, these conclusions can become self-made prisons. And then you walk in and you shut the door and there you are stuck in that mind

pattern and never again being able to relate openly to a man or a woman.

And then you've other weird, weird conclusions that people arrive at. Some of them are so-called prejudices and so on. They're very rigid mental formations that deprive you of openness towards reality.

So it's good to be with relation to other people, also frequently not to be very careful with formulating conclusions about other people, individuals or groups of people. Remain as much as possible in the state of not knowing conceptually. And yet there is a deep knowing there, but it's not a knowing that creates separation between you and the other.

And so it's easy to find imperfections in people when you start working with them or living with them. And if you place excessive focus on the imperfection or areas of unconsciousness, then that can obliterate the totality of that person. For example, let's say somebody lies to you about something for whatever, people lie for different reasons, maybe even to not to hurt you or whatever, who knows what the reason is.

And then you find out and then you say, oh, he's a liar, I know what kind of a person that is now, he's a liar, he lied to me, to me. Of course, that makes it much worse than me. And once you have formulated an opinion or a judgment of that kind, you can no longer meet this person in a space of openness because immediately the judgment you formulated is there between you and you relate, this becomes part of the screens of conceptualization through which you then relate to that person.

Now, if you formulate a judgment about an entire group of people, as political group of people, religious group of people, all, whatever they are, are like that, all, then when you meet an individual representative of that group, you will no longer be able to meet him or her because you're meeting your mental image that you have created. So the true meeting is no longer possible. So very dangerous traps in your mind, created by your mind, by unconscious mental activity, what is conventionally called, which is fashionable these days, identity politics and stuff like that is also dangerous because you have entire groups of people and anybody who belongs to that group, you don't no longer look at the individual human being, say, anybody who belongs to this group is like that. It could be a political, racial group or whatever it may be.

So it's all to do with forming mental screens so that make communication almost impossible, true communication. There are quite a few people who do not express emotions fully or don't express them at all. Perhaps even more so in Northern countries, the further North you go, the less they express their emotions.

That's how it seems to be. Maybe it's too cold to express your emotions. Now, the practice I describe of observing your emotions, allowing them to be, for somebody who habitually does not express emotions, it is not usually the best way to start.

Try and observe his or her emotions because they may not even know what emotions they are having. They may be so much pushed down. So particularly for those people who have been suppressing emotions, it is very helpful to express the emotions, if possible, without injuring anybody or yourself, to allow yourself to express emotions and witness that at the same time.

So the expression itself would not free you because emotions, if they are not observed and not witnessed, tend to renew themselves through renewed thinking because there's this vicious circle between emotion and thought processes. So the expression alone is not enough because you would simply be stuck with it and express the anger because the anger dissipates somewhat as you express it. But if you are not conscious of the relationship between your thought processes and the anger, the thought processes will create renewed anger.

And so you would be going to the same or other therapists and hitting the pillows for 20 or 30 years, not realizing that through your thought processes, you're continuously recreating emotion and you're identifying so much. So without the presence, expression is better than repression. Repression can make you ill, but to become, to transcend, it is essential to be alert and present and watch it as an energy field so that through the watching, it becomes depersonalized so that you don't feel you're not totally stuck in it.

And then you can express it, hit something, not a person if possible, the pillow, if it's anger or scream, and it feels good perhaps and feel the raw energy of it like fire and feel it, wow. And if you allow it completely and express it, it can even very quickly turn around and then you can do something useful that you have an enormous energy and suddenly it gets turned around and it's just, it's no longer, it can shift from anger to just being intense energy. Okay, now I'm going to clean my room.

Not angry anymore, simply with energy. You could also clean your room still being angry, but that's not good cleaning because you would be cleaning on the material level and on an energetic level, you would be polluting your room. And so to become free, for a while, some people need to express fully and then a time comes when there's enough presence and you have expressed it, then you can gradually more and more work on the inner level and bring presence to it on the inner, not that you ever hold it down.

If it wants to and needs to express itself, you may do something, maybe you can transform it into physical movement, vigorous movement or whatever it is and watch, but always be there as a witness. At some point, you may find that you have a choice. The emotion arises, you can express it or not express it.

And it can simply be transformed or transmuted through bringing presence to it. You will know in the moment whether it needs to express itself or not. If you have never or rarely expressed emotion, then by all means, allow yourself to express it without indulging and without personalizing it, recognizing it as energy, no more, just as energy.

And watch. So what in your life as you pursue a goal, another way of putting, of approaching it is to ask yourself if you are not really enjoying while you pursue the goal, whatever it is in your life, if you are not really enjoying the doing because you are so focused on becoming and achieving and arriving at this future point that the enjoyment of the doing is greatly diminished or disappears completely because all you want to do is arrive, but you're not there yet.

That's the nature of stress, how stress arises. Stress means there is a continuous focus on the next moment. So you are torn away, and this is produced by the human mind through thinking, you are torn away internally from the present moment into a nonexistent, because the future never exists except as a thought, you are torn into this so-called future, which is a never land because it can never arrive, you can never reach the future because the moment it becomes reality in your life, it's the present moment.

So by having this mindset, an excessive focus on becoming or arriving or achieving, you lose completely the being dimension. And then your life is completely out of balance, even if you achieve in the eyes of the world, fame or wealth or worldly success, and yet you are a frustrated and unhappy human being, perhaps pretending that you are happy, but you're not. And then you have to take drugs or alcohol or go from one relationship to another or compulsively pursue the next thing and the next thing and the next thing, accumulate more of this and this and this, and so that's not a mastery of life.

Even if you have your private debt, does not mean you have achieved mastery of life. In fact, you may be completely deluded. Not necessarily, you could have a private debt and have achieved the mastery, wouldn't that be great?

So that is, our purpose here is to have that balance and here the emphasis, of course, of this teaching is on finding the being dimension, awareness of being, which is why I talk so much about the present moment, because this is always the moment your attention goes fully into the present moment, you have withdrawn attention from becoming and doing, and what arises is the being dimension. So, and that is associated also with a sometimes brief, but vitally important cessation of thinking. In that moment, when you become completely aware of the present moment, and it starts with sense perception, you're suddenly aware of your surroundings.

You may also suddenly be aware of the inner energy field that you feel you're alive. In this present moment, there is aliveness all around you, and you can perceive it through your senses. You hear, you feel, you see, you smell, but there's also an aliveness, an inherent aliveness in your body.

So you become aware simultaneously in the present moment of a sense of aliveness within and without. So in addition to what you see with your senses, there is an underlying field of aliveness that you can be aware of in the present moment, and that's the being dimension or presence. And that's who you are in essence, but that's not only

who you are in essence.

That is the essence of everything. So when you realize that for yourself, it's not the person who has that realization. The universe has that realization.

The universe, which for a moment, because your life is a moment on a cosmic scale, your life here as a person has a very short duration. It goes, choop, choop. Well, was that it?

Yeah. Then the element of continuous, frustration and discontent, and the feeling there's something not right here, or the feeling there's something vital missing in my life, but always looking to the next thing to find that vital thing that's missing in my life. I have to find it.

If you don't realize it's already here, so there's something. I don't feel, I don't feel complete. There's still something lacking, a sense of lack.

Something is missing. Don't know what it is. You might even not verbally say that.

There's just a feeling that something is missing or something is not right. Of course not, because your life is completely out of balance, but you're, I'm not nothing personal. I'm not talking to you.

I'm talking in general terms. If your life were completely out of balance, you wouldn't be here. Or if you had accidentally stumbled upon this place, you would soon leave.

So the being dimension is accessed, obviously, in the present moment. And the doing, of course, requires time. You cannot do anything without some dimension of time.

Make a cup of tea. You need some time to make a cup of tea. Learn to become this or that.

You need time to become a doctor or to become a musician or to become a dancer or to become whatever you need. Time, that's the time-temporal dimension. And yet, although you need time, the paradox is that you never really, not really, that you never actually experience time or the passing of time, except in your head as a thought, as an anticipation of the next moment or a memory of the last or other moments of the past.

That's how you experience time. But never as a direct experience. Time, you can never experience directly because whenever you ask yourself, where's time?

All you ever get is the present moment. So, on one level of your life, time seems vital or to do things. Now, on another side of that coin of time, where on one hand, time seems useful because you can, on the level, surface level of reality, you can do things in time and become, from being an ignorant person, become a very knowledgeable person in time.

It takes time to acquire knowledge on that level. And yet, that's a good aspect of time, but then there's something else aspect of time which you discover when you compare a photo of yourself taken at the age of 20, let's say you are now 40 or 50 or whatever, and you discover, oh, that's me 20 years ago, and then you look in the mirror, or 30 years ago, what happened to me? Time, who did this to me?

Time. Oh, my God. And if you're young and beautiful or strong and healthy, then you can still know that eventually, time is going to erode your good looks.

No, this is not tragic unless you are very much identified, you derive your sense of identity from your physical body, which might look good right now, but won't in time. Time will, and then, of course, what ultimately time, of course, what time does, it kills you. So first, it enables you to do things and to become, but then at the same time, you begin to wilt like a flower.

It does, so time does that to a flower too, much more quickly than a human, but very similar. It does it to a fruit, a piece of fruit. If you want to observe the passing of time, all you can do is to observe the effect that time has on things, but you cannot observe time because it's never there.

It's a paradox. One could go into this or make it into a huge philosophical thing, which I won't do. It's enough for you to see in your personal, your immediate experience, time is not something that you can ever experience directly.

It only leaves behind evidence it's been there. A dead body, for example. Or an apple that three, two weeks ago was very fresh and now it's all wrinkled and has gone.

And two weeks before it was, the apple looked, and it's the same with young humans. They can be very radiant and then gradually. Now, an interesting thing happens for those humans who are not totally identified with that level of form, but who have access to being dimension as they grow older, the being dimension, as the physical vehicle gets gradually eroded by time, the physical, sorry, the being dimension is actually able to shine through more.

As the body weakens and gets old, there is a light, the light of consciousness that can shine through. And then you find certain old people who, as the body weakens, the light increases of consciousness and the ego is completely gone, and there's just a beautiful presence left. That's the, at the latest, as you grow old, that's your last opportunity.

But if you've missed it for the first 75 years of your life, because you were too concerned with doing all the time and acquiring and becoming, I don't know whether you can still find it. I think if you fall ill or something like that happens to you, yes, you can. It's preferable not to wait until you're close to death to look for the being dimension, because you might not find it anymore because you're so absorbed in the doing and in

time that you won't even look for it.

If you had no interest whatsoever throughout your life in any of this, it's a bit late. That's fine. The universe is abundant and patient and every life has a purpose.

We'll talk about that some other time. Time, you see. We can't get away from it.

This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

[Speaker 2] (2:55:36 - 2:56:23)

The essence of this is to join in the state of presence.

[Speaker 12] (2:56:28 - 2:56:35)

So it's not the words, it's the stillness.

[Speaker 1] (2:56:45 - 2:57:10)

It may be helpful, and this is why we are doing this, to look at me or the image of me on the screen because I'm not, except in the moment when I speak, I'm not thinking.

[Speaker 2] (2:57:12 - 2:57:31)

And so somehow, I don't know how, but somehow that state of pure awareness or presence kind of transmits itself if you're open to it.

[Speaker 1] (2:57:39 - 2:57:51)

When you look at somebody, when you are with somebody who is in that state of presence, then it's easier for you to be present.

[Speaker 2] (2:57:52 - 2:58:06)

When you're with somebody who is immersed in thought activity, identified with thinking, then it's more challenging for you to be present.

[Speaker 1] (2:58:08 - 3:01:31)

Still possible, but then the danger is that you may be pulled into the same vibrational frequency, so to speak, of identification with thinking and lose yourself in it. It's just amazing that it's not yet common knowledge that such a state of consciousness that we call presence or awareness, that it even exists or is possible, that it is the secret dimension of consciousness because very few people seem to know about it and it's not in the mainstream culture. All that's been there in the teaching of the ancient spiritual

teachers, it's the essence of their teaching and yet misunderstood.

So if I could just put it in a nutshell, just in one short, one brief sentence, what this is all about is to be here with me and all the others who are joining us here. We're all connected at a deeper level of the collective consciousness, human consciousness, to be here and to enjoy being aware, fully aware, fully awake without needing to think, conceptual thinking, inner dialogues, monologues, interpretations, viewpoints, past, future, regret, anxiety, all produced by unconscious identification with thinking, unnecessary thinking in many cases.

[Speaker 2] (3:01:39 - 3:01:50)

If thoughts come in while we sit here together, don't follow them, just let them dissolve.

[Speaker 1] (3:01:51 - 3:02:13)

Don't follow them with your attention. Every thought wants to grow and says, give me attention, but you just let it drift away like a cloud. The sky is blue and occasional clouds may come.

[Speaker 2] (3:02:13 - 3:03:26)

The blue sky is the awareness. The clouds are the thoughts. Now, I'm here to help you free yourself from unconscious, compulsive thinking.

And then you can do some real thinking that is effective and when it's needed. So in essence, you are the sky, the cloud, the vast, empty, spacious sky, thinking of the movement of clouds in this analogy, but it is a good analogy.

[Speaker 1] (3:03:32 - 3:05:10)

Now, if there were so much thinking in you that we could compare it to a sky that is totally covered in clouds, then you would not even know what it is I'm talking about right now. There needs to be in you at least a small opening, an interval between two thoughts, a brief, a small opening, the tiny bit of blue sky that you see as the clouds separate for a moment and there you sense a spaciousness, a stillness. And then you know what it is that I'm talking about.

And then you can begin to become comfortable with it and then actually realize how deeply enjoyable or satisfying that dimension of consciousness is.

[Speaker 2] (3:05:23 - 3:07:18)

It frees you not only from compulsive thinking, which is a dreadful affliction, it frees you also, and perhaps even more importantly, from a sense of identity, a sense of self that is created by identification with compulsive thinking, a sense of identity that is derived

from thought. And then you tell yourself and others who you are, that is connected with your life story, a narrative in your mind, which is a story of me,

[Speaker 1] (3:07:19 - 3:07:41)

whatever it is that it consists of, whatever you identify with, whether it's possessions or achievements or non-achievements or successes or failures,

[Speaker 2] (3:07:49 - 3:08:06)

whether you are proud or ashamed of yourself, it all comes down to thought forms

[Speaker 1] (3:08:09 - 3:08:14)

that you confuse with who you are,

[Speaker 2] (3:08:16 - 3:08:18)

even material possessions.

[Speaker 1] (3:08:23 - 3:08:35)

Of course, the only way you can experience a material possession or anything in the outer world is as a thought form.

[Speaker 2] (3:08:37 - 3:08:46)

It gets translated, your sense perceptions get translated into a mental formation.

[Speaker 1] (3:08:50 - 3:09:10)

So you see a big house there, and then the visual perception gets coded into nerve impulses that are sent to the brain and the brain decodes in some way.

[Speaker 2] (3:09:12 - 3:09:21)

And then you end up with a thought form and that says, my house.

[Speaker 1] (3:09:23 - 3:10:05)

And then you identify with a thought form of your house, which may add to your sense of who you are for a while. But there are many thought forms that you can identify with, positive or negative. You can have a thought form that you are, you have no house and you have no car, and perhaps you don't even have a bed.

[Speaker 2] (3:10:09 - 3:10:18)

Does that free you from self-identification?

[Speaker 1] (3:10:21 - 3:11:38)

Well, it frees you from self-identification with a certain type of thought form that corresponds to physical things, but it does not necessarily free you from identification with thought, because you could have the identification with the thought of yourself as someone who has transcended identification with possessions, is therefore spiritually superior to all these unconscious people who live in their big houses and drive their big cars.

You have risen above it. A subtle form of, also of fictitious self, a subtle form of ego, you have to be very careful, of any kind of conceptual identity.

[Speaker 2] (3:11:39 - 3:12:41)

It's always derived from thought, whereas your true identity is non-conceptual, cannot be found in any thought that you have about yourself in the same way that you cannot find the true identity of anybody else through conceptualization, thinking about them.

[Speaker 1] (3:12:53 - 3:14:49)

The art of living is to be able to function in the realm of thought and function as well as possible without looking for yourself in the realm of thought. And usually that means looking for a stronger sense of identity through thought, which for example, you create by having a hostile or antagonistic attitude towards other people or situations, to make them into enemies, so to speak, that strengthens your conceptual identity. Even being angry with somebody strengthens it.

You can see how the ego can get inflated when you're angry with somebody or you observe somebody who is angry. So, this is all part of a live event.

[Speaker 2] (3:14:50 - 3:14:56)

Can't cut it out and that's good.

[Speaker 1] (3:15:10 - 3:15:31)

So if you can use thought, but knowing always who you are, that you are not anything that can be defined by thought, that you cannot know yourself as thought or a bundle of thoughts.

[Speaker 2] (3:15:45 - 3:16:05)

And so we are here to deepen your knowledge of yourself as awareness, as consciousness. And that's nothing to do with conceptual knowledge.

[Speaker 1] (3:16:05 - 3:16:17)

You can't break it down into bits and pieces. Knowledge may not even be the best word to describe it.

[Speaker 2] (3:16:19 - 3:16:23)

Perhaps a better word would be knowing, knowing yourself.

[Speaker 1] (3:16:53 - 4:21:04)

Whereas meditation, true meditation is not a doing, but it's the realization of being. And there's no time in being. Simple realization that you are.

This is why I, some techniques are fine. Eventually, every technique you have to let go. Like a raft, Buddhism has the image of the analogy or the story of a raft that you use to cross a river.

You use a raft to cross a river. When you've crossed the river, you don't take up the raft and carry it around with you. So the raft is a technique or the teaching that can take you there perhaps.

But once you're there, you realize you don't need it. So whatever technique you use in meditation, eventually it is to be transcended or you can transcend it right now without any technique. This is why I don't call this a meditation because if I, again, I love meditation, but there's another possibility, and that is at any given moment to invite this awareness into your life, this dimension to see there is a possibility of awakening, simply realizing that you are in this moment and so that awareness of awareness, the realization of being.

And in that, then, as this deepens, again, this is time to talk about something timeless, and that becomes your identity, the being, not the personality or any achievement or whatever it may be in your past or future. That's fine. You manipulate, you hold, you handle your life consciously.

It will actually improve when you are rooted in the unconditioned consciousness, because that's what it is. Then if you are rooted in the vertical dimension, things begin to actually also improve in the horizontal dimension because that consciousness flows into your life, not that it ever becomes totally free of challenges. The challenges continue, but the challenges will then only take you deeper instead of making you more unconscious, which is what they often do for many humans.

So that is, there's an ancient word, self-realization. You can use that expression. That's who or what you are beyond the personality.

And then that is what Jesus calls when there's a parable about him. He tells a parable about a man who builds a house and the house is built on sand. And when the storms

come and the floods come, the house is swept away.

And then there's another man who, before building a house, he digs deep, he digs deep until he reaches the rock, which is deep. And so he reaches the front, after he digs deep and finds the foundation. And then he builds a house on the rock and the floods come and the rains come and the storms come and the house is not swept away, it stands.

This is an analogy about states of consciousness, the state of deep connectedness with being, the vertical dimension, and the state of being trapped only on the horizontal dimension, when life becomes actually suffering, to use a term of the Buddha, frustrating, suffering, and then you can resent it all and so on. So this is the, now your mission is to invite, this into your life throughout the day. Don't miss an opportunity.

Yes, you still go about your normal activities, but allow yourself to become aware of the vertical dimension as much as possible. It seems at first there's a current in you that doesn't want that. There is an, the egoic self will tell you that this is not the time to be present.

You have other, I've got so much on my plate, I can't be present now, don't talk to me about this. Look what I'm dealing with here. And you want me to be spiritual?

Just, I'll be spiritual when I'm, when I've solved all that. And then I'll find a nice place, a retreat center in Bali, and then I can finally... Of course, life does not stop challenging you, so don't wait.

Have your life interspersed with that brief moments, initially brief, brief moments of spaciousness, brief moments of spaciousness. One conscious breath is already something. Let's say you are, you're on your computer.

Okay, one conscious breath. You look away from the screen. If you can, look away at the sky or a plant, anything natural, or close your eyes.

But if you close your eyes, then your screen will still be there. You'll still see the computer screen, awful. So you look at the screen.

One conscious breath. A little bit of spaciousness has opened up. And during that time period, which if you measure in time, it would be like maybe 10 seconds, whatever.

But that is a little bit of spacious consciousness you have suddenly experienced. And you might even want to take a second conscious breath. Follow the breath with your attention.

And maybe even a third, although your mind says, yeah, I don't have time for this. But it's only one minute. So don't believe every thought that comes in and says, I have to deal with this first.

I have to do this first. That's another parable in the Gospels where you're invited to a wedding feast. People get invited to a wedding feast and everybody says, well, let me do this first.

First, I need to sell my cattle. No, I need to do this first. Let me do this first.

There's always something. Don't believe your mind when it says, no, no, can't do it now. There's nobody who does not have one minute to be aware of their breath, unless it's an emergency.

You have to get to the hospital now. Okay. Get into your car.

Every time I would recommend you close the door and stay just a moment of spaciousness. I suggest half a minute to one minute, but don't measure it. Just feel it.

Okay, I'm going to do one minute now. Okay. And then you're just internally already trying to get to the end of it.

You have to be there. Anytime you're waiting for something, be present. Use, if you cannot just be present, this ability may arise a little bit later when you can just decide, so to speak, not the right word, to just be free of thinking, but just be aware.

So that comes a little bit later, just the ability to just have that space. Somebody asked me some years ago, what's your greatest achievement in life? And I said, well, my greatest achievement is I don't think when I don't have to think or don't want to think.

I don't need to think. That's my greatest achievement. But it's not really an achievement, is it?

It wouldn't get me a job. I'm applying for a job in my, what are you going to see? The resume can be free of thinking.

So it's not an achievement. Again, it would be a misperception to just call it an achievement because that discovery, this realization, that dimension of consciousness has already always been there. In that sense, it's not an achievement.

I have made it. No, you didn't do anything. You just became aware of being, which is not a doing.

It sounds like a doing when you talk about it. You become aware of being, not an achievement because being is the essence of who you are. And to know the essence of who you are is not an achievement.

And so, wow. First level of being aware of the present moment is to be aware of your sense perceptions. That brings, it's the first step into the present moment.

Then perhaps you're aware of your breathing and your inner body, and sense perception at the same time. So first you become aware of where you are, what's around you, or what you're doing. And then you go deeper into the present moment.

And the essence of the present moment is you. So the essence of what we call the present moment is consciousness. And consciousness is the space in which everything happens.

Consciousness is the one thing that never changes is the present moment. It's always now. It's always now.

And what is the present moment in essence? In essence, the present moment is not what happens in the present moment. The deeper essence is the present moment is the space for whatever happens.

And there's the space, like the canvas, however you want to call it. So you are aware of yourself ultimately as the present moment. And this realization that ultimately you are the present moment, those words had not come to me when I was writing the power of now.

So it never got into the book because the words came to me after I'd already written the book. Said, oh, I should have put that in. Oh no, why didn't I put that in?

Oh, you're no good. You're good. I didn't do that.

So you can, you sense the essence of what present moment really means as consciousness. The one thing that is beyond any doubt that you are right now conscious. And that's not the right way of putting it.

If I say you are conscious, you are consciousness is better. You are consciousness. Today I may just answer some written questions.

This is only a very small selection out of several hundred. It's hard to choose. It's only almost random choice, not totally random, but almost.

But before I do that, perhaps just a few words, and this will take between five minutes and one hour. Don't. When you want to strengthen the physical body, what do you do?

You exercise. But what is that actually when you exercise? What do you do when you exercise?

One way of putting it is to say that you create difficulty for the body. You create obstacles for the body to overcome. There it is, running on the track with a lifting weight.

It's when you're creating a difficulty for the body. Any exercise is making life difficult for the body. That's a way of looking at it.

That's not a normal way of looking at it. You take the body out of its comfort zone, although there is a stage where the body, once it gets going, the body may enjoy the energy of it. But until that flows, there's a discomfort.

And that's the only way the body can get stronger. If the body stays in its comfort zone, then, well, you will be lying on a sofa or on a deck chair. It's very nice, but the body doesn't change.

So that's an interesting, almost an analogy for something that happens to humans, because it seems that life for everybody creates difficulties. So it's not, one would have thought, if I were God, I would make life easy for everybody. And you would then see most likely, if you did that, most likely there would be, no evolution would ever have happened, or no further evolution if you do it right now, because it's only, it seems, both on the physical level and beyond, it's only through facing difficulties, which you could also call challenges, which you could also call problems, if you like, which you could also call one damn thing after another. The strange thing is, only by encountering these challenges do we grow in consciousness and generate energy. It awakens us eventually.

Now, if you overdo physical exercise, you put too much strain on the body, you could kill the body, you could kill yourself, and this has happened to people who were so obsessed with physical exercise that they overdid it. I've read, for example, whenever it was one or two years ago, a man who wrote about the incredible benefits of jogging died of a heart attack while he was jogging, and he wasn't that old, so you can overdo it, and then instead of the body getting stronger, it dies. And you could also say, when you look at life and humans, life on this planet, probably many other planets, you would say, well, it's all very well.

Sometimes it seems to work that through facing challenges and problems, we grow. We grow out of identification with mind. We grow out of the ego.

We transcend our conditioned state of consciousness, and a new consciousness arises. And if I know, not actually speaking for myself, without facing difficulties and challenges, there would not have been any growth in consciousness and no awakening if I had had a, what's the word? For example, a trust fund, where you know from a very early age, your parents have already looked after your security.

And you know from an early age, if you don't want to work or anything, you don't have to, you can have a comfortable life without ever doing anything. There are people like that. There may even be one or two here, but if you are here and you are a trust fund baby, then other things must have happened to you that created difficulties.

It wasn't financial, but there were other things. And even eventually to a trust fund baby, other difficulties will happen. But for quite a while, it could be that this person remains stagnant or might enjoy certain activities or is indulged in sensory, pleasures until it gets

too much.

It's no longer satisfying and then it reaches a critical stage. And sometimes there was a man in, I met him many, many years ago. I was taken to a kind of cocktail party.

I didn't move in those circles, but it just happened accidentally that I ended up there. And somebody took me and says, you must come and look, this is where you're going to meet the sixth richest man in England or something. Somebody, a friend of mine who was impressed by these things.

So I met this man who became rich apparently because he invented one little thing. One, he had one idea and became a billionaire. This is not uncommon these days, by the way, with the internet.

But this was before the internet. He had one idea and that's called Tetra Pak. The drinks that come in a carton and it has a carton that has a particular kind of, opens in a particular way so that you can pour out the liquid.

It's called, it's a patent, Tetra Pak. So he came up with that and he became a billionaire. And I've talked to him briefly and then I forgot about many, many years past and forgot about it.

And two or three years ago, I happened to read in the paper that his son, who was by now, he was probably 40 years old, was a drug addict, seriously addicted to drugs and lost completely control of his life, was adrift completely. And he was, they arrested him. He was driving under the influence of some drugs.

And when police entered his house, they found in one of the bedrooms in big house in Belgravia, London, they found his wife, the dead body of his wife had been in that bed for several months. And he just couldn't, he hadn't killed her, but she probably died of a drug overdose and he just couldn't face dealing with it. So he just closed the door and there was a dead body.

This can happen to the extreme cases of trust fund dysfunction. So in other words, when life gets too easy for you, things can quickly deteriorate, but that's your opportunity then because first life gets too easy. Then because it gets too easy, it deteriorates and you lose more and more consciousness.

And then it is possible that you encounter so much suffering that then finally experience the difficulty of life. And then there's a possibility of growth. So this could happen to this man too.

Now, there's always the possibility of awakening. This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

And of course, so you see your life, your so-called life crumbling and it's painful. And it's would be, we're not denying that. That's not saying it's not painful.

It is painful, but it is a chance. It's an opportunity for people to go deeper and realize a foundation, something what you could call true sense of safety or security that has nothing to do with the externals of your life. And it seems that it's necessary for many people to experience adversity in the form of loss to be driven there voluntarily.

They don't go there. And not everybody who experiences adversity will go there. Some get trapped in a reactive movement and become deeply either angry, say it's not fair, shouldn't have happened to me, or be despondent, can't take anymore.

Or you cry for the next five years. You get stuck in a reactive movement. And so you're even more deeply stuck in a rigid pattern.

But there is a chance that you can go deeper and let go of seeking to identify with any form in your life. And suddenly something arises from deep within that is peaceful. You can't name it.

And so you've touched suddenly something that you didn't know existed in you. I sometimes call it the formless. Could call spirit because spirit is the formless.

And suddenly you have the peace that passes all understanding because you can't explain it. Well, I'm trying to explain it. But it's hard.

So it seems to me there's a general pattern at work that it is inherent in the nature of physical existence of life forms that challenges an essential ingredient of their lifespan here. And part of the way through which they evolve. But when they say they evolve, what it means is the one consciousness evolves, awakens into this dimension through the different life forms in different ways.

And it awakens only because we are being challenged. And that is quite a relief to realize to be challenged doesn't mean there's something wrong. There's something wrong with my life that shouldn't be.

If you believe or act as if this shouldn't be happening, then you get really unhappy. Then the challenges become transformed into unhappiness inside you. If it's not unhappiness, it's resentment.

If it's not resentment, it's anger. It's self-pity. It's complaining.

It's despondency. So for the simple reason that you are misunderstanding the very purpose of life and expecting something that your mind has come up with, it should be different. What you are looking for is something deeper.

What every human is looking for is something deeper than the world can give you. The

world can only challenge you, give you challenges and adversity so that you awaken. The world cannot, as I said, it cannot make you happy because it's not here to make you happy.

But it has another purpose. It is here to make you conscious. That's how it operates.

Also, that means whatever arises in the present moment is just right for this moment, for you at this moment. But if you are stuck in the mind, the egoic mind, then you will completely ignore or even continuously dislike the present moment. And it is an amazing way to live.

It is dreadful. But millions still live like that without knowing it unconsciously. They live for the next moment until they get very old.

Then they know there's not much time left. Then the past becomes more and more important, the happiness of the past. Oh, oh.

So living for the next moment is, for most people, unconscious and quite normal. They live hoping that at some point they are going to achieve fulfillment. And little fulfillments come here and then.

There's nothing wrong with that. It's wonderful when you achieve things. It's even wonderful when you fall in love.

Enjoy it. Falling in, it's not going to last, but enjoy it. So that's great.

It's not, but there's always, I've met in the, fortunately been able to meet over the years quite a few people who are in the eyes of the world highly successful. They've got everything. They've got fame.

They've got money. They've got everything. They have got their private jets.

They can go anywhere at any moment, can have anything, any pleasure. And they've told me that after they achieved fame and fortune, there was an initial time period when there was elation and they were on a continuous high, but then gradually, more and more, they experienced a very deep low in their mental, emotional state, including depression and wanting to, not wanting to live anymore. They had everything, but, and some had to go to drugs to make life bearable, had everything.

Wasn't enough. It wasn't enough. And then you can't fool yourself anymore when you have everything.

You can't fool yourself. When I achieve that, I'll be happy. No, you have achieved everything, but you're not happy.

So the worst thing would be for you to achieve, to get everything that you want, and

then you can't fool yourself anymore and look to the future for some fulfillment, and that's really dreadful. So that is the human condition, and it all is connected to who you sense yourself to be, your identity, your identity as who you are, your sense of self. That is the foundation for your life, your sense of self, and everybody is concerned with identity.

From childhood onward, the identity becomes very important. Of course, every human needs shelter and food, and sustenance, shelter, and one can say almost the next thing, well, the next thing is, as a human grows up, needs some kind of love or affection, but that's already bound up with identity because if you don't get love and affection, then you already have a deficient sense of self that developed in early age. So identity refers to your sense of self, and where does your sense of self come from?

What does it mean to be you? And usually, most humans, especially those who are not awakening yet, they look to their sense of identity through a narrative that is connected to their past. So I call that sometimes the story of me.

So everybody has the story of me. I call that, well, it's a narrative, and people call it, this is an interesting expression, they call it my life. So you think about my life, let me think about that.

Well, it's a mixture of good and bad. It's been all kinds of weird things in the past. And certainly, almost everybody says, it didn't quite go the way I had imagined it to be when I was 18 or 17.

And many people have a feeling something went wrong somewhere. Strangely, many people have the feeling they haven't started to live yet. And it's almost like I'm still, I'm hoping at some point I'm going to start living soon.

I'll start, I just need to meet the right person. I just need to get that job. I just need to find this or that possession, or if people would only recognize my worth or recognition of one kind.

It's an unconscious process. The longing, my life hasn't actually started yet. And some people have that throughout their life until finally they are surprised that they reach retirement.

And they're still, but just maybe a few years before retirement, you can look to your retirement as the liberation. Then I can start living. Now I know when I retire, then I can start living.

Okay, two more years, one more year, six months. And then the moment comes, you sit in your office and the clock reaches five o'clock, it's my last day. And then off you go.

And the first few days and weeks are great because you go to the golf course and then

sit around. If you have sufficient funds, you can have your cocktails. You may not have sufficient funds these days, so that's another problem.

And so a few weeks pass and you sit there and you take a trip and you come back. And then you move to a better climate because you don't, let's move to Florida, okay. And then you sit in Florida, just looking at the sun and then you play another game of golf.

And then a kind of fatigue sets in and then the mind says, and now what? And nothing, who am I now? I had this title, I had a job description.

I was the vice president of this company or whatever. And now I'm no longer a vice president. And a great part of my identity was derived from the concept of vice president of the company.

And suddenly the concept has dissolved and who am I now? Without that, well, that's weird. I get this weird feeling of not being nobody anymore.

And so you're retired. And it's a strange thing that it is not uncommon for people to die just two or three years after retiring because there's nothing there anymore to live for. They were looking towards retirement for some kind of a solution, but that's not it.

So it's not, everybody's looking where it cannot be found. It cannot be found in the future. That what you're looking for cannot be found in the future because, don't tell anybody, but there is no future.

There is no future. There just seems to be a future. And you are aware, just as I'm aware of what's around me, you're aware of what's around you.

You're aware of my voice. You're aware of what you see. And you may be aware of feelings or thoughts that are still coming and going.

And the all important question is, in addition to being aware of these things, are you aware that you are aware? That is the, or we could call the transcendent dimension. That is inner space opening up and that is going beyond form in your life because everything is form, sense perceptions, thoughts, thought forms, emotions, emotional formations.

And the challenge is not to get trapped exclusively in the world of form, which includes your form identity, which consists of whatever's going on in your life and primarily the thoughts and thought patterns and emotional patterns that you, the memories and so on, is all thoughts that you identify with as yourself. That's a very small, limiting sense of self that easily gets frustrated, upset, anxious, reactive. And why do you always get, not you personally, why, if one is trapped in that narrow sense of self, why does one get so easily upset, anxious, reactive, lost in all kinds of mental formations, identified with viewpoints and opinions so that other viewpoints and other opinions held by other people make those people into enemies, all those things that bring enormous limitation

into your life, but that's normal. Almost everybody lives like that, except those who are awakening.

And awakening, just as you are, awakening means a dimension is coming into your life that is beyond form, and that's why we are here. So when I asked at the beginning, whether you are, in addition to being aware of whatever is going on and even of my voice, the image on the screen, in addition to all that, are you aware that you are aware? That's the dimension of depths, because suddenly you realize there's a depth to who you are that's formless.

And one could say unknowable, so what you know about yourself is very little. And what you can know, if you undergo whatever psychoanalysis, examine your psyche, repressed memories, hidden desires, what you can know is very small, but beyond that, there's a vast depths. If you are not aware of that, then it's almost as if it wasn't there, it's not there for you, you're not in touch with it.

But that depth is where the person is transcended and connects with something that is infinitely vaster than the person. And that is a source of true intelligence, of aliveness, of all life. And it, being in touch with that, knowing, sensing it within yourself, frees you from being only the little person.

And from that depths emanates love for yourself, loving kindness that can only emanate when you're not trapped in form, which needs to protect itself, enhance itself. So when you're trapped in form, you're always looking out for where the next threat is coming from, or try to solidify your form identity, enhance it, strengthen it. And then, so then no, there can be no real outflow of goodwill, loving kindness, love, if you want to call it that, goodness arising, a goodness that is deeper than good and bad.

For those of you for whom perhaps this is a new thing, a new realization, you may still be asking, being aware that I'm aware, what do you mean by that? And what does it mean? Well, what does it mean is it means that you're aware of yourself as consciousness and not just aware of yourself as this person.

Now, the person is not separate from consciousness. It's a form that consciousness has taken like a wave on the surface of the sea, a temporary form, but the wave is not separate from the depths of the sea and the ocean, it is part of it. So that's what that means.

And if you still don't know how to be aware of yourself as consciousness or to be aware of awareness, one way to give you a taste of it is, and that's why it's an ancient meditation method, is to be aware that you're breathing. You're always breathing, but usually not aware that you're breathing. To be aware that you're breathing is to be continuously aware of the breath flowing in and out like now.

And so it's not just one moment, oh yeah, I'm breathing. No, it's a continuous awareness of the breath flowing in and out, sensing it. And for a moment, let's say, feel that the air that surrounds you and that you're breathing in is consciousness.

That it's conscious consciousness, the essence of all life. So you're breathing in consciousness and now it's also inside you. So it's within and without.

Consciousness cannot be analyzed, dissected, cut into smaller pieces. So you can't know really anything about it, but you can sense it, be it, know that you are it, essentially. So breath awareness opens up that inner space of awareness.

So at first you're aware of breath, of breathing. So it still seems that you're aware of something, but breath is something that is not clearly defined in form. It's almost formless, just as your breath is formless, has not a clearly defined form.

That's why, as I said before, in various places, breath is often equated with spirit. That is the formless consciousness. And at the beginning of the Old Testament of the Bible, the beautiful myth, before form comes into being, the world is described as formless.

And the breath of God or the spirit of God is hovering, it says. So by being aware of your breathing, you also become aware of awareness. So after a little while, you can forget about breathing.

And the awareness of breath has become the awareness of awareness. Awareness. And so that awareness, you're rooted then in something timeless, eternal, very deep.

And you don't get anxious and upset anymore about all the changing conditions of your life and what other people do or fail to do or have done or shouldn't have done. All that absurd littleness that makes up most people's lives. And that makes life so miserable and frustrating.

That's what the Buddha called dukkha, which means misery, which means suffering, which means unhappiness, which means happy one day, unhappy the next. And this has often been described in spirituality as dying, the kind of deaths that you die, which happens to some people spontaneously when their sense of self, form-based sense of self, perhaps due to intense suffering, crumbles. And then that which is deeper and formless suddenly is there, and that's the death and the rebirth.

But the fact that you're here means that probably you've had enough suffering to have reached this point where you no longer need to be pushed or forced into the kingdom of heaven, which is one expression that an ancient teacher used to describe the formless dimension. And the fact that you're here now means you probably don't need to be forced into the kingdom of heaven through intense suffering anymore because it's already emerging in you, through you. So you've suffered enough.

However, if you should need just a little bit more, then that's fine, you'll get it. The world gives you what you need. Ultimately, the world is not here to make you comfortable, not here to make you happy, you might have noticed.

But to bring about, paradoxically, to bring about the transcendence of the world. And you spend a long time becoming a person, lifetimes, in order to eventually transcend the person. So first the egg forms, and it has to become a nice egg.

And then it starts cracking. The shell cracks open and something miraculous emerges. And with this comes the ability also to be comfortable with just being when doing is not required.

You don't need to run around all your life continuously doing. There can be a balance between doing and being. And it's wonderful if you discover in yourself the ability to just be like now.

Not trying to get anywhere or do anything, but just sense your own depths. And from that depth, you look around and you will find a lot of aliveness and beauty with that before you overlooked.

[Speaker 2] (4:21:32 - 4:21:41)

There is a moment of spacious awareness. You haven't interpreted it yet because you did not have enough time to interpret it.

[Speaker 1] (4:21:41 - 5:14:08)

So there was a timeless moment of pure perception. It frees you very briefly from the egoic self. So you can continue to function without going totally insane.

Awareness is rising above thinking. And I'd asked you before to become aware of gaps between words. And this is the secret, the entry point is there.

By becoming aware of gaps between words, for example, you become aware that in those brief moments you are actually not thinking. This is the key to the evolution of human consciousness is realizing the possibility of, let's put it like that, of becoming familiar with that space of pure awareness where you are able to think, but you don't have to think. This is rising above thinking instead of falling below thinking.

Rising above thinking, there's an alertness to it. This is the opposite of what happens when you take in certain substances. There's a decrease of alertness.

You become less conscious. When you rise above thinking, and I would suggest to you that as we talk about it here, that it's not just the words, that become aware of your state of consciousness right now when you listen to these words and realize that in order to understand and recognize the truth behind these words, you don't have to think. You

don't have to figure out in your conceptual mind whether what I'm saying is true or not.

At a deeper level, you know it's true, but how do you know that it's true? Because you experience, if only briefly, here and now, you experience that beautiful space of pure awareness or presence. Wow.

So there are moments when you're actually, you're not thinking like now. I can stop speaking now for 10 seconds. Now, when I stop speaking now for 10 seconds, do you need to fill that space by adding thought to it, or are you able to just be with that 10-second space without adding any thought to it?

And then I'll ask you a question after that, but right now, I would stop speaking for 10 seconds and I will just do something that certain Zen masters do in order to remind their disciples of the state of alert presence. They go like this. One Zen master never gave any other explanation when he was asked to explain the essence of Zen.

All he would ever do is raise his finger and look at you. Please, can you explain the essence of Zen to us again? We didn't understand it yesterday.

So for 10 seconds, I'll raise my finger and please don't count the seconds. Now, when you're not, did you disappear when you were not thinking? When you're not remembering your problems, when you're not remembering whether your life is a big success or a big failure, to take two extremes, if you think your life is a big success, you're in a state of temporary delusion.

And just wait a little. So it's amazing that, now you may also find, because that sometimes in your daily life, you have moments when there is pure awareness, but you don't even know it. Throughout your daily life, you have brief moments when you're actually not thinking, but they may be quite short, but you have brief moments without wanting them whenever you look at something, especially if it's something natural, like this might be the sky or a flower or a dog, but not necessarily even natural.

It could be almost anything that does not immediately stimulate conceptualization like something written. So you look at something, let's say, especially you just step out of the building, you open the door or you come into the building and you open the door and you step, and for a moment, something new enters your perceptual field. Now, if you're very alert, in the first two or three seconds, you have to take it in and you're not thinking.

Then the mind kicks in and calls it something. It says, oh, this is that, this is that, whatever the mind has to say about it. It identifies it.

It gives you, it attaches a label to whatever it is that you are perceiving. But in the first few moments when something new enters your perceptual field, there is a moment of spacious awareness. You haven't interpreted it yet because you did not have enough

time to interpret it.

So there was a moment, a timeless moment of pure perception. And the more you have that in your life, the more it frees you very briefly from the egoic self. So you can continue to function without going totally insane because you have these moments, these brief moments of awareness.

Now, there are humans who almost never have them, but they are in a very serious mental state of mental dysfunction. So if you're not completely insane yet, and of course, all of you here have gone far beyond all that already. If you're not completely, continuously trapped in dreadful unhappiness, that means occasionally you experience these brief moments of awareness, but you don't even know it.

You might think, oh, this is caused by, let's say you witness something beautiful. Let's say you witness a sunset. And you go, oh, and you're really looking at that sunset.

And for quite a while, the mind doesn't say anything. There's a pure perception, and there's a stillness behind the perception. But all you're aware of is the perception itself.

So when you then interpret it, you say, I felt so good because that sunset was so beautiful. Another example, you might be engaged in strenuous physical activity, perhaps even dangerous physical activity. You might be surfing, or you might be climbing a mountain wall, or whatever it is, some dangerous or strenuous physical activity, and you feel so good, you feel so alive.

You only feel alive when you're engaged in that activity. So you get addicted to that activity. Why?

Because it frees you from yourself temporarily. And what does that mean? It means while you're engaged in that activity, you are not thinking, you are just present.

And so, but you don't know that. You confuse the activity or the contemplation of the beautiful sunset. You confuse that with what caused that sense of being intensely alive.

What was the cause of feeling so good in that moment? Well, you say, well, the sunset made me feel so good. Or when I engaged in surfing, I feel so good.

The surfing makes me feel good. That's not entirely true. The deeper reason why you feel good is you are free of yourself in those moments.

And what arises is intense presence. In that intense presence, you experience self-transcendence. You are in touch with being.

Ah, and then people get addicted to certain activities. And if they're dangerous activities, then you never know how much, anything could happen. Now, the good news is, of course, if you enjoy certain activities or enjoy beauty in nature, it's wonderful.

Just go into nature with all your senses alive and take in. It frees you. It can also, if you're alert, it can free you from the problematic thinking mind, can free you from yourself.

And you take in the incredible aliveness that's all around you. And you go in a state of astonishment and wonder. I think it was Plato, or was it, well, Plato or Socrates who said, philosophy begins with wonder or astonishment.

You go, oh, and what is wonder or astonishment? Wonder or astonishment, you're not thinking, and you're not even trying to think. You're just aware, and you're aware of it.

There's a depth. You're not just aware of what's on the surface of sensory perception. You're aware of something that is deeper than sensory perception, the intense aliveness that's behind all phenomena, all phenomena of nature, but ultimately all phenomena.

Whatever we perceive is a surface dimension of reality. There's something far deeper hiding behind the surface dimension of reality. So you take in nature and you go, wow, oh.

So nature can free you temporarily. If you don't mistake the thing that you think frees you, it's not it. It frees you from your mind, and because it frees you from habitual or obsessive compulsive thinking, addictive, obsessive compulsive.

These are three good words to describe most people's mind activity. Addictive, obsessive, compulsive, dreadful. It frees you from that, and because it frees you from that, you suddenly feel good.

Now, how do you feel good? What does it mean? There's a deep sense of connectedness with, ah.

Let's return for a moment to the ripple because we forgot about the ripple. I hadn't come to the end of the story of the ripple yet. Because so far, the ripple is unhappy because it lives on the surface of the ocean.

At some point, the ripple becomes so dissatisfied with what it can find on the surface of the ocean, it comes to a stop and it goes, ah. And it suddenly becomes aware there's more to it than it had thought. There's more to it than meets the eye, so to speak, because what meets the eye is the surface phenomena of reality.

Sensory perception is there. So there's more to it than meets the eye. The ripple suddenly becomes aware that, oh.

But it cannot define what this more is. It goes, oh. It begins to realize that it's actually forever connected to and one with the ocean.

And that's an enormous realization and liberation for the ripple. Wow. And then perhaps the ripple is able to remain in connectedness with that sense of beingness or presence,

even when it continues its ripple existence on the surface.

It still operates as a ripple, and yet no longer in the state of continuous fear, anxiety, dissatisfaction, regret, irritation, and all the things that make up people's lives and life situation very, very unsatisfactory, not pleasant at all. And it can then begin to even enjoy its ripple existence on the surface of things, because the neediness is gone, the neediness of needing some kind of satisfaction, ultimate satisfaction on the level of surface reality of the surface of the ocean. And the strange paradox is, or irony, is that once you, because you are the ripple, once you find the connectedness with being, the surface existence of the surface I becomes a more satisfying experience, because the neediness is gone.

You do still do things, create things, you are active, you still acquire new things, you learn new things, new skills, more knowledge, you have experiences, you have relationships, you travel, you experience a new place, you continue to explore the sensory realm, but it becomes a much more satisfying place because you are not looking to it for ultimate satisfaction. That's a wonderful liberation. And you realize ultimate satisfaction is inseparable actually from the present moment.

I find it impossible to find inner stillness and peace with the prospect of genocide in mind. How can one remain at peace knowing genocide, torture, and kidnappings have happened and will keep happening? Could I truly remain at peace if my family members were being tortured by some military army?

The last part of the question, could I truly remain at peace if my family members were being tortured by some military army? We cannot answer that here because as far as I can tell from your question, your family members are not being tortured by some military army. So the question does not arise from an actual situation, but from thoughts in your head, you imagine what would happen if.

Now it is beyond doubt, and we all know that these things have happened and are happening, as you say, all over the planet. Therefore, you find it difficult to be at peace or to find inner stillness knowing that these dreadful things are still happening all over the planet. That seems understandable, but is anybody being helped, you or anybody else, by your unwillingness to find peace?

Within. It's not the case that you actually go out into the world in order to alleviate the suffering or to stop all the genocide and kidnappings and torture, as you put it. Now, if you did feel called upon to go to some corner of the earth where violent or dreadful things are happening to alleviate suffering, that's another matter.

If you look at human history, you can see that these things have happened thousands of years ago already. They continue to happen throughout history. To the extent that, as I sometimes put it, reading history of humanity seems like reading the story of insanity

with a few lucid moments here and there, and in particular, the 20th century, a place of incredible insanity and suffering inflicted by humans.

On other humans. Now, once you see that your unwillingness to embrace spiritual awakening, because so much unconsciousness is happening all over the planet that is the cause of the violence, that doesn't really make sense. Does it?

Your mind is saying, I'm refusing to invite the spiritual dimension into my life or to enter the awakening process because so many people on this planet are unconscious. Therefore, I refuse to become conscious. It's a convenient excuse for the egoic mind to stay in charge and to keep running the show.

And while it does that, it can complain, of course. It's lovely, isn't it? The complaining about all the dreadful things that are happening.

Does that help anyone? No. No.

Did the Buddha, who taught 2,500 years ago how to go beyond suffering, did he say, I'm not telling you how to go beyond suffering because so many humans on this planet are still suffering. Let's wait for them to come to an end of suffering and then I'll tell you the secret and then we can all become enlightened. Doesn't work like that.

It doesn't start with, let's wait for the rest of the universe to become enlightened and then we can enter the spiritual dimension. It has to start from you. Any change on the planet, in order to be true change and not just a variation on the same theme, must entail a change in consciousness because whatever humans produce, whatever they manifest externally arises and corresponds to, arises out of their state of consciousness.

If that state of consciousness is dysfunctional, disharmonious, negative, fearful, angry, and millions live in that state, identified with their ego, then you get huge collective egos fighting other collective egos and that's the insanity. Change, we both agree that change is necessary, but it doesn't come from out there. It would also apply to your own life.

There's some people who come to me and say, I have to sort out various outstanding matters in my life. The big problem still in my life is my business situation and my living situation and this, I don't really have time to go into all this spiritual stuff because there's too much for me to deal with at the moment or as the expression goes, I have too much on my plate to have time for spiritual awakening that has to wait, I have to sort these things out first. And if you do that, of course, you will find that the time never comes because there's no end to the problems that arise out there.

Jesus told the same story in the parable of the wedding feast. People are invited to a wedding feast and each person has their particular excuse why they cannot come to the wedding feast. One person says, oh, I've got to have some business dealings to do, just have to sell my cows and sheep and need to do that.

Let me first do that, maybe I'll come then. The other one says, oh, my father has just died, let me first bury my father. Every excuse starts with the words, let me first do this.

And that shows the prevalent attitude of believing that something out there needs to change before I can, or in your case, before I feel justified in looking for inner peace. But that is a fallacy. The external peace can only come when humans, or at least a sufficiently large number of humans, embrace inner peace.

And you can't wait for the torture and killings to stop and then embrace inner peace. Change happens from the inside out, not from the outside in. So, yes, knowing that at this very moment, every second, every minute, dreadful things are happening on the planet.

Of course, it's always been like that. At this very moment, somebody is being murdered. Perhaps bombs are exploding, people are torturing, kidnapping others, warfare between armies or groups.

Or gangs. Of course, it's happening every moment. Does your anxiety help that situation, your non-peace?

No. But if there's a shift in consciousness, there may be a change. And that starts with you.

So don't believe what your mind is telling you about the undesirability of inner peace. Because the world is so mad and so violent, that does not make sense if you look closely. This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive.

To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. This is not a conventional meditation. I may be speaking most of the time, but there are also gaps in between the words, which of course are always more important than the words.

And if you're aware of the gaps, as much as you're aware of the words, then you're already entering the state of meditation without having to go through any preliminary technique. Not that there's anything wrong with techniques. So it's actually quite lovely to be aware not only of the words, but also the stillness that's there.

The space, one could say, between the words, even underneath the words. And the miraculous thing is when you're aware of that for a brief moment, whenever you're aware of the space, you're not thinking. So the more you're aware of the space or the spaces, the less absorbed you are in the stream of thinking and not being absorbed in the stream of thinking, not identifying with the stream of thinking, is meditation.

And of course, the aim of meditation is that eventually it becomes your normal state of consciousness, in which case you may still want to practice so-called formal meditation

because you like it, or you may not. Now, usually, in your daily life, things constantly arise in your field of awareness, demanding attention, situations, people, things that need to be done. And sometimes things are pulling at you from various directions, demanding your attention at the same time.

And when you no longer know where to put your attention, you're beginning to experience so-called stress because stress means one thing is pulling this way, another thing is pulling that way, and so you get stress. And as long as you're unaware, unconscious, spiritually speaking, the world around you determines where your attention goes, people, situation, events, your electronic devices that go ping when the next text message comes in, or whatever sound it is, or go pong when the next email arrives, and immediately your attention goes there. And then somebody else, somebody, oh.

So I call that losing oneself in the world. And then, of course, there's your thinking. Every thought that arises seems to say, give me more of your attention, follow me to where I want you to go.

And so when you're unaware, then whatever thought comes into your head has this enormous pulling power. And so you identify with the thought and you're completely in it, and it takes you this way and that way and leads to a whole succession of thoughts. And so on the most primordial level, it's thinking, really, that absorbs your attention, your mind, because even external things have to be transformed into mind stuff before you can experience it so that you can experience it.

And all external objects, before you can be aware of them, have to be taken in through sensory perception, then transformed into nerve impulses, and then reassembled somewhere to make up this picture of external reality. But it's ultimately all you ever experience is your mind. So that's really what we need to look at.

So most people are continuously aware of something, and they are at the mercy of whatever arises in their mind that has this power to pull in their attention. One thing you learn in meditation is you have a choice. You can direct your attention to one thing, and then you can see if you can keep your attention on one particular mind object, which could be becoming aware of your breathing, or it could be a mantra that you repeat in your mind, one mind object, or an external object, the candle flame.

So you begin to realize that you can actually direct attention. You don't have to be at the mercy of whatever comes into your mind. So as we sit here, for example, you can direct your attention.

Your attention is, of course, in auditory perception and visual perception. But in addition, you can also have some of your attention on your breathing, for example. You're aware even as you listen and as you watch, if your eyes are open, you can be aware also that at the same time, you're breathing, you're choosing to have some attention there too.

That's a very calming thing. And you become aware that your body is alive on the inside. You can become aware that there's a sense of aliveness inside your hands.

Another ancient meditation method to do it more methodically, you become aware that your feet are alive on the inside, your legs, your entire body. There's a field of aliveness. You become aware of that.

You can then choose to put your attention on that rather than on something else. Where it would habitually go. So gradually, you become aware of your own power.

You're not at the mercy of events and things, your thoughts, ultimately. There's a deeper dimension in you, deeper than thinking, and getting in touch with that, accessing that, realizing that that is the essence of who you are. That's why we're here.

The purpose of this is to get in touch with that deeper dimension within yourself, deeper than thinking. And what is that? We could describe it as the feeling or the sense of being you at the most fundamental level.

What does it feel like to be you? Now, usually, when you speak in terms of I, let's use the first person, what does it feel like? What's it like to be you?

What does it feel like to be me? What is that sense of identity, the sense of self? Usually, you refer then to certain things in your mind, your history, your conditioned mind, the history of me, the story of me, me and my problems, me and my situation, me and this and this and this.

So there's always, on that level, your feeling of being yourself is really to be identified with certain things that arise in your mind. But here we are attempting to go deeper to a more foundational, a more real sense of what is it that underlies all that? What is it that makes the story of you, that most people tend to be who they are, what is it that makes the story of you possible?

What is the space, the light in which it appears? There's something deeper without which there could be no story. And yet it's not separate from it.

And that's always the same. There's a deep sense of beingness or presence in you that is prior and deeper than anything that happens in your life or in your mind. So I'd like you to get in touch with that and get this sense of being you at the deepest level.

What does that feel like? And it's a very strange question. So I'm, usually then your attention is directed to certain things, objects in your mind.

What we're attempting to do here is to ultimately becoming aware of that attention itself, which is awareness. So when I ask you, what's it like to be you? I'm really asking you to become aware of your own awareness.

And that is not an object. You can't say, ah, there it is, I've got it now. You cannot have it because you are it.

It's the essence of who you are. You cannot describe it because it has no form. You cannot talk about it in terms of past or future.

Because there's no time to it. It is a timeless dimension. And this, their sense of beingness, that, if that becomes the foundation for your life, so to speak, if you could not lose touch with that, in other words, not lose touch with the most essential dimension within you, then the way in which you experience this world would change.

Because you would be continuously aware of that which is deeper than whatever arises in this world or in your mind. And to feel that within yourself brings about a sense of trust in life. It is as if something were carrying you, something vaster than the little man.

You are me, and you are connected with a vastness there that goes far beyond you as the person with a history. And to sense that within yourself, you can feel there is a power there that is the power of life itself. And if you don't know that, all that's available to you is a trickle of that power.

But as you become aware of it, which really means become aware of awareness, become conscious of consciousness, which again, when we speak, when we use words, it's never quite right. Because the moment we construct a sentence, we create duality, subject and object. And you say, I am aware of consciousness.

That you have a subject and an object, which isn't quite right. Because there is no I apart from consciousness. So you'd have to qualify it and say, I'm aware of consciousness as myself.

Then you undo the original error that is semantic. That brings about a sense of, you can say rootedness in being and brings about a trust in life. In other words, what is trust, which in other spiritual traditions have other words for it, faith.

It's the absence of fear. That's really what trust is. So when you're in touch with that within yourself, the world is no longer perceived as a fearful place.

And there's a detachment that comes in, especially in your relationship with your mind. Thoughts, of course, still come. You can use thought.

In fact, use it much more effectively. And yet you don't become identified anymore with every thought that comes into your mind. So you're detached from thought, although thought can operate.

It doesn't draw you in totally. There's always some of you remains spacious beyond thought, and then thought happens. It is possible, even if for the time being you are in a

job that you would perhaps not choose to do for the rest of your life, but even there to make the first step towards opening up is to let go of resistance to what you're doing and give it your fullest attention.

And sometimes then life takes you away into something else because you have opened yourself up so you can give of your best. If you, let's say for the past few, three years, you disliked working at this restaurant and everybody somehow, even though you smile, but everybody can feel that you don't really want to be there and the customers can feel it and your colleagues can feel it. And if you then shift and you do it with fullest attention and you honor every moment, every person that comes into the moment and the way you put the plate on the table, there's attention there.

So what changes then is not sometimes what you do but how you do what you do. And I would say, I don't know if you've looked at that, the first step towards finding something more satisfying can be to change, not to look for what, I don't know what, but change the how in what you're doing already and bring full presence to what you're doing. And then perhaps somebody notices how present you are, a customer at a restaurant and says, oh, what's your name?

And suddenly that leads to something else. Either you open your own restaurant and suddenly people come in and they feel good in that presence that you create, an energy field of presence or whatever it may be. So have you looked at that to changing, initially perhaps to change the how rather than necessary because otherwise if you're trapped in negativity, it may be much more difficult to break out of that.

[Speaker 11] (5:14:09 - 5:15:48)

I agree absolutely with that. It seems to me one of the things that makes us human, because in most respects we're like the rest of life on earth, our lives are short and organic and dependent. But you ask, well, why have human beings suddenly come to dominate the planet in the way that we have?

And part of my answer anyway is to say that human beings uniquely have extraordinary powers of imagination, the ability to bring into mind things that aren't present. We can look forward, we can look back. We can enter other people's consciousness virtually, which is what we mean by empathy.

And if we imaginatively engage with somebody else's consciousness, if we're empathetic, then we broaden our own lives. And it's always interesting to me that in times of war and conflict, the first thing that we try to suppress is our empathy for the people that we're rising up against. And it's only when we suppress our empathy that we can do things that are literally unimaginable.

And the reason I say that is from that power comes all the powers of practical creativity.

And there is a literal sense, I think, which is clearly in what you've just said, that as human beings, we create our own lives. We create our own realities.

We compose our lives. And we can recompose them. We can recreate them.

We can see things differently. We can choose to see it differently. We can see it this way, or we can see it that way.

And often the most dreary circumstances can be transformed, not by the circumstances changing, but by our attitude to the circumstance changing. And that in due course may change the circumstance.

[Speaker 1] (5:15:49 - 5:36:13)

And that in itself, that perhaps is the, the ultimate creative act is that. It's the ultimate creative act, not necessarily create something, but to create, not to be a reactive entity, but to create your own life. Yes.

Find death before death finds you. There was a spiritual teacher, philosopher in early 20th century from Gurdjieff, from Russian area, I remember that. He later moved to France and taught there.

He had an interesting, he was a, he said, people have a personality and essence. And he said, many people have a strongly developed personality and virtually no essence. And it's very rare for people to have more essence than personality.

It was an interesting way of looking at it. And that's, of course, how it is, that I'm now elaborating. He only, there's only a little bit of that.

And then he dropped the whole matter and then he didn't talk about it again. So the essence, there is, there are two dimensions in your identity. There is the form identity, the you as form, with your physical form and your name and all your knowledge and education and abilities and your past, whatever happened in your past, that's all connected.

And it all makes up your, who you are on the level of form, who you perceive yourself to be and who others see you. And there is a connection between how the world or other people see you and how you see yourself. And when you are trapped exclusively in a form identity, so you only know yourself as a form identity, then how other people see you is of extreme importance to you because it contributes to how you see yourself.

So you might become self-conscious and see the self-conscious in English means that you're very much aware of how you're being perceived. And you feel always a little uneasy because you feel observed and people are judging you and you say, and you want to appear in a certain way. And there's a natural tendency in humans to emphasize

their form identity to the world.

It's a natural thing. So I'm not, you can't tell a little child when the little child begins to say, or says, you're observing that one child says to the other child, look, I can do this. You can't do what I can do.

I can do this, but you can't. Or the child says, my dad has a bigger car than yours. You can't say to the child, don't do that.

You're emphasizing your form identity. But you know, that's what's happening. It's a natural tendency in humans to emphasize.

It could be a possession. I have more than you. It could be my body is looks better than yours or is stronger than yours or bigger than yours or taller than yours.

Or it could be, I have an ability that you don't have. Children start with that. And it's, let's, I can play the piano.

What can you play? I play the ping pong machine. Okay.

So the emphasize form identity is a natural thing. It can be, there is a point where this should come to a natural conclusion. I would say in a more evolved humanity, the emphasis of form identity as a person reaches adulthood a little bit after is replaced.

At the moment, this is not what's happening, but can be replaced by something more genuine and deeper. And that is finding your essence identity that's underneath your form identity. And that is spiritual dimension, finding the spiritual dimension in yourself so that who you think you are is no longer, you still have a form identity.

Yes, that level is still there. Undoubtedly, you have certain abilities. You're good at this.

You're not good at that. You're better than the other person in this thing, but not as good as in the other thing. That remains, but it no longer gives you your sense of who you are.

And that can only happen when something else arises that is deeper than the form. And that's the presence. And when the presence arriving in you, which has no form and is not tangible, it's there pervading your entire being, then suddenly you realize and you feel who you are essentially has nothing to do with what you possess how your body looks, your abilities, what you can do, or what you know.

That's another one. That's form identity with what I know. I know more than you.

So then comes the realization who you essentially are is nothing to do with possessions or looks or physical or mental abilities or other abilities. But it comes from a much deeper place. And that deeper place no longer operates through comparison.

Your essence identity does not deepen because it's stronger than somebody else's essence identity. You don't compare yourself anymore to others in order to find out who you are. And that's such a liberation from only knowing yourself as that particular form because with that comes a lot of suffering.

A lot of suffering comes when your, who you are is derived from the form of you. Because at some point, let's see if you have good looks and then your, who you are is based mostly on that. And you feel superior to most because you look so much better.

Then you look down on all these other people who are not good looking at all. And then you even emphasize it. So you buy, you look even greater with the wonderful things you wear.

And then as the decades pass, you look in the mirror and there's something wrong slowly. And you notice that the mirror is becoming, seems to be becoming defective. It no longer shows you the beauty of who you are externally.

And then you need to pay for repair jobs. But even there, it's just postponing the suffering that inevitably comes when what your identity was based on begins to collapse. And that's awful.

Or it could be an ability. You are very good at something, but then at some point something happens and you are not good at it anymore. Or somebody else suddenly comes who is so much better than you.

One could give many examples. Knowledge, perhaps your mind doesn't retain the knowledge anymore or it becomes redundant. And having an encyclopedic mind is no longer a great thing because the internet is always better, Wikipedia.

So sooner or later, if it's strengths, then eventually you can't compete anymore. You get arthritis, can't jump high enough anymore. But all these things, sooner or later, when your identity is based on form, then you begin to suffer.

So it's vital to have both, but it's not easy because your form identity has its own kind of momentum. And that's the ego. The ego is anything you identify with as yourself becomes part of your ego identity.

So form identity is ego. The ego is a formation, an energy field, an energy form in you that is quite, refuses to go. It wants to survive as this particular form.

It wants to defend its form. It wants to strengthen its form. So although there may be, and the evolutionary impulse of the universe may be at work in you, which wants something else to arise, there may be the ego trying, not wanting it to arise.

And so you get scared of stillness, of inner peace. Can't sit still. You don't want to stop

thinking because you think I'm going to disappear if I stop thinking.

And you want to continue to have opinions about who you are, the old opinions about who you are. And there have been spiritual teachers and spiritual masters and mystics throughout the ages have realized form identity, essence identity. And there is a whole stream of spirituality that is based on de-emphasizing your form identity.

And of course, St. Francis is part of that stream of de-emphasizing form identity. Not saying, look at me, I'm so good at this or that. But it says, basically, I'm nobody.

I'm nobody in particular. That can go too far where it becomes another form. So you have to be very careful when that happens because when you say I'm the most miserable sinner, then you've, that's not quite it.

That's because that's a big, another form identity that can be even stronger than to say, I'm the most saintly person there's ever been. I'm the most miserable sinner, so dreadful. But to de-emphasize form identity can be a wonderful thing.

Once it requires enough presence so that you already can sense that which is beyond. And it starts with a little thing like in a discussion, you're able to drop your particular viewpoint because it makes no difference whether you are right or wrong anymore. And you just let it go and feel quite liberated.

It makes no difference whether who is right, he or the other person or you, who cares? That's, and suddenly you feel there's a peace that comes there when we don't need to be right anymore. That's because to be right is one way in which people will emphasize the me, the me make the other person wrong.

So that's one way. Another, it can be very beneficial for some people who have been afflicted with some kind of suffering or disability, which may be physical disability or whatever it is that makes it difficult for them to develop a, well, to have a well-developed form identity. Let's say somebody who is physically disabled and so they can either seek refuge in some other area and become very focused on identifying with their mind or whatever.

It can also happen that if there's one major thing that seems to interrupt the full development of your form identity, it can more quickly lead you to the realization of your essence identity. That is, there have been philosophers in the past or spiritual teachers who had disabilities and it's because of their physical disabilities, they were able to let go of identification with their unsatisfying form. So if the form of you is unsatisfying, strongly unsatisfying, it can be an opening, an early opening into essence identity.

The same thing happens when somebody loses all the things that they had identified with in their lives through some disaster that suddenly happens in you. Things are removed that you had considered to be an essential part of who you are and life takes

them away and suddenly you're faced with that nothingness or emptiness. You don't know who you are anymore because life has taken away all those things that you identified with and then it can happen if you don't go into a contraction and quickly form another victim identity that it opens up into the formless, the essence.

That is the peace that passes all understanding as it's called in the New Testament because how can a person who has lost everything suddenly feel so peaceful? It can happen, it doesn't happen always, perhaps only in a small percentage of cases where people lose everything. Potential, the potential is there whenever there's great loss in your life, the potential is there for the arising of the essence identity and that is grace.

You can call that grace, the grace that is hiding on the other side of every disaster, it's hiding there, you just need to recognize it. But there is no need to wait for disaster to happen to you but, and this is why we are here now, we don't want to wait for disaster because that might be too late, it might not happen for a while. It will happen eventually, disaster will come to all of you because, well, yes, oh, that's because you're going to die.

The body is going to die, old age will come and then that'll be it. As well, as somebody said, each one of us has already been diagnosed with a fatal illness leading to death, it's called life on the surface level, of course it's. So therefore, the ancient dictum of spirituality is find death before death finds you.

Because death is going to find you, it's just a question of time. Now, what does it mean, find death before death finds you? It means find that in you which is beyond death.

So the death that you find refers to the death of the ego, the egoic identity in you, which when you discover the essence identity, then the ego identity begins to die. And that's a wonderful thing, but not to the ego. It doesn't mean that the forms disappear, but identification with the forms is no longer there.

So you still have the same things as before, but the identification doesn't happen anymore. Traditionally, this is a very painful process, finding death before death finds you without a strong spiritual energy that you come into contact with in one way or another, it's painful. The only way you can find death before death finds you is for life to knock you so hard that the ego gets knocked out of you.

[Speaker 3] (5:36:39 - 5:39:48)

Hi everybody, welcome. Welcome to this special Eckhart Tolle Foundation online event. I'm so glad that you're here with us.

Thank you. My name's Tammy Simon. I'm the founder of Sounds True, and I have had the great joy and honor of working with Eckhart Tolle since 2001.

And I'm also on the board of the Eckhart Tolle Foundation and have been on the board

since its inception. And it's a great joy to be your host for this special online event. During this event, you'll be hearing more about the Eckhart Tolle Foundation.

Perhaps for some of you, this is the first time you'll be learning more about the foundation's history and its activities. And we're also going to introduce you to a New Earth Youth Initiative, which is a new program that the Eckhart Tolle Foundation is sponsoring. And it brings Eckhart's teachings and the experience of presence to young people who very well would otherwise not have access to these teachings and the experience of presence in Eckhart and Kim's presence.

And you're going to be learning more about that. Also as part of this online special event, we have two surprise videos. Not going to say much more about it, except that these videos are from some celebrated visionary humans who are expressing their support of bringing Eckhart's teachings to young people.

Most of all, I want to thank each and every one of you for being with us. There's a kind of ripple effect that comes from us connecting together in this way with a shared intent to bring presence to more and more people without financial barriers to access. So it is so wonderful to be with you and to have this experience together.

Oh, and of course, as part of our time together, you're going to hear from Kim and Eckhart. Did I forget to say that? Yes, indeed.

That's going to happen too. And now I'd love to introduce you to someone who is the president of Eckhart teachings and the co-founder and board chair of the Eckhart Tolle Foundation. This is someone who's very special to me personally.

I've known this person for more than two decades now and watched her grow into her role with such beauty and dignity and the power of a generous heart, Erin Jacobson. Erin.

[Speaker 6] (5:39:51 - 5:46:19)

Thank you, Tammy. And thank you all for joining us tonight. I just wanted to spend a few moments and tell you a little bit about how we started and some of the inspiration for the foundation.

I've been working for Eckhart teachings since it began in 1999. And our mission has always been the same and that's to share Eckhart's teachings with as many people as possible. Of course, back in the early days, we did not have a big team.

We basically did everything by hand. You know, there's almost, it was the early days of the internet. And I can still remember like it was yesterday folding paper flyers in the living room and packaging audio and video cassette tapes, being in charge of duplicating the audio and video cassette tapes.

I was the one taking all of the phone fax and snail mail orders, packaging them up and walking several blocks to the post office every day. In fact, our very first covers were actually black and white photocopies that we made at Kinko's. As you can imagine over the years, we have received a lot of feedback from people who have been impacted by the power of now and a new earth.

And some of the most impactful feedback that we've received have been letters from people in prison, writing to Eckhart and expressing their gratitude as well as telling their stories. And we have been so impacted by these letters and Eckhart keeps every single one. And even though we were impacted, it still made us think about all the communities with very little access that, and we were wondering like, how can we help them?

And giving back has always been a part of Eckhart teachings. And we've been doing so by giving those that can't afford to pay event scholarships, access to online courses. We have a lot of teachings available for free on YouTube and other streaming platforms.

And even though that we've been giving individuals help, we still wanted a way to be able to focus and give back to underserved communities. So in 2016, we launched the Eckhart Tolle Foundation and we chose to support incarcerated people, hospice patients and the underserved youth. We've had a couple of large conferences where all the proceeds went to fund the foundation.

We've been giving tens of thousands of books away to prisons, hospices and the underserved youth. We've brought the youth to learn directly from Eckhart and Kim in person. And we've been donating, we've given grants to these communities.

And we also recently partnered with Adovo and they are providing tablets and access to Eckhart and Kim's teachings to over 250,000 people. And we're also planning for Eckhart to speak in a couple prisons soon in person. And tonight we're highlighting the underserved youth because they need mental, emotional and spiritual support and not only for their own personal wellbeing, but because they represent humanity's future and this world needs more conscious and aware people.

We are committed to helping these communities and help them relieve the suffering caused by the dysfunctional egoic mind so that more people can show up in their lives present and aware and in touch with their essential nature. If you're inclined to be a part of this impact, we have three ways that you can help. Number one, by sharing our social media posts about our book donation programs and our grant programs with your networks.

Number two, we of course graciously welcome any donations. And number three, and it truly is the most important. My personal favorite quote of Eckhart's has always been, the world can only change from within.

And that does mean that you being here, connecting to presence and continuing to practice living your life from presence is the most essential. I'd also like to thank all of you, our incredibly generous donors and our dedicated board of directors for their service, our staff and our volunteers, and of course our executive director, Ali Weibel. All of you are making this work possible.

Now it's time for our first surprise video, expressing their support for the work that we've been doing by bringing Eckhart's teachings to young people. This person's team reached out to me several years ago in hopes of connecting with Eckhart. And little did I know at the time what their vision was and where this connection would go.

I'm amazed by this person's commitment to sharing Eckhart's teachings with his massive audience. I would say that he is making spiritual teachings cool in the eyes of young people. He's definitely opening a meaningful conversation and he's using his art and his platform to not only share his own learning and wisdom, but also Eckhart's teachings.

Eckhart was featured in his most recent album throughout his whole album, almost, Mr. Morali and the Big Steppers. He is a multi-platinum Grammy and Emmy award-winning artist. He was the first non-classical, non-jazz musician to win a Pulitzer Prize for his 2017 album, Damn.

Here he is. Mr. Kendrick Lamar.

[Speaker 9] (5:46:21 - 5:48:43)

I believe people can, they truly can use, well, not people, young people. Young people need to hear Eckhart's words the most because today we live in a society where it's so many things pushing and pulling, where there's a lifestyle, social media, friends, trends, so many things consume young people and their decision-making. And to truly crack that code and have that balance, everybody wants nice things, right?

But to have that balance is to also go within, as I said before. I wish I would have read these books when I was 16, when I was 13. I'd probably be far more advanced in my personal life and my daily, you know, interpersonal dynamics, not only with people, but with myself.

But I'm fortunate enough to come across it in my 30s, right? But for the kids that's out there listening, 12, 13, 14, 15 and up, I truly recommend that you get into it because it'll open your mind up further than you can even imagine, further than the things that you want, further than the things that you think that you need. You'll explore a whole new journey of self-worth, passion, purpose, creativity, and stillness within yourself.

It's worth it, a hundred percent. Not only on a professional level, because I know everyone has dreams and goals and aspirations, but on a personal level, it plays the same rules. And when you intertwine the words between the two, things are happening

tempo for you.

[Speaker 3] (5:48:46 - 5:49:42)

Kendrick Lamar saying, young people need to hear Epgart's words the most. What a terrific surprise video. Let's learn more about the New Earth Youth Initiative.

And to share with us more about the details, we have a fellow board member of mine on the Epgart Tolle Foundation board. One of the best parts of participating on the board is the type of allyship and friendship and creative partnership that I can have with somebody like Elizabeth Lesser, co-founder of Omega Institute, author of several best-selling books, including Broken Open, How Difficult Times Can Help Us Grow, and Cassandra Speaks, When Women Are Storytellers, The Human Story Changes. Elizabeth, over to you.

[Speaker 7] (5:49:43 - 5:54:41)

Okay, thank you. Hey, everybody. What a pleasure to be with you.

It's a cold, chilly night here in New York, and I imagine you're all coming in from all over the world and the country. It's just great to feel everybody on the Zoom and YouTube and wherever you're joining us. So I'm here to introduce our next guest, but first I wanna tell you briefly about the foundation's youth initiative.

We're calling it the New Earth Youth Initiative, and it's really meaningful to me to be working on something about young people and kids because I've been in education my whole life. I started out as a kindergarten and elementary school teacher, and then I worked my way up to working with grownups in education when I co-founded Omega Institute 47 years ago. And it dawned on me as I worked with kids years ago that grownups also need to keep learning, that it's actually imperative for adults to learn how to grow and change and expand our consciousness as we age.

And not just getting facts, but the important things like how do I quiet my mind and open my heart and relate to the mysterious parts of myself, my soul, my consciousness. And throughout my 50 almost years at Omega, I've had the privilege of being in the presence of educators of the mind and the heart and the soul, people like Eckhart Tolle, although there's really no one like Eckhart Tolle. And I got to really experience him in his full Eckhart-ness back in 2008 when I helped Oprah produce a webinar focusing on A New Earth, the book, the 10 chapters.

I don't know, many of you may be tuned into that. Millions and millions of people around the world tuned into that webinar. I remember the first night we did it, it was one of the first things like it in the world.

And the entire Chicago internet went down because so many people were trying to get

on. And I learned during that, that his work wasn't just for serious spiritual readers and seekers, that anyone trying to figure out this tricky thing called being human could access the depth and the scope and the magnificence of his work. And that made me think, well, then kids could also.

And young people don't just need to learn how to read and write and do math. They need education of their hearts and their minds and souls, the way Kendrick Lamar was saying, if only he had had that learning way back in his early teens, what a difference it would make. And that's why we're doing this.

That's why we are raising money and spending the money we raise to do things like bringing his books to schools and school libraries, creating programs specifically for young people like the lectures Eckhart did a few years ago with NYU students and offering grants to like-minded organizations working with youth. And I'd like to introduce you now to a leader from one of those organizations. And he happens to be a dear friend of mine.

He has taught at Omega Institute for many years and his work inspires all of us at Omega and here at the foundation greatly. His name is Andres Gonzalez, and he's one of the three co-founders of the Holistic Life Foundation and the co-author of Let Your Life Shine, which is a powerful book that documents the way yoga and meditation have transformed and empowered thousands of historically underserved kids in Baltimore. For 20 years, Andres has shared wellness, healing and present moment practices in public school systems and beyond, breathing life back into a community destroyed by drugs, poverty and systemic racism.

And what I love so much about Andres is how he personally walks his message in the world. He has this message that love can heal any heart including our own. And he is that kind of healer and welcome Andres.

[Speaker 5] (5:54:44 - 6:04:12)

Thank you so much, Elizabeth. It's so good to see you. It's been a while.

I hope you're staying warm where you're at because it's chilly here in Baltimore as well. So before I get to just a few of the topics that I wanted to address, I really just wanna give a quick shout out to the Eckert Tolle Foundation for all the amazing work they do. The Holistic Life Foundation has been going for 20 years and recently they've been supporting us not only financially in terms of giving us funds to help run our Holistic Roots Program, which is a mentoring program.

It's really helping these underserved kids in the city. But also they've donated books to us, countless amounts of books. I mean, books on top of books on top of books so we can give them to the youth, to the adults, the teenagers, to anyone that we run into in all of

our programs.

They're accessible and they're there to spread his message and his truths. And it's just amazing what they're doing. And this new initiative as well is incredible and it's so needed.

And I've seen it through the work I've been doing for over 20 years now all across the nation and across the world. And I wanted to start by talking about a metaphor and how important this work is. Our teacher Uncle Will used to use this extended metaphor to describe how important breath work or meditation is for people in general, but I think in particular for our youth and the transformation that it can have on them when they start using these skills and techniques to learn how to self-regulate.

The way he would do it, he'd say, our body's like a boat and the world is the ocean. And more oftentimes than not, our waters are calm. We can set our sails and go whatever direction we wanna go.

But if you think about it sometimes, and actually now I think about it most of the time, our waters aren't calm. We're bombarded by external and internal stimuli. Externally, we have what's going on in the world.

You have your family, you have your friends, your parents, your loved ones. So again, now there's coworkers, bosses, you have society, social media, politics, right? We're so that's smacking us around externally.

That's moving our boat around. We're trying to set our sails, it's getting tougher. And then internally, the bombardment we have, our fears, our doubt, stress, worry, anxiety, trauma that we faced, whether it's our personal trauma, secondary trauma, intergenerational trauma.

So really those waters, this world is chaotic. And we're bombarded by this all the time. And it's pushing us around all over the place.

So it's hard for us to set our sails. And our teacher used to remind us how the breath or meditation, that is our anchor. That allows us to still ourselves, which in turn will still our waters, which will allow us to set our sails and go in whatever direction we wanna go and achieve whatever it is that we wanna achieve.

And I've seen firsthand the amazing transformation this has with kids. So we were based out of Baltimore and we're in Northwest Baltimore. So like where the wire came out, like the hood of all hoods, right?

And there's a young lady in elementary school, we got with her. She was from the same projects that Freddie Gray was from. And for some reason, people would bully this girl, right?

She didn't have the cool clothes or the backpack. She was kind of, had a little less material wise than anyone else did. So they picked on her.

They made fun of her. They said stuff to her. And we're always confused why they chose her because her brother had showed her how to throw her hands a little, right?

So he had a box and he showed her. So I was always confused, like why do you keep picking on this girl? She's gonna beat you up.

She's stronger than you. She knows what to do with her hands, right? So we teach her some of these techniques, some of these practices of breath work and meditation.

And this is early on in us providing these techniques and practices to youth. And so myself and the other two co-founders, Ali and Atma, we're at this school and with the principal and we go and we're walking the halls and we turn the corner. And when we turn the corner, this young lady has this other lady, she's grabbed her by the shirt and she had her thrown up against the lockers.

And she's looking at her and you can tell she is about to cop back and hit this little girl. And she looks at us and she sees us walking down the halls and she looks at the girl and she looks at the guests again and she goes, looks at the girl and goes, you're lucky I meditate. And she lets go of the young lady, sits down and starts breathing.

And it was one of the most powerful things. The principal was looking at me like, what did I just see, right? And we were like, oh my God, what did we just see?

Cause we seen how she was with the other kids too. So it's just so powerful and amazing to see the impact that it can have on these youth. And not only is it helping with dealing with their stress, dealing with their anxiety, dealing with that bombardment I was talking to y'all about, but honestly, some of these kids in these neighborhoods, these techniques and practices that we're talking about that this new Earth Youth Initiative is focusing on will help these kids so much that in some cases, it may end up saving their lives.

Cause now they're no longer reacting to what the world is throwing at them, but they're learning to instill themselves and they're able to respond. You know, and Elizabeth mentioned I'm a big love guy, which I am, as you can see by the clothes. And I just think love is the most powerful force in the universe.

And I think that these techniques in particular, one of the things I think when youth learn to go inward, like Kendrick was talking about 13, 16, to learn how to instill those waters, learn how to be able to go inside and just be, remember we're human beings. When they learn that, they gain the sense of love, self-love, they learn to love themselves. And then now when they're looking out at others, they're more empathetic, they're more compassionate.

They start seeing themselves in everyone and everything. Now they're not alone. Now they're not so disconnected to anything.

Now they see the interconnection between themselves and everyone. They're not just their corner anymore. They're not just their block.

They're not just the East side or West side of Baltimore. They're not just Baltimore or Maryland or the United States. They're not just this country, this continent.

They start seeing that universal self, that omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent self that they truly are. And that's when you see that transformation occur. And it's so beautiful and it's so powerful and it's so needed in the world that we're in right now.

And it's just, it's amazing. And so kudos to this foundation and the initiative they're making. I have two other things, I have these two quotes that Eckhart has in his books that I just wanted to talk about because they really ring true to some of the stuff and the synchronicities and the synergies that we're doing with the Holistic Life Foundation that are with his work.

So one of them is from The Power of Now. And our teacher used to always talk about how the only time that exists is right now, right? And Eckhart says, as soon as you enter the present moment, all unhappiness and struggle dissolve.

And life begins to flow with joy and ease. When you act out of the present moment awareness, whatever you do becomes imbued with a sense of quality, care, and love. And our teacher used to always say, the past causes anger.

Someone said something to you, they did something to you, you might regret something you did. The future causes anxiety. What's gonna happen?

What am I gonna do with myself? What's going on? When we teach these youth to be in the now, which is the only time that exists, right?

The past is gone. The future is never getting here. But when they learn to live in this now moment, this present moment, this present, it's a gift.

That's the reason it's called the present. It's so powerful. And what we're doing is we're allowing these kids to remember that they can access that whenever they want to.

And that reminder is something my teacher used to always say. He said, he says, I'm not a teacher. I'm not a teacher.

I'm a reminder, I'm a calm, do it. And Eckhart talks about that too. And stillness speaks.

A true spiritual teacher, he says, does not have anything to teach in the conventional sense of the word. Does not have anything to give or add to you. We have it all already,

right?

Such as new information, beliefs or rules or conduct. The only function of such a teacher is to help you remove that which separates you from the truth of who you already are and what you already know in the depth of your being. And that's what this initiative is gonna be able to do y'all.

So really, we need your support. We need you to tell your friends to tell a friend. We need y'all to really understand the impact that this can have.

If we can take kids from inner cities, underserved communities, who have never had a retreat experience, never even left their city, they get to go hang out with Eckhart? Like, I wanna go to the retreat. You know what I mean?

So for real, special shout out to the Eckhart Tolle Foundation, all the amazing work that they're doing. Thank you for continuing to support the Holistic Light Foundation. And please, all y'all, please do the same.

Support as much as you can. This New Earth Youth Initiative is so powerful. It's so incredible.

We're honored to be a part of it here at the Holistic Light Foundation. I'm honored to be here. And I really just love to all of y'all.

And don't forget that love is the most powerful force in the universe.

[Speaker 3] (6:04:15 - 6:07:31)

Thank you, Andres. Bring in the heart. And it's time for our next surprise video.

I notice when I say that, I imagine like there should be confetti and music and sounds that go like rocket ship. Okay, okay, in a moment. And this next surprise video is from a quintessential multi-hyphenated artist, a Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter, actress, New York Times bestselling author, Jewel.

Jewel is also the founder of the Jewel Never Broken Foundation, which works with children and at-risk youth to give them the tools that they need to develop and grow into whole human beings. And I wanna connect a few dots for you here before we hear the surprise video from Jewel. Andres mentioned that the Holistic Life Foundation is part of the support partnering with the Eckhart Tolle Foundation in an upcoming retreat for young people to come be present with Eckhart and Kim in a retreat and environment.

The Jewel Never Broken Foundation is also partnering with us as is Echoes of Hope, a shout out to Echoes of Hope and other nonprofits who work with youth. And we're identifying 100 young people who can travel to Southern California and attend this three-day retreat with Eckhart and Kim at the end of May. And we're specifically raising funds.

This is the current focus of our New Earth Youth Initiative coming up in 2024. One aspect of it is to raise funds for the travel and the food and the lodging for these 100 young people to be part of this retreat experience. Eckhart Teachings is donating, gifting the tuition for the retreat, but you can imagine there are costs involved in bringing these 100 young people to the event and providing them with the travel food and lodging they need to attend.

And that's our goal here in this fundraiser is to raise funds specifically for these 100 young people to be at the retreat. We have a matching grant right now that's in effect. So when you donate and I'd like to invite you if you feel inspired to donate, there's a donate button below the player page to do so and your funds will be matched.

And this is our chance if this matches your inspiration. And with that, now let's have our surprise video with Jewel from the Jewel Never Broken Foundation.

[Speaker 10] (6:07:34 - 6:08:39)

Hey, everybody, it's Jewel. And it is an honor to be here with you all today and support Eckhart. I know we are all here because we love him and his teachings.

And I love what the foundation is doing to make sure that these types of teachings can get into the hands of so many people through the foundation, through the book programs, making sure it gets into the hands of youth. In prison systems, this is such important work. I really hope that you will donate and make more of these types of things possible.

His teachings have helped not only me, but my youth in our foundation. We are a foundation that's been working in mental health with youth for 22 years. And I cannot tell you how many times our kids have come up to us saying how his books have impacted them and their life.

I know this is not news to you. I know you're here because you know this and we all agree. Eckhart has done incredible things donating books to our foundation.

And it is just a privilege to show up here today because through his foundation, I know we can do such incredible work.

[Speaker 3] (6:08:39 - 6:09:04)

Thank you, Jewel. And now we have the chance to hear from Kim and Eckhart directly. We'll start by hearing from Kim Ang, Eckhart's teaching partner, the founder of Presence Through Movement.

Kim, here we go. Thank you, Tammy. Hello, everybody.

Hello, friends.

[Speaker 4] (6:09:07 - 6:20:26)

So what I'd like to do is for you to sit kind of like in a meditative state, but we're not going to really do a formal meditation. This is something that you can do for yourself like, you know, five, 10, three times, 20 times a day. And that is to be able to just sit in presence.

And even though things are happening around us, there may be voices, there may be things that you see in the background, but we're just going to kind of allow that to kind of go in the periphery and hold our hands like with our palms up, maybe just on your lap, but the palms up in a receiving. So we're receiving that spirit within, receiving that consciousness that is within you. So not only that you are receiving it, so you are that hole in the flute in which a life then can breathe through you, create through you.

So as we sit here with our palms up, we're in that receptive, receiving, and also emanating that light of consciousness. So our purpose in life is unfolding of that spirit within, or as Jesus said, seek the kingdom of God within. Or Buddha, he didn't say it in those words of kingdom or God, but he said the end of suffering.

And right now we are in these times, it's a challenging time. There's a lot happening in the world and these youths is the next generation to create a new earth, to create a better world than what we have created. I mean, it's all been a process, you know, and it's not always uphill, but it comes around, but they are our next generation and we are, as what Eckhart calls, we are the frequency holder for this next generation.

And these youths, I mean, as all of us have been challenged, not only by external, but by the internal, the ego, the mind, and these youths will probably also have to go through that. But if we hold that frequency of consciousness for these youths to be able to live in this world and create something that will be harmonious, peaceful, holy, and this is what we are moving towards. We're allowing that consciousness to come through our very, the essence of who we are, come through our being.

And we are that vehicle, just as those youths are the vehicle for the light of consciousness to shine through, for a new world to be able to be here, that we will end suffering, that we'll have the kingdom of God shine through us. So we are here to share this together for it's one consciousness, one life, that manifests through all these various forms. So we have our part, we each have our part.

And maybe our part is just being a frequency holder. Maybe our part is working with the youths. So it doesn't matter what is happening in the family life of the youths.

I mean, ideally, it'd be nice to be able to have conscious parenting that's happening in their family life. But just as we, each one of us, just as a school teacher, even, they may have that student one hour, three hours, five hours, whatever, how many hours in a day,

it doesn't take all day to be with a student. It just takes a moment of pure consciousness to be that light, where that student can then just basically transform.

They will remember that time. We all can go back probably in our memories and think of somebody who has been there for us, no matter how small, in a way, short of time that it's been. But we, the older generation, the middle generation, and the younger generation, we're here to awaken, to unfold, to manifest a new earth, to be present, to let go of that egoic form and that identification with form so that we can live and breathe, be conscious.

So these youths may be the next leaders of our country, of the various countries that are around, and so shall it be. But will they live and be a leader, be the vessel in which consciousness can use their speech, use their mind, use their bodies in the sense of creating and living, bringing together a global peace? Now, we don't know what that requires, whether that means we go deeper into, as a collective world, deeper into, well, deeper into suffering, deeper into the fall of or the end of, maybe, of a civilization.

We don't know that. We don't know what's going to happen, but we do know, and I know that life comes around. So it may be take five, 10 steps back, but it'll come back around, and we are, that's the evolution of human consciousness, is that we are evolving.

And what we do, what can we do, but be present, accepting what is in this moment, and maybe there's a lot, and there's a lot of challenges that is happening in this world at this moment, but we can go deeper into that space consciousness so we can be that frequency holder. And from that space of being that frequency holder, we begin to learn and accept the spiritual laws of just accepting, allowing this moment to be as it is. Even though that there may be some challenging times, and there will be challenging times for youths.

I think anybody who is going to be, go into a leadership role is challenged, and they will be challenged, but we keep coming back to being present, to connect with that consciousness. And since that consciousness is the one consciousness, we as the individual human beings are holding that frequency. So it's all just one, one consciousness, manifesting in all these various forms, whether it's good, bad, for in the world of form, there are opposites, so there's gonna be good, there's gonna be bad, there's gonna be happy, there's gonna be sad, there's gonna be good times and bad times, but within those times can then consciousness come through and a shift begins to happen, something will happen. And we know if you go within, you know that the shift that is happening is happening in, if we can say the world of form, that it is transforming this world as we know it.

And this is what is needed, is just for all of us together to be that frequency holder. So, speaking of the world, I forgot to check my time to see when I started, so I don't know whether I've gone over, I'm under, but it feels complete if we could just sit in again,

silence, and just allow consciousness to feel that consciousness within you, with your palms facing up.

[Speaker 12] (6:21:31 - 6:21:40)

We are one and connected and holding that space for the next generation, thank you.

[Speaker 3] (6:21:44 - 6:21:50)

Thank you, Kim. And now, over to Eckhart.

[Speaker 2] (6:22:04 - 6:22:10)

Hello, everybody, good to be with you.

[Speaker 1] (6:22:14 - 6:22:28)

It's, as the Buddhists would say, an auspicious evening. The full moon has just risen above the treetops here.

[Speaker 2] (6:22:29 - 6:24:48)

I've been watching it, and traditionally, those are very powerful moments in time for meditation and going within. So it just happens that this session here coincides with the full moon. We haven't been planning it, and the moon is incredibly still.

It rises, it looks enormously big when it first rises, then it seems to get a little smaller, but there's such stillness around it. It's challenging being a human being. It's also an incredible opportunity for the arising of consciousness, but it is undoubtedly not easy.

Humans are facing a seemingly endless succession of challenges, and challenges is already a positive term. Some people would call it bad things happening. When you become a little bit more conscious,

[Speaker 1] (6:24:48 - 6:25:04)

you recognize that seemingly negative things that are happening, limitations arising in your life, obstacles arising, difficult situations, circumstances, people, and then at some point you realize

[Speaker 2] (6:25:04 - 6:25:55)

that those difficult situations, in whatever form they manifest, are actually an essential part of being human, and an essential part, as far as the flowering of consciousness is concerned, the next shift in consciousness that we're moving into.

So for young people, life is particularly challenging. The most difficult time in my life was

childhood and adolescence, and many other people find that also.

[Speaker 1] (6:25:56 - 6:26:42)

When you're a child, you're born into a particular set of circumstances over which you have no control. You're completely at the mercy of whatever circumstances you're born into. Your parents, your environment, family background, the culture you're born into, the environment, the country, all this, and there's nothing you can do about it when you're a child.

But you are seemingly the passive recipient of whatever life is throwing at you. And some humans are born into extraordinarily difficult circumstances, even as young children.

[Speaker 2] (6:26:47 - 6:27:23)

And then you reach adolescence, and then often it gets even more difficult, because adolescence, for many people, is a very disconcerting time when you're halfway between childhood and adulthood, the time of transition. For many adolescents, it's a time of great upheavals and unhappiness, even when the external circumstances are relatively okay.

[Speaker 1] (6:27:24 - 6:27:35)

They're being challenged by an inner turmoil in many cases, and they're completely unprepared for that, because nobody at school has prepared them for it.

[Speaker 2] (6:27:36 - 6:27:44)

As they enter adolescence, they're going to enter, probably, a time of inner turmoil, no matter what their outer circumstances are.

[Speaker 1] (6:27:49 - 6:28:07)

And sometimes, if the outer circumstances are relatively okay, the turmoil, the inner turmoil, can be even greater than if the adolescents were born into poverty or to fight for survival every day.

[Speaker 2] (6:28:10 - 6:28:30)

So whatever it is, it's not easy, and it's essential for youngsters to be prepared for not just for adolescents, children to be prepared for what's coming, and then adolescents to be prepared for what's coming when they grow into adults.

[Speaker 1] (6:28:34 - 6:29:03)

And what we are attempting to help with in reaching as many youngsters as possible is

teaching the basics of awareness, which is the key to transcending the suffering that otherwise arises in the human mind that is inherited from generation to generation.

[Speaker 2] (6:29:06 - 6:29:20)

So the most basic teachings for a young person, and it should start in childhood, is to be aware of their inner states rather than being at the mercy of their inner states.

[Speaker 1] (6:29:21 - 6:32:24)

They may be at the mercy of, until they become a little older, of their outer circumstances, but they don't need to be at the mercy of their inner states, which means emotions and thoughts. If they could become aware, if it could be shown to a child, it's not complicated, that emotions arise and that it is possible to be aware of these emotions instead of being totally absorbed in them, being totally taken over by them, that it is possible to stand back, so to speak, and witness the emotions. There it is.

That's extremely important in adolescence when sometimes very negative and violent emotions arise. Is the emotion taking you over completely or are you able to allow the emotion to be there but not being totally absorbed in it, not being totally identified in it so that it doesn't make you do sometimes things that are irreversible in many cases? So basic teaching is awareness of inner states that could start at the age of six and a few, some individual teachers are kind of introducing that, making that part of the teaching.

It has not yet entered the curriculum of many schools, maybe a few alternative schools, but the most important curriculum at school should not be any subject, whatever it may be, mathematics, English or whatever language, geography, whatever. It's all secondary relative to what is primary and that is to be aware. That should be the main subject in a more enlightened subject.

We are going in that direction. So it's awareness of emotions, which could be shown by role playing, by telling stories, all kinds of possibilities can help children to develop the ability to be aware. And the arising of awareness is the essence of spirituality.

Another word for awareness is presence. The arising of presence is the essence of all spirituality. So that, if we can make that the main teaching, everything else would then fall into place.

So it would start in childhood and then it becomes very important in adolescence when emotions do tend to arise, powerful emotions.

[Speaker 2] (6:32:27 - 6:32:39)

Also, not just awareness of emotions, but also to be aware of thoughts that arise. What are you telling yourself?

[Speaker 1] (6:32:40 - 6:36:10)

These are simple things that can be taught even to a child. It's not complicated. By telling stories, as I said, by telling stories, by acting it out, role playing, a child can learn to become aware also of how they speak to themselves in their mind, the inner voice.

What is the voice saying? So that they don't become the voice, because if you are the voice that you've been taken over by the conditioned mind, the mind which is conditioned by your environment, by whatever circumstances you were born into, whatever your parents have done, what people have done to you, et cetera, the conditioned mind, yes, it's there. You can't get rid of it easily, but you don't need to be totally absorbed by it, not totally identified with it.

So how do you, what is your mind saying? What is it doing? Simple things could be taught to children, and then gradually that ability grows, the ability to stay aware when difficult things happen, as they will in every person's life.

Every person is not only facing external difficulties, but also problems arising from the workings of the human mind. And the human mind also has incredible possibilities for manifesting and creating, but there's also built into the human mind a deep-seated dysfunction that everybody inherits. In some humans, it is present in a more acute form than in others, but in every human, this deep-seated dysfunction, which we could call the ego, the egoic mind, operates in one way or another in every person's life.

So we have that, it's been recognized in all spiritual traditions that, yes, humans are wonderful beings, they're wonderful possibilities. They also have created amazing things, but also there is a huge downside to being human, and that is the inherited, let's call it by a more direct term, the inherited craziness of the human condition, of the human mind. So we all inherit a little bit of insanity and sometimes a lot.

If that were not the case, the world would not be the way it is now when you see the enormous amount of suffering, most of it created by humans. Some suffering created by natural disaster, yes, but more suffering created by humans. But what does that mean?

It's created by the consciousness, the collective consciousness in humans that creates this world. And that's what you hear about when you listen or watch the news tonight.

[Speaker 2] (6:36:11 - 6:36:21)

What you're going to hear is manifestations of the collective consciousness of the human mind, and it's not pleasant.

[Speaker 1] (6:36:24 - 6:47:20)

And so this needs to be shown to young people so that you would have a wonderful

start. You'd have already the power given to you of how to face the difficult life circumstances that are going to come sooner or later, sooner probably. So give children, give youngsters this gift of showing them the possibility of being aware, of being present, instead of losing themselves in their emotions and in their thoughts completely.

So that's really the essence what we need to teach young people. Traditionally, the knowledge of this always come in much later in life when people beginning to suffer more and more and more and then they just can't stand it anymore. And at some point, there's some awakening.

It's not guaranteed, but at some point when humans suffer, they awaken. And for quite a while, people coming to talks and retreats have seen some percentage of young people, but the potential of young people seems to be growing now slowly. Traditionally, it's been people in the second half of life who've come because they've suffered enough so that they finally begin to awaken.

Seems that humans need to suffer until there is the beginning of an awakening, but it doesn't have to be like that. Humanity has already suffered a lot. And I have observed two things in young people these days.

Seemingly contradictory, one is a high degree of disorientation and of aimlessness and of sometimes nihilism, nothing is worth doing. Sometimes a high degree of suddenly being possessed by some ideology that you subscribe to that reduces the complexity of life to one or see single things as the, yeah, this is the answer. I have the answer for everything.

So you become possessed by an ideology and then you act it out violently sometimes. And others, completely aimless or they can't stand a seemingly empty life. So they're looking, they're going, they take drugs and so on.

So there's a very negative development on the one hand, but I've also observed, and it seems almost contradictory into something, is an increasing readiness in youngsters to awaken. They just need to hear the message, but nobody has told them. They just need to hear the message and then the shift can happen even at an early age.

But the strange thing is this, the message most youngsters have not yet been reached by this message. So there is, on the negative side, being young these days is very difficult. I don't want to go into it too deeply.

A huge challenge is that the technology that being absorbed in the virtual dimension, the virtual world of the screens that youngsters interact with, being told this is a huge challenge for youngsters and a huge challenge for human consciousness. So one would need to address that specifically. That's one of the major, if not the major challenge for young person now is how to live with this new technology, not lose yourself in the new

technology.

And this technology is really an externalization of the human mind. So the human mind has always been a problem losing yourself in your mind, which is the egoic state of consciousness and having no awareness at all, being taken over by one thought after another, one thought after another. That's always been a problem already for hundreds and thousands of years.

But now you have the additional problem, this incessantly talking, active human minds that comes up, it never stops. One damn thing after another arises. It's become now externalized to the technology.

It comes at you, you interact with these screens and it never stops as a continuous input of stuff. You're bombarded by stuff. And youngsters, many youngsters these days, the major part of their reality is not this life here, the actual life that surrounds them.

The major part of their reality is a virtual world. The virtual world has become more real to them than the real world. Humanity has never faced a challenge of that kind.

It's for the first time, and it is an enormous challenge, enormous. This is why it's so important. So it's always been important to live consciously, but now we have no choice.

If we do not bring awareness in, we are going to lose ourselves completely in that the externalized mind, which is a virtual world, the virtual world can also be helpful. We're using technology here to reach people. It can be helpful, but it needs to be used with awareness.

Without awareness, without presence, it will consume you. So it's now an absolute necessity for humans to become aware, otherwise they will be consumed, not just by their mind, they will be consumed by what they have created, the externalized mind, the virtual mind, they will be consumed by it. So it's a, and this is a greater, this is the greatest danger for human consciousness, the greatest challenge, greater than any other challenge in the external world.

So it's so important now, only awareness can liberate us from all that. So the teaching, the main teaching, it's otherwise, we are actually confronted with a life-threatening situation in technology. So it's not just, it's always been a, traditionally, the awakening of consciousness is only, it's always been there for already for thousands of years.

There've always been humans who have awakened, yeah, have been able to transcend the egoic mind and become aware, but up until recently, it's been a kind of luxury almost. It was great. Some humans were able to realize it, many through the existing religious teachings, although religious teachings to a large extent have also become corrupted and misused by the human ego to a large extent, but there've always been some who were able to awaken through that, but now that's not enough anymore.

What we now need is an awakening on a much larger scale, and the possibility is there. When I talk to youngsters, and I want to do it much more, okay, I've given talks at some universities, I've talked, spoken at Stanford and New York University, and at first, I wasn't sure, but first, I wonder what they're going to make of it, and I was amazed how open they were to the teaching, and some said, wow, I've never heard that before. So the openness is there, and we just need to create channels so that they can be reached with this message.

And the message, basically, if I had to express it and define it in one single sentence, the message is that there's more to you than meets the eye. There is a possibility of accessing a deeper or higher state of consciousness. There is a dimension of consciousness in you just waiting to be discovered.

You don't have to achieve it, because that means you need a lot of time to get there. It's not something, the awakening is not something you need to achieve. It's something you discover.

To show that to youngsters, and not just conceptually, but experientially, to show them the possibility, for example, of being aware of the way in which they talk to themselves in their head. Just what are you saying to yourself? There's already an awareness, or the possibility of discovery between two thoughts.

[Speaker 2] (6:47:20 - 6:47:35)

There's a space. We call it stillness. And again, everything in this world goes against that.

[Speaker 1] (6:47:36 - 6:48:06)

Every device that you have with a screen on it is trying to obscure, to prevent you from accessing the dimension of stillness, because it's the opposite of stillness. It's stuff getting at you, content, stuff. Another text message, another Facebook post, another this, another this coming up, interacting.

[Speaker 2] (6:48:06 - 6:48:17)

Never a moment of, ah, and so the possibility to discover still.

[Speaker 1] (6:48:17 - 6:49:14)

I mean, there are a few apps, or there are quite a few apps that you can get that teach you meditation, and that's good. So it can be used for a helpful purpose. It can be, most of it is in the service of unconsciousness, this technology, but it can, but a small percentage of it is actually helpful.

There are some apps that teach you how to breathe consciously, how to be aware of

your breath. One of the simplest, most fundamental ways of accessing this inner dimension of stillness that transcends thought, be aware of your breathing. So you have this little app.

I tried a few on my iPhones, and oh, that's quite good. So it goes, you can choose the duration. It says, breathe in, inhale, and it goes tick, tick, tick.

[Speaker 2] (6:49:18 - 6:50:00)

Hold, exhale, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick. Oh, inhale, hold, exhale, hold. Well, and what happens when you follow that?

The mind becomes still. So it can be used in a constructive and helpful way. It can be.

90% of it isn't yet, but, so we need to be, to use it skillfully with awareness.

[Speaker 1] (6:50:00 - 6:50:34)

Without awareness, it will destroy you. With awareness, it can be a wonderful thing, this technology, and then you may have heard about the latest developments of AI, artificial intelligence. It does the most amazing things.

You can ask it to write an essay on some subject, and it'll write it within five seconds. It would take you five hours to write that. It might not be as good.

It can do amazing things.

[Speaker 2] (6:50:35 - 6:50:44)

And so, quite soon, perhaps, the AI will be better at thinking than the human mind.

[Speaker 1] (6:50:48 - 6:51:50)

So that's another reason for going beyond thinking, so that, to discover a dimension in you that is actually higher and more powerful than the thought, the dimension of thinking. It's time now, because otherwise it'll defeat you, and it becomes better at thinking than you are. So you have to rise above thinking, the way we are able to use the mind and use the technology, but are not consumed by it.

You are above it, and that is presence, that is awareness. So this is a wonderful thing, but this is an incredible time we live in, when things are extremely challenging. One could say, who knows where it's going?

It could go very, very wrong.

[Speaker 2] (6:51:51 - 6:52:15)

It could, or it could be the very seemingly negative thing that we have created can be the opening into that higher dimension of consciousness that is waiting to be discovered in every human.

[Speaker 1] (6:52:16 - 6:52:19)

And that's vital. It's waiting to be discovered.

[Speaker 2] (6:52:19 - 6:52:32)

It's dormant in you. And so that's, children need to grow up with that, give a child this gift.

[Speaker 1] (6:52:35 - 6:52:47)

And then the child will grow into an adult and will be able to use that, and then it will become, it will grow, it will become more powerful.

[Speaker 2] (6:52:48 - 6:53:18)

Every challenge that then this human faces will make that human more conscious instead of drawing them back into unconsciousness. But of course, always, no matter in what way you become engaged in this, it always comes back to, you have to live it.

[Speaker 1] (6:53:19 - 6:53:35)

You have to live it every moment, and every moment is always this moment. In a way, one could say there is no every moment, there's only this moment. It just looks like lots of moments, but it's only ever this moment.

[Speaker 2] (6:53:35 - 6:55:36)

And this is the only moment where you can live state of the state of presence. And you can sense the power of presence within you, beyond the thinking mind, beyond emotional fluctuations. There's a, we can call it stillness, but it's much more than stillness, it's just a word, but let's call it stillness.

Discover the stillness that is always waiting. It just was obscured. So that is the most vital message for humanity.

I want to thank all of you for participating in this, realizing its importance, and every one of you can contribute in some way. And perhaps the most important contribution, I think Aaron already pointed it out earlier, the most important contribution, of course, is your state of consciousness. The world can only change from within.

[Speaker 1] (6:55:38 - 6:55:45)

What the world humans create is a manifestation or an externalization of the collective consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (6:55:46 - 6:57:13)

If the collective consciousness is dysfunctional, the outer world will reflect it. So thank you for being part of this. It's, nothing could be more important.

This is the purpose of your life, is to participate and embody the arising of what we could call the transcendent consciousness, the spiritual dimension, the shift. And then what arises as the book that I wrote, I guess it was written through me, a new earth then arises naturally as a reflection of the collective consciousness. Thank you.

Tammy, back to you.

[Speaker 3] (6:57:14 - 7:01:06)

Thank you, Eckhart. Here, as we come to a close, I just wanna underscore, I've had the pleasure and privilege of watching Eckhart teach some groups of young people. And I've seen their openness, and I've seen, as Eckhart described, in many young people, they just need to hear the message and how it was lights going on so quickly, and I could see it in their eyes.

And I have to say, some of the happiest experiences I've had at Eckhart Tolle, Kim Eng Retreats has been watching those lights go on behind the eyes of young people. And so I wanna thank all of you for being with us here as we more formally launch, moving into 2024, the New Earth Youth Initiative, as has been said a couple of different times in terms of your contribution to the Eckhart Tolle Foundation living with presence, the alpha and omega of it all. Additionally, if you feel inspired, we would love for you to help spread the word about the Eckhart Tolle Foundation.

Many people are just learning about it. You can do this by resharing our social media posts and our newsletters. We'd also love your ideas about how Eckhart's teachings can reach different populations in creative ways.

One way through book donations, if you have ideas for where we can donate Eckhart's books, you can access a request form at EckhartTolleFoundation.org. So again, if you have ideas and you'd like to share them with us about where we can donate Eckhart's books, there's a request form on EckhartTolleFoundation.org. We'd also love your ideas for connecting us with like-minded nonprofits like the Holistic Life Foundation and the Jewel Never Broken Foundation or other ideas you might have about how we can bring the teachings of presence to diverse demographics and people who would otherwise not have access.

You can write to us and you might wanna write this down, outreach at

EckhartTolleFoundation.org. Perhaps creative ideas have been emerged in you from being part of this special online event. Write to us at outreach at EckhartTolleFoundation.org.

If you would feel inspired to donate to the Eckhart Tolle Foundation, I also warmly invite you to do so. You can scroll below the player and there's a donate button there. And again, to repeat, your donations will be matched in the coming days and will support programs like our New Earth Youth Initiative and the 2024 Prison Teaching Tour that's coming up that you'll hear more about as well.

Also, finally, if it matches your inspiration, you can include the Eckhart Tolle Foundation in your estate planning and in your will. Okay, to conclude now, Eckhart, would you be willing to lead us in some moments of connected stillness together?

[Speaker 2] (7:01:09 - 7:03:55)

Yes, Tammy, I am willing. Wonderful. So we come into the present moment so fully that we don't need to think about it, but just sense the present moment, the stillness, the power of stillness.

Thoughts fall away, but you stay alert and awake and there's a stillness. And that stillness is a presence. It is a presence of consciousness, the light of consciousness.

And then you realize that essentially I am that. I am, you realize the essential I am-ness, I am that, that's an ancient Indian saying, Tat Tvam Azeem, I might be mispronouncing it, but I am that is the realization of your essential nature as consciousness itself. The person is secondary.

More essentially, you are consciousness. And you can sense that as an essential aliveness or aliveness, has no form.

[Speaker 12] (7:04:46 - 7:04:47)

Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (7:05:12 - 7:08:21)

Hi, everybody. Welcome. Welcome to this special Eckhart Tolle Foundation online event.

I'm so glad that you're here with us. Thank you. My name's Tammy Simon.

I'm the founder of Sounds True. And I have had the great joy and honor of working with Eckhart Tolle since 2001. And I'm also on the board of the Eckhart Tolle Foundation and have been on the board since its inception.

And it's a great joy to be your host for this special online event. During this event, you'll

be hearing more about the Eckhart Tolle Foundation. Perhaps for some of you, this is the first time you'll be learning more about the foundation's history and its activities.

And we're also going to introduce you to a New Earth Youth Initiative, which is a new program that the Eckhart Tolle Foundation is sponsoring. And it brings Eckhart's teachings and the experience of presence to young people who very well would otherwise not have access to these teachings and the experience of presence in Eckhart and Kim's presence. And you're going to be learning more about that.

Also, as part of this online special event, we have two surprise videos. Not going to say much more about it, except that these videos are from some celebrated visionary humans who are expressing their support of bringing Eckhart's teachings to young people. Most of all, I want to thank each and every one of you for being with us.

There's a kind of ripple effect that comes from us connecting together in this way with a shared intent to bring presence to more and more people without financial barriers to access. So it is so wonderful to be with you and to have this experience together. Oh, and of course, as part of our time together, you're going to hear from Kim and Eckhart.

Did I forget to say that? Yes, indeed. That's going to happen too.

And now I'd love to introduce you to someone who is the president of Eckhart teachings and the co-founder and board chair of the Eckhart Tolle Foundation. This is someone who's very special to me personally. I've known this person for more than two decades now and watched her grow into her role with such beauty and dignity and the power of a generous heart, Erin Jacobson.

Erin.

[Speaker 6] (7:08:24 - 7:14:52)

Thank you, Tammy. And thank you all for joining us tonight. I just wanted to spend a few moments and tell you a little bit about how we started and some of the inspiration for the foundation.

I've been working for Eckhart teachings since it began in 1999. And our mission has always been the same and that's to share Eckhart's teachings with as many people as possible. Of course, back in the early days, we did not have a big team.

We basically did everything by hand. You know, there's almost, it was the early days of the internet. And I can still remember like it was yesterday folding paper flyers in the living room and packaging audio and video cassette tapes, being in charge of duplicating the audio and video cassette tapes.

I was the one taking all of the phone fax and snail mail orders, packaging them up and

walking several blocks to the post office every day. In fact, our very first covers were actually black and white photocopies that we made at Kinko's. As you can imagine over the years, we have received a lot of feedback from people who have been impacted by the power of now and a new earth.

And some of the most impactful feedback that we've received have been letters from people in prison writing to Eckhart and expressing their gratitude as well as telling their stories. And we have been so impacted by these letters and Eckhart keeps every single one. And even though we were impacted, it still made us think about all the communities with very little access that, and we were wondering like, how can we help them?

And giving back has always been a part of Eckhart teachings and we've been doing so by giving those that can't afford to pay event scholarships, access to online courses. We have a lot of teachings available for free on YouTube and other streaming platforms. And even though that we've been giving individuals help, we still wanted a way to be able to focus and give back to underserved communities.

So in 2016, we launched the Eckhart Tolle Foundation and we chose to support incarcerated people, hospice patients and the underserved youth. We've had a couple of large conferences where all the proceeds went to fund the foundation. We've been giving tens of thousands of books away to prisons, hospices and the underserved youth.

We've brought the youth to learn directly from Eckhart and Kim in person. And we've been donating, we've given grants to these communities. And we also recently partnered with Adovo and they are providing tablets and access to Eckhart and Kim's teachings to over 250,000 people.

And we're also planning for Eckhart to speak in a couple prisons soon in person. And tonight we're highlighting the underserved youth because they need mental, emotional and spiritual support. And not only for their own personal wellbeing, but because they represent humanity's future and this world needs more conscious and aware people.

We are committed to helping these communities and help them relieve the suffering caused by the dysfunctional egoic mind so that more people can show up in their lives, present and aware and in touch with their essential nature. If you're inclined to be a part of this impact, we have three ways that you can help. Number one, by sharing our social media posts about our book donation programs and our grant programs with your networks.

Number two, we of course graciously welcome any donations. And number three, and it truly is the most important. My personal favorite quote of Eckhart's has always been, the world can only change from within.

And that does mean that you being here, connecting to presence and continuing to

practice living your life from presence is the most essential. I'd also like to thank all of you, our incredibly generous donors and our dedicated board of directors for their service, our staff and our volunteers. And of course our executive director, Ali Weibel.

All of you are making this work possible. Now it's time for our first surprise video, expressing their support for the work that we've been doing by bringing Eckhart's teachings to young people. This person's team reached out to me several years ago in hopes of connecting with Eckhart.

And little did I know at the time what their vision was and where this connection would go. I'm amazed by this person's commitment to sharing Eckhart's teachings with his massive audience. I would say that he is making spiritual teachings cool in the eyes of young people.

He's definitely opening a meaningful conversation and he's using his art and his platform to not only share his own learning and wisdom but also Eckhart's teachings. Eckhart was featured in his most recent album throughout his whole album, almost, Mr. Morali and the Big Steppers. He is a multi-platinum Grammy and Emmy award-winning artist.

He was the first non-classical, non-jazz musician to win a Pulitzer Prize for his 2017 album, Damn. Here he is, Mr. Kendrick Lamar.

[Speaker 9] (7:14:54 - 7:17:16)

I believe people can, they truly can use, well, not people, young people. Young people need to hear Eckhart's words the most because today we live in a society where it's so many things pushing and pulling, you know, where there's a lifestyle, social media, friends, trends, so many things consume young people and, you know, their decision-making. And to truly crack that code and have that balance, you know, everybody wants nice things, right?

But to have that balance is to also go within, as I said before. I wish I would have read these books when I was 16, when I was 13. I'd probably be far more advanced in my personal life and my daily, you know, interpersonal dynamics, not only with people, but with myself.

But I'm fortunate enough to come across it in my 30s, right? But for the kids that's out there listening, 12, 13, 14, 15 and up, I truly recommend that you get into it because it'll open your mind up further than you can even imagine, further than the things that you want, further than the things that you think that you need. You'll explore a whole new journey of self-worth, passion, purpose, creativity, and stillness within yourself.

It's worth it. A hundred percent. Not only on a professional level, because I know everyone has dreams and goals and aspirations, but on a personal level, it plays the same rules.

And when you intertwine the works between the two, things will happen tempo for you.

[Speaker 3] (7:17:20 - 7:18:13)

Kendrick Lamar saying, young people need to hear Epgart's words the most. What a terrific surprise video. Let's learn more about the New Earth Youth Initiative.

And to share with us more about the details, we have a fellow board member of mine on the Epgart Tolle Foundation board. One of the best parts of participating on the board is the type of allyship and friendship and creative partnership that I can have with somebody like Elizabeth Lesser, co-founder of Omega Institute, author of several best-selling books, including Broken Open, How Difficult Times Can Help Us Grow, and Cassandra Speaks, When Women Are Storytellers, The Human Story Changes.

[Speaker 7] (7:18:13 - 7:23:15)

Elizabeth, over to you. Okay, thank you. Hey, everybody.

What a pleasure to be with you. It's a cold, chilly night here in New York, and I imagine you're all coming in from all over the world and the country. It's just great to feel everybody on the Zoom and YouTube and wherever you're joining us.

So I'm here to introduce our next guest, but first I wanna tell you briefly about the foundation's youth initiative. We're calling it the New Earth Youth Initiative. And it's really meaningful to me to be working on something about young people and kids because I've been in education my whole life.

I started out as a kindergarten and elementary school teacher, and then I worked my way up to working with grownups in education when I co-founded Omega Institute 47 years ago. And it dawned on me as I worked with kids years ago that grownups also need to keep learning, that it's actually imperative for adults to learn how to grow and change and expand our consciousness as we age. And not just getting facts, but the important things like how do I quiet my mind and open my heart and relate to the mysterious parts of myself, my soul, my consciousness.

And throughout my 50 almost years at Omega, I've had the privilege of being in the presence of educators of the mind and the heart and the soul, people like Eckhart Tolle, although there's really no one like Eckhart Tolle. And I got to really experience him in his full Eckhart-ness back in 2008 when I helped Oprah produce a webinar focusing on A New Earth, the book, the 10 chapters. I don't know, many of you may be tuned into that.

Millions and millions of people around the world tuned into that webinar. I remember the first night we did it, it was one of the first things like it in the world. And the entire Chicago internet went down because so many people were trying to get on.

And I learned during that, that his work wasn't just for serious spiritual readers and seekers, that anyone trying to figure out this tricky thing called being human could access the depth and the scope and the magnificence of his work. And that made me think, well, then kids could also. And young people don't just need to learn how to read and write and do math.

They need education of their hearts and their minds and souls. The way Kendrick Lamar was saying, if only he had had that learning way back in his early teens, what a difference it would make. And that's why we're doing this.

That's why we are raising money and spending the money we raise to do things like bringing his books to schools and school libraries, creating programs specifically for young people like the lectures Eckhart did a few years ago with NYU students, and offering grants to like-minded organizations working with youth. And I'd like to introduce you now to a leader from one of those organizations. And he happens to be a dear friend of mine.

He has taught at Omega Institute for many years and his work inspires all of us at Omega and here at the foundation greatly. His name is Andres Gonzalez, and he's one of the three co-founders of the Holistic Life Foundation and the co-author of Let Your Life Shine, which is a powerful book that documents the way yoga and meditation have transformed and empowered thousands of historically underserved kids in Baltimore. For 20 years, Andres has shared wellness, healing and present moment practices in public school systems and beyond, breathing life back into a community destroyed by drugs, poverty and systemic racism.

And what I love so much about Andres is how he personally walks his message in the world. He has this message that love can heal any heart, including our own. And he is that kind of healer and welcome Andres.

[Speaker 5] (7:23:17 - 7:32:45)

Thank you so much, Elizabeth. It's so good to see you. It's been a while.

I hope you're staying warm where you're at because it's chilly here in Baltimore as well. So before I get to just a few of the topics that I wanted to address, I really just wanna give a quick shout out to the Eckert Tolle Foundation for all the amazing work they do. The Holistic Life Foundation has been going for 20 years and recently they've been supporting us not only financially in terms of giving us funds to help run our Holistic Roots program, which is a mentoring program that's really helping these underserved kids in the city, but also they've donated books to us countless amounts of books.

I mean, books on top of books on top of books so we can give them to the youth, to the adults, the teenagers, to anyone that we run into in all of our programs, they're

accessible and they're there to spread his message and his truths. And just amazing what they're doing and this new initiative as well is incredible and it's so needed. And I've seen it through the work I've been doing for over 20 years now all across the nation and across the world.

And I wanted to start by talking about a metaphor and how important this work is. You know, our teacher, Uncle Will used to use this extended metaphor to describe how important breath work or meditation is for people in general, but I think in particular for our youth and the transformation that it can have on them when they start using these skills and techniques to learn how to self-regulate. The way he would do it, he'd say, you know, our body's like a boat and the world is the ocean.

And more oftentimes than not, our waters are calm, right? We can set our sails and go whatever direction we wanna go. But if you think about it sometimes, and actually now I think about it most of the time, right?

Our waters aren't calm, right? We're bombarded by external and internal stimuli. Externally, we have what's going on in the world.

You have your family, you have your friends, your parents, your loved ones, significant others, you have coworkers, bosses, you have society, social media, politics, right? We're sort of, that's smacking us around externally. That's moving our boat around.

We're trying to set our sails. It's getting tougher. And then internally, the bombardment we have, our fears, our doubt, stress, worry, anxiety, trauma that we faced, whether it's our personal trauma, secondary trauma, intergenerational trauma.

So really those waters, this world is chaotic. And we're bombarded by this all the time. And it's pushing us around all over the place.

So it's hard for us to set our sails. And our teacher used to remind us how the breath or meditation, that that is our anchor. That allows us to still ourselves, which in turn will still our waters, which will allow us to set our sails and go in whatever direction we wanna go and achieve whatever it is that we wanna achieve.

And I've seen firsthand the amazing transformation this has with kids. So we were based out of Baltimore and we're in Northwest Baltimore. So like where the wire came out, like the hood of all hoods, right?

And there's a young lady in elementary school, we got with her. She was from the same projects that Freddie Gray was from. And for some reason, people would bully this girl, right?

She didn't have the cool clothes or the backpacks. She's kind of had a little less material wise than anyone else did. So they picked on her.

They made fun of her. They said stuff to her. We were always confused why they chose her because her brother had showed her how to throw her hands a little, right?

So he had a box and he showed her. So I was always confused, like why do you keep picking on this girl? She's gonna beat you up.

She's stronger than you. She knows what to do with her hands, right? So we teach her some of these techniques, some of these practices of breath work and meditation.

And this is early on in us providing these techniques and practices to youth. And so myself and the other two co-founders, Ali and Atma, we're at this school and we're with the principal and we go and we're walking through the halls and we turn the corner. And when we turn the corner, this young lady has this other lady, she's grabbed her by the shirt and she had her thrown up against the lockers.

And she's looking at her and you can tell she is about to cop back and hit this little girl. And she looks at us and she sees us walking down the halls and she looks at the girl and she looks at the guests again. And she goes, looks at the girl and goes, you're lucky I meditate.

And she lets go of the young lady, sits down and starts breathing. And it was one of the most powerful things. The principal was looking at me like, what did I just see, right?

And we were like, oh my God, what did we just see? Cause we seen how she was with the other kids too. So it's just so powerful and amazing to see the impact that it can have on these youth.

And not only is it helping with dealing with their stress, dealing with their anxiety, dealing with that bombardment I was talking to y'all about, but honestly, some of these kids in these neighborhoods, these techniques and practices that we're talking about that this new Earth Youth Initiative is focusing on will help these kids so much that in some cases, it may end up saving their lives. Cause now they're no longer reacting to what the world is throwing at them, but they're learning to instill themselves and they're able to respond. You know, and Elizabeth mentioned, I'm a big love guy, which I am, as you can see by the clothes.

And I just think love is the most powerful force in the universe. And I think that these techniques in particular, one of the things I think when youth learn to go inward, like Kendrick was talking about, 13, 16, to learn how to instill those waters, learn how to be able to go inside and just be. Remember, we're human beings.

When they learn that, they gain the sense of love, self-love, they learn to love themselves. And then now when they're looking out at others, they're more empathetic, they're more compassionate. They start seeing themselves in everyone and everything.

Now they're not alone. Now they're not so disconnected to anything. Now they see the interconnection between themselves and everyone.

They're not just their corner anymore. They're not just their block. They're not just the East side or West side of Baltimore.

They're not just Baltimore or Maryland or the United States. They're not just this country, this continent. They start seeing that universal self, that omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent self that they truly are.

And that's when you see that transformation occur. And it's so beautiful and it's so powerful and it's so needed in the world that we're in right now. And it's just, it's amazing.

And so kudos to this foundation and the initiative they're making. I have two other things, I have these two quotes that Eckhart has in his books that I just wanted to talk about because they really ring true to some of the stuff and the synchronicities and the synergies that we're doing with the Holistic Life Foundation that are with his work. So one of them is from The Power of Now.

And our teacher used to always talk about how the only time that exists is right now, right? And Eckhart says, as soon as you enter the present moment, all unhappiness and struggle dissolve. And life begins to flow with joy and ease.

When you act out of the present moment awareness, whatever you do becomes imbued with a sense of quality, care, and love. And our teacher used to always say, the past causes anger. Someone said something to you, they did something to you, you might regret something you did.

The future causes anxiety. What's gonna happen? What am I gonna do with myself?

What's going on? When we teach these youth to be in the now, which is the only time that exists, right? The past is gone.

The future is never getting here. But when they learn to live in this now moment, this present moment, this present, it's a gift. That's the reason it's called the present.

It's so powerful. And what we're doing is we're allowing these kids to remember that they can access that whenever they want to. And that reminder is something my teacher used to always say.

He said, he says, I'm not a teacher. I'm not a teacher. I'm a reminder, I'm a calm, do it.

And Eckhart talks about that too. And stillness speaks a true spiritual teacher. He says, does not have anything to teach in the conventional sense of the word.

Does not have anything to give or add to you. We have it all already, right? Such as new information, beliefs or rules or conduct.

The only function of such a teacher is to help you remove that which separates you from the truth of who you already are and what you already know in the depth of your being. And that's what this initiative is gonna be able to do y'all. So really, we need your support.

We need you to tell your friends to tell a friend. We need y'all to really understand the impact that this can have. If we can take kids from inner cities, underserved communities, who have never had a retreat experience, never even left their city, they get to go hang out with Eckhart.

Like I wanna go to the retreat, you know what I mean? So for real, you know, special shout out to the Eckhart Tolle Foundation, all the amazing work that they're doing. Thank you for continuing to support the Holistic Light Foundation.

And please, all y'all, please do the same. Support as much as you can. This New Earth Youth Initiative is so powerful.

It's so incredible. We're honored to be a part of it here at the Holistic Light Foundation. I'm honored to be here.

And I really just love to all of y'all. And don't forget that love is the most powerful force in the universe.

[Speaker 3] (7:32:48 - 7:36:04)

Thank you, Andres. Bring in the heart. And it's time for our next surprise video.

I notice when I say that, I imagine like there should be confetti and music and, you know, sounds that go like rocket ship. Okay, okay, in a moment. And this next surprise video is from a quintessential multi-hyphenated artist, a Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter, actress, New York Times bestselling author, Jewel.

Jewel is also the founder of the Jewel Never Broken Foundation, which works with children and at-risk youth to give them the tools that they need to develop and grow into whole human beings. And I wanna connect a few dots for you here before we hear the surprise video from Jewel. Andres mentioned that the Holistic Life Foundation is part of the support partnering with the Eckhart Tolle Foundation in an upcoming retreat for young people to come be present with Eckhart and Kim in a retreat and environment.

The Jewel Never Broken Foundation is also partnering with us as is Echoes of Hope, a shout out to Echoes of Hope and other nonprofits who work with youth. And we're identifying 100 young people who can travel to Southern California and attend this three-

day retreat with Eckhart and Kim at the end of May. And we're specifically raising funds.

This is the current focus of our New Earth Youth Initiative coming up in 2024. One aspect of it is to raise funds for the travel and the food and the lodging for these 100 young people to be part of this retreat experience. Eckhart Teachings is donating, gifting the tuition for the retreat, but you can imagine there are costs involved in bringing these 100 young people to the event and providing them with the travel food and lodging they need to attend.

And that's our goal here in this fundraiser is to raise funds specifically for these 100 young people to be at the retreat. We have a matching grant right now that's in effect. So when you donate, and I'd like to invite you, if you feel inspired to donate, there's a donate button below the player page to do so.

And your funds will be matched. And this is our chance if this matches your inspiration. And with that, now let's have our surprise video with Jewel from the Jewel Never Broken Foundation.

[Speaker 10] (7:36:04 - 7:37:12)

Hey, everybody, it's Jewel. And it is an honor to be here with you all today and support Eckhart. I know we are all here because we love him and his teachings.

And I love what the foundation is doing to make sure that these types of teachings can get into the hands of so many people through the foundation, through the book programs, making sure it gets into the hands of youth, in prison systems. This is such important work. I really hope that you will donate and make more of these types of things possible.

His teachings have helped not only me, but my youth in our foundation. We are a foundation that's been working in mental health with youth for 22 years. And I cannot tell you how many times our kids have come up to us saying how his books have impacted them and their life.

I know this is not news to you. I know you're here because you know this and we all agree. Eckhart has done incredible things donating books to our foundation.

And it is just a privilege to show up here today because through his foundation, I know we can do such incredible work.

[Speaker 3] (7:37:13 - 7:37:37)

Thank you, Jewel. And now we have the chance to hear from Kim and Eckhart directly. We'll start by hearing from Kim Eng, Eckhart's teaching partner, the founder of Presence Through Movement.

Kim, here we go. Thank you, Tammy. Hello everybody, hello friends.

[Speaker 4] (7:37:40 - 7:43:49)

So what I'd like to do is for you to sit kind of like in a meditative state, but we're not going to really do a formal meditation. This is something that you can do for yourself, like, you know, five, 10, three times, 20 times a day. And that is to be able to just sit in presence.

And even though things are happening around us, there may be voices, there may be things that you see in the background, but we're just going to kind of allow that to kind of go in the periphery and hold our hands like with our palms up, maybe just on your lap, but the palms up in a receiving. So you're receiving that spirit within, receiving that consciousness that is within you. So not only that you are receiving it, so you are that hole in the flute in which a life then can breathe through you, create through you.

So as we sit here with our palms up, we're in that receptive, receiving, and also emanating that light of consciousness. So our purpose in life is unfolding of that spirit within, or as Jesus said, seek the kingdom of God within. Or Buddha, he didn't say it in those words of kingdom or God, but he said, at the end of suffering.

And right now we are in these times, it's a challenging time. There's a lot happening in the world. And these youths, it's the next generation to create a new earth, to create a better world than what we have created.

I mean, it's all been a process, and it's not always uphill, but it comes around. But they are our next generation. And we are, as what Eckhart calls, we are the frequency holder for this next generation.

And these youths, I mean, as all of us have been challenged, not only by external, but by the internal, the ego, the mind. And these youths will probably also have to go through that. But if we hold that frequency of consciousness for these youths to be able to live in this world and create something that will be harmonious, peaceful, holy, and this is what we are moving towards.

We're allowing that consciousness to come through our very, the essence of who we are, come through our being. And we are that vehicle, just as those youths are a vehicle for the light of consciousness to shine through, for a new world to be able to be here, that we will end suffering, that we'll have the kingdom of God shine through us. So we are here to share this together for it's one consciousness, one life, that manifests through all these various forms.

So we have our part, we each have our part. And maybe our part is just being a frequency holder. Maybe our part is working with the youths.

So it doesn't matter what is happening in the family life of the youths. I mean, ideally, it'd be nice to be able to have conscious parenting that's happening in their family life. But just as we, each one of us, just as a school teacher, even, they may have that student one hour, two hours, three hours, five hours, whatever, how many hours in a day.

It doesn't take all day to be with a student. It just takes a moment of pure consciousness to be that light where that student can then just basically transform. They will remember that time.

We all can go back probably in our memories and think of somebody who has been there for us no matter how small, in a way, short of time that it's been. But we, the older generation, the middle generation, and the younger generation, we're here to awaken, to unfold, to manifest a new earth, to be present, to let go of that egoic form and that identification with form so that we can live and breathe, be conscious.

[Speaker 12] (7:43:52 - 7:44:07)

So these youths may be the next leaders of our country, of the various countries that are around. And so shall it be.

[Speaker 4] (7:44:10 - 7:50:13)

But will they live and be a leader, be the vessel in which consciousness can use their speech, use their mind, use their bodies in the sense of the creating and living, bringing together a global peace. Now, we don't know what that requires, whether that means we go deeper into, as a collective world, deeper into, well, deeper into suffering, deeper into the fall of or the end of a, maybe of a civilization. We don't know that.

We don't know what's going to happen, but we do know. And I know that life comes around. So it may be take five, 10 steps back, but it'll come back around.

And we are, that's the evolution of human consciousness is that we are evolving. So, and what we do, what can we do, but be present, but accepting what is in this moment. And maybe there's a lot, and there's a lot of challenges that is happening in this world at this moment, but we can go deeper into that space consciousness so we can be that frequency holder.

And from that space of being that frequency holder, we begin to learn and accept the spiritual laws of just accepting, allowing this moment to be as it is. And know that there may be some challenging times and there will be challenging times for youths. I think anybody who is going to be, go into a leadership role is challenged and they will be challenged, but we keep coming back to being present, to connect with that consciousness.

And since that consciousness is the one consciousness, we as the individual human beings are holding that frequency so it's all just one, one consciousness manifesting in all these various forms, whether it's good, bad, for in the world of form, there are opposites. So there's going to be good, there's going to be bad, there's going to be happy, there's going to be sad. There's going to be good times and bad times, but within those times can then consciousness come through and a shift begins to happen.

Something will happen. And we know if you go within, you know that the shift that is happening is happening in, if we can say the world of form, that it is transforming this world as we know it. And this is what is needed, is just for all of us together, to be that frequency holder.

So speaking of the world, I forgot to check my time to see when I started. So I don't know whether I've gone over, I'm under, but it feels complete if we could just sit in again, silence and just allow consciousness to feel that consciousness within you. With your palms facing up.

We are one and connected and holding that space for the next generation. Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (7:50:16 - 7:50:24)

Thank you, Kim. And now, over to Eckhart.

[Speaker 2] (7:50:37 - 7:50:54)

Hello, everybody. Good to see you. Good to be with you.

It's, as the Buddhists would say, an auspicious evening.

[Speaker 1] (7:50:56 - 7:51:01)

The full moon has just risen above the treetops here.

[Speaker 2] (7:51:02 - 7:51:04)

I've been watching it.

[Speaker 1] (7:51:08 - 7:51:20)

And traditionally, those are very powerful moments in time for meditation and going within.

[Speaker 2] (7:51:21 - 7:52:42)

So it just happens that this session here coincides with the full moon. We haven't been planning it. And the moon is incredibly still, it rises.

It looked enormously big when it first rises, then it seems to get a little smaller, but it's such stillness around it. It's challenging being a human being.

[Speaker 1] (7:52:44 - 7:52:49)

It's also an incredible opportunity for the arising of consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (7:52:50 - 7:53:16)

But it is undoubtedly not easy. Humans are facing a seemingly endless succession of challenges. And challenges is already a positive term.

Some people would call it bad things happening.

[Speaker 1] (7:53:20 - 7:53:33)

When you become a little bit more conscious, you recognize that seemingly negative things that are happening, limitations arising in your life, obstacles arising, difficult situations, circumstances, people.

[Speaker 2] (7:53:35 - 7:54:16)

And then at some point you realize that those difficult situations, in whatever form they manifest, are actually an essential part of being human and an essential part, as far as the flowering of consciousness is concerned, the next shift in consciousness that we're moving into. So for young people, life is particularly challenging.

[Speaker 1] (7:54:17 - 7:54:52)

The most difficult time in my life was childhood and adolescence, and many other people find that also. When you're a child, you're born into a particular set of circumstances over which you have no control. You're completely at the mercy of whatever circumstances you're born into.

Your parents, your environment, family background, the culture you're born into, the environment, the country, all this.

[Speaker 2] (7:54:57 - 7:54:59)

And there's nothing you can do about it when you're a child.

[Speaker 1] (7:54:59 - 7:55:15)

You are seemingly the passive recipient of whatever life is throwing at you. And some humans are born into extraordinarily difficult circumstances, even as young children.

[Speaker 2] (7:55:20 - 7:55:44)

And then you reach adolescence, and then often it gets even more difficult, because adolescence, for many people, is a very disconcerting time, when you're halfway between childhood and adulthood, the time of transition.

[Speaker 1] (7:55:46 - 7:56:17)

For many adolescents, it's a time of great upheavals and unhappiness, even when the external circumstances are relatively okay. They're being challenged by an inner turmoil, in many cases. And they're completely unprepared for that, because nobody at school has prepared them for it.

As they enter adolescence, they're going to enter, probably, a time of inner turmoil, no matter what their outer circumstances are.

[Speaker 2] (7:56:22 - 7:57:04)

And sometimes, if the outer circumstances are relatively okay, the turmoil, the inner turmoil, can be even greater than if the adolescents were born into poverty, or to fight for survival every day. So whatever it is, it's not easy, and it's essential for youngsters to be prepared for, not just for adolescents, for children to be prepared for what's coming, and then adolescents to be prepared for what's coming when they grow into adults.

[Speaker 1] (7:57:07 - 8:00:57)

And what we are attempting to help with in reaching as many youngsters as possible is teaching the basics of awareness, which is the key to transcending the suffering that otherwise arises in the human mind that is inherited from generation to generation. So the most basic teachings for a young person, and it should start in childhood, is to be aware of their inner states, rather than being at the mercy of their inner states. They may be at the mercy of, until they become a little older, of their outer circumstances, but they don't need to be at the mercy of their inner states, which means emotions and thoughts.

If they could become aware, if it could be shown to a child, it's not complicated, that emotions arise, and that it is possible to be aware of these emotions instead of being totally absorbed in them, being totally taken over by them, that it is possible to stand back, so to speak, and witness the emotions. There it is. That's extremely important in adolescence when sometimes very negative and violent emotions arise, is the emotion taking you over completely, or are you able to allow the emotion to be there, but not being totally absorbed in it, not being totally identified in it, so that it doesn't make you do sometimes things that are irreversible in many cases.

So basic teaching is awareness of inner states that could start at the age of six, and a few, some individual teachers are kind of introducing that, making that part of their teaching. It has not yet entered the curriculum of many schools, maybe a few alternative

schools, but the most important curriculum at school should not be any subject, whatever it may be, mathematics, English, or whatever language, geography, whatever, it's all secondary relative to what is primary, and that is to be aware. That should be the main subject in a more enlightened subject.

We are going in that direction. So it's awareness of emotions, which could be shown by role-playing, by telling stories, all kinds of possibilities can help children to develop the ability to be aware, and the arising of awareness is the essence of spirituality. Another word for awareness is presence.

The arising of presence is the essence of all spirituality. So that, if we can make that the main teaching, everything else would then fall into place. So it would start in childhood, and then it becomes very important in adolescence when emotions do tend to arise, powerful emotions.

[Speaker 2] (8:01:01 - 8:01:12)

Also, not just awareness of emotions, but also to be aware of thoughts that arise. What are you telling yourself?

[Speaker 1] (8:01:13 - 8:02:32)

These are simple things that can be taught even to a child. It's not complicated. By telling stories, as I said, by telling stories, by acting it out, role-playing, a child can learn to become aware also of how they speak to themselves in their mind, the inner voice.

What is the voice saying? So that they don't become the voice, because if you are the voice, you've been taken over by the conditioned mind, the mind which is conditioned by your environment, by whatever circumstances you were born into, whatever your parents have done, what people have done to you, et cetera. The conditioned mind, yes, it's there.

You can't get rid of it easily, but you don't need to be totally absorbed by it, not totally identified with it. So how do you, what is your mind saying? What is it doing?

Simple things could be taught to children, and then gradually that ability grows, the ability to stay aware when difficult things happen, as they will, in every person's life.

[Speaker 2] (8:02:33 - 8:03:07)

Every person is not only facing external difficulties, but also problems arising from the workings of the human mind. And the human mind also has incredible possibilities for manifesting and creating, but there's also, built into the human mind, a deep-seated dysfunction that everybody inherits.

[Speaker 1] (8:03:07 - 8:15:54)

In some humans, it is present in a more acute form than in others, but in every human, this deep-seated dysfunction, which we could call the ego, the egoic mind, operates in one way or another in every person's life. So we have that, it's been recognized in all spiritual traditions that, yes, humans are wonderful beings, they're wonderful possibilities, they also have created amazing things, but also there is a huge downside to being human, and that is the inherited, let's call it by a more direct term, the inherited craziness of the human condition, of the human mind. So we all inherit a little bit of insanity, and sometimes a lot.

If that were not the case, the world would not be the way it is now, when you see the enormous amount of suffering, most of it created by humans. Some suffering created by natural disaster, yes, but more suffering created by humans, but what does that mean? It's created by the consciousness, the collective consciousness in humans that creates this world, and that's what you hear about when you listen or watch the news tonight, what you're going to hear is manifestations of the collective consciousness of the human mind, and it's not pleasant.

And so this needs to be shown to young people so that you'd have a wonderful start, you'd have already the power given to you of how to face the difficult life circumstances that are going to come sooner or later, sooner probably. So give children, give youngsters this gift of showing them the possibility of being aware, of being present, instead of losing themselves in their emotions and in their thoughts completely. So that's really the essence what we need to teach young people.

Traditionally, the knowledge of this has always come in much later in life, when people are beginning to suffer more and more and more, and then they just can't stand it anymore, and at some point, there's some awakening, it's not guaranteed, but at some point when humans suffer, they awaken, and for quite a while, people coming to talks and retreats have seen some percentage of young people, but it's now, the potential of young people seems to be growing now slowly. Traditionally, it's been people in the second half of life who've come because they've suffered enough so that they finally begin to awaken.

And it seems that humans need to suffer until there is the beginning of an awakening, but it doesn't have to be like that. Humanity has already suffered a lot. And I have observed two things in young people these days, seemingly contradictory.

One is a high degree of disorientation and of aimlessness and of sometimes nihilism, nothing is worth doing. Sometimes a high degree of suddenly being possessed by some ideology that you subscribe to that reduces the complexity of life to one or see single things as the, yeah, this is the answer, I have the answer for everything. So you become possessed by an ideology and then you act it out violently sometimes.

And others completely aimless or they can't stand a seemingly empty life. So they're

looking, they're going, they take drugs and so on. So that's a very negative development on the one hand, but I've also observed, and it seems almost contradictory in something, is an increasing readiness in youngsters to awaken.

They just need to hear the message, but nobody has told them. They just need to hear the message and then the shift can happen even at an early age. But the strange thing is this, the message, most youngsters have not yet been reached by this message.

And so there is, on the negative side, being young these days is very difficult. I don't want to go into it too deeply. A huge challenge is that the technology that being absorbed in the virtual dimension, the virtual world, the screens that youngsters interact with, this is a huge challenge for youngsters and a huge challenge for human consciousness.

So one would need to address that specifically. That's one of the major, if not the major challenge for young person now is how to live with this new technology, not to lose yourself in the new technology. And this technology is really an externalization of the human mind.

So the human mind has always been a problem losing yourself in your mind, which is the egoic state of consciousness and having no awareness at all, being taken over by one thought after another, one thought after another. That's always been a problem already for hundreds and thousands of years. But now you have the additional problem, this incessantly talking, active human minds that comes up, it never stops.

One damn thing after another, right? It's become now externalized to the technology. It comes at you, you interact with these screens and it never stops as a continuous input of stuff.

You're bombarded by stuff. And youngsters, many youngsters these days, the major part of their reality is not this life here, the actual life that surrounds them. The major part of their reality is a virtual world.

The virtual world has become more real to them than the real world. Humanity has never faced a challenge of that kind. It's for the first time, and it is an enormous challenge, enormous.

This is why it's so important. So it's always been important to live consciously, but now we have no choice. If we do not bring awareness in, we are going to lose ourselves completely in that the externalized mind, which is a virtual world, the virtual world can also be helpful.

We're using technology here to reach people. It can be helpful, but it needs to be used with awareness. Without awareness, without presence, it will consume you.

So it's now an absolute necessity for humans to become aware, otherwise they will be consumed, not just by their mind, they will be consumed by what they have created, the externalized mind, the virtual mind. They will be consumed by it. And this is the greatest danger for human consciousness, the greatest challenge, greater than any other challenge in the external world.

So it's so important now that only awareness can liberate us from all that. So the teaching, the main teaching, otherwise we are actually confronted with a life-threatening situation in technology. So it's not just, it's always been a challenge Traditionally, the awakening of consciousness is only, it's always been there already for thousands of years.

There've always been humans who have awakened, have been able to transcend the egoic mind and become aware, but up until recently, it's been a kind of luxury almost. It was great. Some humans were able to realize it, some many through the existing religious teachings, although religious teachings to a large extent have also become corrupted and misused by the human ego to a large extent.

But there've always been some who were able to awaken through that. But now that's not enough anymore. What we now need is an awakening on a much larger scale and the possibility is there.

When I talk to youngsters and I want to do it much more, okay, I've given talks at some universities, I've spoken at Stanford and New York University and at first I wasn't sure, at first I wondered what they're going to make of it. And I was amazed how open they were to the teaching and some said, wow, I've never heard that before. So the openness is there and we just need to create channels so that they can be reached with this message.

And the message basically, if I had to express it and define it in one single sentence, the message is that there's more to you than meets the eye. There is a possibility of accessing a deeper or higher state of consciousness. There's a dimension of consciousness in you just waiting to be discovered.

You don't have to achieve it because that means you need a lot of time to get there. The awakening is not something you need to achieve, it's something you discover. To show that to youngsters and not just conceptually but experientially, to show them the possibility, for example, of being aware of the way in which they talk to themselves in their head.

Just what are you saying to yourself? There's already an awareness or the possibility of discovery between two thoughts, there's a space.

[Speaker 2] (8:15:55 - 8:16:08)

We call it stillness. Oh, and again, everything in this world goes against that.

[Speaker 1] (8:16:09 - 8:16:27)

Every device that you have with a screen on it is trying to obscure, to prevent you from accessing the dimension of stillness because it's the opposite of stillness.

[Speaker 2] (8:16:28 - 8:16:50)

It's stuff getting in, content, stuff. Another text message, another Facebook post, another this, another this, coming from, interacting. Never a moment of, ah, and so the possibility of discovery, still.

[Speaker 1] (8:16:50 - 8:17:51)

I mean, there are a few apps, there are quite a few apps that you can get that teach you meditation, and that's good. So it can be used for a helpful purpose. It can be, most of it is in the service of unconsciousness, this technology, but it can, but a small percentage of it is actually helpful.

There are some apps that teach you how to breathe consciously, how to be aware of your breath. One of the simplest, most fundamental ways of accessing this inner dimension of stillness that transcends thought, be aware of your breathing. So you have this little app.

I tried a few on my iPhone and said, oh, that's quite good. So it goes, you can choose the duration. It says, breathe in, inhale, and then it goes, tick, tick, tick, tick, hold, exhale.

[Speaker 2] (8:17:53 - 8:18:21)

Tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, hold. Inhale, hold, exhale, hold. Well, and what happens when you follow that?

The mind becomes still. So it can be used in a constructive and helpful way.

[Speaker 1] (8:18:21 - 8:18:33)

It can be, 90% of it isn't yet, but, so we need to be, to use it skillfully with awareness.

[Speaker 2] (8:18:34 - 8:18:36)

Without awareness, it will destroy you.

[Speaker 1] (8:18:37 - 8:19:07)

With awareness, it can be a wonderful thing, this technology, and then you may have heard about the latest developments of AI, artificial intelligence. It does the most

amazing things. You can ask it to write an essay on some subject and it'll write it within five seconds.

It would take you five hours to write that. Might not be as good. It can do amazing things.

[Speaker 2] (8:19:08 - 8:19:17)

And so, quite soon, perhaps, the AI will be better at thinking than the human mind.

[Speaker 1] (8:19:22 - 8:20:19)

So that's another reason for going beyond thinking, so that, to discover a dimension in you that is actually higher and more powerful than the thought, the dimension of thinking. It's time now, because otherwise, it'll defeat you. It becomes better at thinking than you are.

So you have to rise above thinking, the way we are able to use your mind and use the technology, but are not consumed by it. You are above it, and that is presence, that is awareness. So this is a wonderful thing, but this is an incredible time we live in, when things are extremely challenging.

One could say, who knows where it's going?

[Speaker 2] (8:20:19 - 8:20:23)

It could go very, very wrong.

[Speaker 1] (8:20:24 - 8:20:55)

It could, or it could be the very, the very seemingly negative thing that we have created can be the opening into that higher dimension of consciousness that is waiting to be discovered in every human, and that's vital. It's waiting to be discovered. It's dormant in you.

[Speaker 2] (8:20:56 - 8:21:05)

And so that's, children need to grow up with that, give a child this gift.

[Speaker 1] (8:21:09 - 8:21:21)

Then the child will grow into an adult and will be able to use that, and then it will become, it will grow, it will become more powerful.

[Speaker 2] (8:21:21 - 8:21:51)

Every challenge that then this human faces will make that human more conscious

instead of drawing them back into unconsciousness. But of course, always, no matter in what way you become engaged in this, it always comes back to, you have to live it.

[Speaker 1] (8:21:52 - 8:22:03)

You have to live it every moment, and every moment is always this moment. In a way, one could say there is no every moment, there's only this moment.

[Speaker 2] (8:22:03 - 8:24:09)

It just looks like lots of moments, but it's only ever this moment, and this is the only moment where you can live state of the state of presence, and you can sense the power of presence within you, beyond the thinking mind, beyond emotional fluctuations. There's a, we can call it stillness, but it's much more than stillness, it's just a word, but let's call it stillness. Discover the stillness that is always waiting.

It just was obscured. So that is the most vital message for humanity. I want to thank all of you for participating in this, realizing its importance, and every one of you can contribute in some way, and perhaps the most important contribution, I think Aaron already pointed it out earlier, the most important contribution, of course, is your state of consciousness.

The world can only change from within.

[Speaker 1] (8:24:11 - 8:24:19)

What the world you want to create is a manifestation or an externalization of the collective consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (8:24:20 - 8:24:41)

If the collective consciousness is dysfunctional, the outer world will reflect it. So thank you for being part of this.

[Speaker 1] (8:24:43 - 8:24:45)

Nothing could be more important.

[Speaker 2] (8:24:46 - 8:25:46)

This is the purpose of your life, is to participate and embody the arising of what we could call the transcendent consciousness, the spiritual dimension, the shift, and then what arises as the book that I wrote, I guess it was written through me, a new us then arises naturally as a reflection of the collective consciousness. Thank you. Tammy, back to you.

[Speaker 3] (8:25:47 - 8:29:39)

Thank you, Eckhart. Here, as we come to a close, I just want to underscore, I've had the pleasure and privilege of watching Eckhart teach some groups of young people, and I've seen their openness, and I've seen, as Eckhart described, in many young people, they just need to hear the message and how it was lights going on so quickly, and I could see it in their eyes. And I have to say, some of the happiest experiences I've had at Eckhart Tolle Kim Ing retreats has been watching those lights go on behind the eyes of young people.

And so I want to thank all of you for being with us here as we more formally launch, moving into 2024, the New Earth Youth Initiative, as has been said a couple of different times in terms of your contribution to the Eckhart Tolle Foundation, living with presence, the alpha and omega of it all. Additionally, if you feel inspired, we would love for you to help spread the word about the Eckhart Tolle Foundation. Many people are just learning about it.

You can do this by resharing our social media posts and our newsletters. We'd also love your ideas about how Eckhart's teachings can reach different populations in creative ways. One way through book donations, if you have ideas for where we can donate Eckhart's books, you can access a request form at EckhartTolleFoundation.org.

So again, if you have ideas and you'd like to share them with us about where we can donate Eckhart's books, there's a request form on EckhartTolleFoundation.org. We'd also love your ideas for connecting us with like-minded nonprofits like the Holistic Life Foundation and the Jewel Never Broken Foundation or other ideas you might have about how we can bring the teachings of presence to diverse demographics and people who would otherwise not have access. You can write to us and you might wanna write this down, outreach at EckhartTolleFoundation.org.

Perhaps creative ideas have been emerged in you from being part of this special online event. Write to us at outreach at EckhartTolleFoundation.org. If you would feel inspired to donate to the Eckhart Tolle Foundation, I also warmly invite you to do so.

You can scroll below the player and there's a donate button there. And again, to repeat, your donations will be matched in the coming days and will support programs like our New Earth Youth Initiative and the 2024 prison teaching tour that's coming up that you'll hear more about as well. Also, finally, if it matches your inspiration, you can include the Eckhart Tolle Foundation in your estate planning and in your will.

Okay, to conclude now, Eckhart, would you be willing to lead us in some moments of connected stillness together?

[Speaker 2] (8:29:42 - 8:32:28)

Yes, Tammy, I am willing. Wonderful. So we come into the present moment so fully that

we don't need to think about it, but just sense the present moment.

The stillness, the power of stillness. Thoughts fall away, but you stay alert and awake and there's a stillness. And that stillness is a presence.

It is a presence of consciousness, the light of consciousness. And then you realize that essentially I am that. I am, you realize the essential I am-ness, I am that, that's an ancient Indian saying, Tat Tvam Azeem, I might be mispronouncing it, but I am that is the realization of your essential nature as consciousness itself.

The person is secondary. More essentially, you are consciousness. And you can sense that as an essential aliveness or not-ness, has no form.

[Speaker 12] (8:33:19 - 8:33:20)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (8:33:58 - 9:08:27)

Beautiful sunshine, but the fog is rolling in slowly. That's beautiful too. And quite often along the coast here, you get fog and sunshine at the same time.

So as the fog reaches the beach, it begins to dissolve and then you have the sun filtering through the fog, quite magical. So here we are, an interesting thing to observe while you're here especially, but the rest of your life also is where your attention is at any given time or more precisely in the present moment, which is all there is, where your attention is in the present moment and whether your attention is determined by all kinds of factors or whether you have some influence over where your attention goes. Now you've all noticed and experienced when you're walking in the street or you're sitting somewhere and suddenly there's some noise behind you or somebody shouts something or you're in a restaurant sitting and somewhere behind you, somebody drops a plate.

And usually most people would go immediately. It's an automatic thing. And these days, of course you have other, not just plates breaking, which happens relatively rarely, but you have your phones demanding your attention.

So you are having a wonderful conversation with a friend and then you suddenly hear, ping, ping, ping. You were just talking about it really connecting and suddenly your attention goes, and it's a text message. Or some other sound, which means it's an email.

And that demands your attention and people don't realize that they obey immediately that little device. It's like a plate breaking, except this happens all the time and all people shouting behind you. So your attention is being pulled out continuously.

When I first got my iPhone two years ago, then I got my first text messages, which were quite miraculous. And then often I didn't reply until the next day or two days later. And

then I was told this is not according to text message etiquette.

Text message etiquette dictates that you reply immediately. So occasionally I do that now, but even now I don't always reply immediately. And I don't even look at it immediately.

At first I did when I got the iPhone and then I realized what it was doing. And then apart from all these external things, and of course the electronic devices, they increase the demands that the external world makes upon your attention. Before you had all these electronic devices.

Yes, even then the world would make demands continuously on your attention, but not as frequent as with all these devices. And so people don't realize they are kind of, they lose their freedom of choice. And something even more all pervasive that was already there before the electronic devices came is that certain thoughts in your mind also demanding your complete attention.

A little thought comes in about something that you can't do anything about now, but you have to think about it now. And the thought says, give me your attention. So what I'm talking about here is you begin to identify with every thought that arises.

It has a pulling power. It pulls you in and it's an energy formation. Everything, a thought is an energy form.

Everything is not physical energy. It's probably halfway between physical and non-physical. And the greatest scientists, no matter what they tell you, their ego may not allow them to admit it, but if they're really honest and their ego is not huge, they will admit to you they don't, they have examined the brain for a long time, but they can't, they don't know what a thought is.

You've looked at brain chemistry and examined it and examined it, but what is a thought? They still don't know. And so we don't need to know on that level here.

You just experience what a thought is and how it pulls your attention in. And you follow it up. You follow it where it wants to take you and it leads to another associated thought and another.

And before you know it, you are dragged along by another mind stream out of the present moment into some conceptual reality, because that's what thought is. So you're drawn away into some conceptual reality, which includes a conceptual sense of self, a me, an image of me, a narrative of me. And so that is then the reality that you inhabit most of the time.

And so whether your attention is pulled by some external thing or an electronic gadget or your thoughts, it goes to all kinds of places in your head and outside and thing and

what. You actually can choose to direct your attention to something rather than being at the mercy of all kinds of factors that determine where your attention is going to go. So you can choose when you hear the bing of a text message or the bong of an email, you can choose to not give it your attention, but just remain still for three seconds.

And then you have a choice. You can give it your attention or not give it your attention. At least now you have a choice.

The same thing with when some of this shouting behind you and obviously doesn't concern you, why automatically go? If you're really present, then you can hear the noise and you don't go there. It's not necessary.

It's just somebody dropped a plate or whatever. In a restaurant, it happens all the time. So you can choose to direct your attention.

For example, right now, you can choose to direct your attention. Of course, at the moment it's in visual perception and auditory perception. In addition, you can choose to direct your attention into your right hand, which does not diminish your ability to listen and to see what's going on here.

So you can have your attention in your right hand and feel the energy as I can feel it right now. Can feel the energy in my right hand or the aliveness, which does not diminish my ability to speak or to see you. I can feel, and I can feel the left hand also.

So you can direct attention into your feet. You can direct attention to some object in this room. Any sensory perception.

You can choose to think a particular thought and then let go of the thought. What am I going to have for dinner? What are they going to serve for dinner tonight?

Thought arises. I'm feeling a little bit peckish. What's one of the, and then you can choose to let go of that thought and not to follow it and return your attention to visual and auditory perception.

And so that's it. You have a choice when you're, when you realize that you have a choice where you don't need to, and to practice with the electronic gadgets particularly, because they, the common, the consensus is that you don't have a choice. You have to immediately look and check and reply or whatever immediately.

It used to be just telephones, but the telephones had a line attached to them. So they're in a particular place. They didn't follow you around.

But even when they had telephones, people would interrupt any conversation just because the phone was ringing. And at that time, they didn't even have a caller identification. So you had to pick it up no matter who, you had no idea who was going to

call, but you had, it was ringing.

You had to pick up and give your attention to that call. Then the time came, fortunately, when there was caller IDs, at least you could look and see who is called. Do I want to talk to this person?

So the choice in directing your attention, and that is really the beginning of meditation or any meditation practice is to have some influence over where your attention goes. And usually in meditation, your attention is directed to a meditation object for a while and some people get stuck there for 20 years or the rest of their lives. The attention may go to a mantra, which really is a certain thought or certain sounds that you repeat in your head or you speak out aloud.

And so it becomes the focus for your attention and you choose to direct your attention there rather than useless thinking. Your attention becomes focused or you can have an external object of your attention, a candle flame, a flower, whatever it is, and you keep your attention there for a few minutes, 10 minutes, 15 minutes. And when it wanders away and you notice it's gone away, you choose to redirect your attention to that, the object.

of your meditation. So it's a practice, it's like a physical exercise. The muscle of choice is strengthened by realizing you can practice, you have a choice.

And then you discover you do not have to follow every thought where it wants to take you. You can drop a thought or you can recognize a thought as just another of those old thoughts, not interesting, and then it dissolves by itself. So it's not, the process is not to emphasize more and more the form of the me and the form and as God continues to build me, he is building me up, that could be the idea.

God is building me up. God, of course, you can replace with the universal intelligence, the universe, whatever you want to, whatever term you want to use. And yet I know from inner realization that it's not really how it works.

It's becoming diminished as a person and then something else shines through that has nothing to do with the form of the person. But the form of the person was necessary, like the seed has to break open and that was necessary, but the seed does not find its purpose, the purpose for its existence is not to become a better seed or to look better as a seed, but to break open and no longer being a seed. And then these amazing things come out of the tiniest seeds.

I, in a botanical garden, I bought in a little, they were selling a little paper bag seeds for trees and then I planted some in pots and I bought, there were like probably 80 or 100 tiniest seeds, you can hardly see the single seeds and they became, it said, this is the sequoia tree or something like, or it becomes a gigantic, it can live for 2,000 years. It

comes out of something you can hardly see. But if the seed had a self-image of being a seed and were persistent in remaining a seed and stubborn and insisting, no, I'm seed and I want to be a better seed, then it wouldn't happen.

The whole miracle would not unfold. And there may be seeds who refuse to give way and break open. When you hold things down, often after a while, an explosion happens.

It's like a boiling kettle. You can't hold it for that long and then you have some kind of rationalization in your mind, you'll do it anyway. The mind will give you a reason.

Certain actions take place, you do things, you know they're not the optimal things to do but you can't help it. It's something acts through you. There seems to be some power there that makes you do things that you know are not right or not good for you and yet you can't stop it.

That seems to be the case. And that, of course, is often the case with people who are, with you it might be many different areas of your life but this is also the case with addictions. For example, people who are addicted to a certain substance or who are addicted to eating too much or drinking.

There's something that overpowers them in you that seems to obscure the awareness or the awareness is pushed to the side and this thing, this powerful thing does it anyway. And again, my answer is a little bit similar to what I said to the first questioner tonight. The power of presence needs to grow in you so that it is strong enough not to, it's not willpower because willpower is not the best way of dealing with these things but it's what I'm talking about could sometimes be confused with willpower but willpower includes the application of a force to hold something down.

Let's say if your addiction is to alcohol have a, to indulge in intoxicating beverages, in other words, booze is the British word, then, and you can feel it, it comes on, there it comes. You know the bottles are there, there they are and you feel you have to go there and you have to reach out and you have to pour yourself a drink. Now, when you're not aware at all, you don't even know what you're doing, you're so unconscious that you're already holding the drink and you're drinking, then at that point, you don't even know that you're drinking.

The same with food, I've spoken to people who have had addictions to food, they often say they wake up when they're already, they've already eaten in the middle of the night, they've already unconsciously gone to the fridge, taken out the chocolate cake and they're already halfway through the chocolate cake and suddenly they're like, what am I doing? But, so awareness comes in at a very late point. Willpower would be to hold an urge down, let's say, I'll go, they have the pool or even what the example you gave, you want to turn on the TV and you know it's not right because I'm not here for that and he actually told us not to do it.

And I, what I can't do, I can't help it, I have to go, I can't, I can't. Now, willpower, you would say, I'm going to hold this down, I'm not going to do it. And I can feel the urge, but you're holding it down.

When you hold things down, often after a while, an explosion happens, it's like a boiling kettle. You can't hold it for that long and then you have some kind of rationalization in your mind, why, it's, you'll do it anyway. The mind will give you a reason.

I spoke to a man who was addicted to food and he was, his body was very unhealthy, he was extremely dangerously overweight. Unfortunately, he's passed away, but he was a wonderful man and he talked to me and often, before he goes to the, to indulge in excessive eating, he would, his mind would say something like, you've had a rough day, you really deserve a treat. It explains why it's the right thing.

I'm not going to do it for much longer, but just today I need, I really need a treat. Life is not, hasn't been treating me, but it's the only pleasure I have, what should I do, it's all I have, there's no other pleasure in my life. Okay, go to the fridge.

Listen, I attempted to be able to show him that this thought is a deception and I had a little bit of success, but unfortunately it was too late to save him. Well, he is no longer in the body, but that's okay. He's the essence of never, he probably reincarnates now into the opposite, perhaps, in order to learn a lesson.

Again, what I said to the first questioner, to practice presence power when you're not particularly tempted by anything and you're just in your room, there's no particular temptation, go into the body, feel the inner body, be aware, be present. When you sense perception, I recommended that practice, sense perception, feel the presence pervading every cell in your body, the inner body awareness. And so that there's enough presence when this impulse comes, you use it as, don't say go away or something like that because it won't go away, it'll do it anyway.

The impulse comes, whatever it may be, and you observe, you realize it's not a good thing that it wants you to do. And if there's enough awareness, you use it as every time an impulse of that kind comes, this is your special spiritual practice. So instead of wanting to get rid of it, welcome when an impulse of that kind comes and see that this is a special spiritual practice specially designed for you, of course it is.

And so how do you transform this into spiritual practice? First, you realize this is an opportunity for practicing. And the first thing you could do is you practice delaying, obeying the impulse, not obeying it immediately, but delaying it.

And you observe them. Let's say when you wanted to go to the TV and turn this thing on, or you feel the impulse, or say, okay, here's my next spiritual practice. I'm now going to delay the turning on of this show on TV for three minutes.

And during those three minutes, you observe this, the impulse in you, you observe, it has, it's an energy form, and you observe it, oh, there you are. There you are, hmm, do you feel it? It's like a little gremlin or something.

It's like a little gremlin. And so this time gap can be a very useful first practice, that you introduce a time gap before you give in. You're not saying, I'm not going to give in.

No, you say, three minutes. During those three minutes, I'm going to observe you. And you shine the light of consciousness, the light of awareness on this impulse, which is an energy form.

And it can be an energy form that is in you as a kind of emotion. It can also dangerously invade your mind and make you, the explanation I gave just now with this friend of mine, the thought comes into your head that explains why you should give in to this impulse, that it can happen easily. And there too, you need to be present enough, sufficiently aware, so that you do not believe in every thought, especially those kinds of thoughts.

You don't believe in every thought that comes into your head. You observe the thought because the thought is part of it. And even to the thought, you say, oh, there you are.

There's a thought, and there's a feeling behind the thought. And you set aside three minutes. During those three minutes, you observe that, isn't that interesting?

Wonderful spiritual practice. And while you observe, you grow in consciousness. You apply consciousness to it.

Only three minutes, three minutes. And then after the three minutes, see how you feel. It may have dissolved, but probably not yet.

It's still there. And then you can see, can I do another two or three minutes? Am I strong enough for that?

Is my awareness strong enough? And yes, it is. Don't believe you might, oh, stop this nonsense.

Do it anyway. And so you, and then you achieve five or six minutes of, and then what happens after that, we don't know. It is possible that the impulse has receded, gone back to a dormant state, and you're suddenly, you don't have to do it.

It's also possible that the impulse is still there, and you cannot, after five minutes, there's not enough awareness left, and you finally have to go and do it. But at least the five-minute interval, the time gap was very important. And when anything like that happens, you always introduce a time gap for your spiritual practice, during which you do not hold it down, but you observe it.

So you don't push it down. You observe, oh, there you are. So if it's a gremlin, you don't,

you don't say, hold you down.

Ah. There's a gremlin. You look at it.

There it is. Oh. Now, the interesting thing, when you apply awareness to something, you shine the light of consciousness on it, the possibility of transformation is also there.

It arises as you shine the light of consciousness on it. This is the famous example from fairy stories and so on. The frog, you don't kill the frog, or do something with it.

You kiss the frog, and the moment you kiss the frog, it turns into the prince. And so the frog stands for, and this is like mythology. There's some wisdom embedded in these fairy stories, which, by the way, were not, many of them were not created by the people who wrote them.

They were already orally transmitted over long periods of time. So they are mythologies that often contain a lot of wisdom. And there's certainly a lot of wisdom in kissing the frog, which then turns into something beautiful.

So there's something ugly, but you give it, you kind of, you give it an acceptance and love. You look at it, and then it, transformation happens. So that is the spiritual practice.

And after a while, you will find that initially, perhaps after the time gap, you still do it. But then gradually, this time gap gets longer, and then you may observe that the energy behind the impulse weakens, and it subsides until next time. But gradually, it weakens, and all these self-sabotage mechanisms then begin to gradually disappear if you apply the awareness to it, observe them.

There it is. So think of the frog. These are all the frogs and whatever they are, gremlins, frogs, that live in you as energy fields.

And the energies are trapped there. They are not in themselves bad. They are trapped.

Like the pain body is an energy that is emotional energy that's trapped. When the pain body dissolves, it's transformed into presence. It's like a fire.

You put a log into a fire, or it's consumed and transmuted, perhaps is the word. It's transmuted into presence. And here we have, again, the famous example.

In Middle Ages, certain philosophers were very interested in alchemy. Alchemy was supposed to be the transformation of base metal into gold through a chemical process of transformation. But the true meaning behind alchemy was the transformation of human consciousness.

And they have many images and so on. They could not speak and write about this openly because they would have been executed by the church at the time. So they had

to hide all these symbols as if it were to do the transformation of base metal into gold, of something that is, first of all, not very desirable into something wonderful.

And that's the alchemical process of transmutation, which really is something in the human psyche. There's an entire long treatise written by Carl Jung, the psychologist, on alchemy with countless illustrations and just fascinating things. But it's all, it's the transformation of something undesirable initially into awareness or into consciousness.

And this is, so you're lucky to have that tailor-designed spiritual practice for you. That makes a difference if you can reach people in their own language. And people were grateful that I made this effort.

Normally, I'm not into efforting at all. And...

[Speaker 8] (9:08:27 - 9:13:01)

Hi, Eckhart. My name is Baba. And I started listening to you, I think a year ago during the pandemic.

Thanks a lot to my partner who introduced me to you. I have a three-dimensional question for you, sir. As a technologist, I come from this experience of creating virtual worlds, and I'd say there's some good news.

The good news there, both as a producer and a consumer, is there's a lot of suffering there. And as we always say, suffering is the foundation to consciousness, so hopefully we'll find a solution there. On a serious note, the three-dimensional question I have for you is, in regards to language, how is the understanding of multiple languages ...

I don't know if you've addressed this in the past, but just listening to you speak, since you have a grasp or a decent grasp of multiple languages, how has your understanding of multiple languages enabled you to get access to wisdom in the conscious dimension and communicate that in accessible ways? So that's the first one. Then the second one is pushing, wanting to explore your mind around digital media.

So I don't know whether you've experienced digital media or whether you spend much time on there, but if you were to explore your mind and talk about how you would design social media in conscious ways, what would you recommend there? Because I literally quit my job to leave in my car to explore some of these ideas. Because yeah, I think, as the pandemic showed me, it's important we solve this problem and exploring your mind would give me some insights.

Then the final one is the power of now, and it's ... I come from a different community whereby thoughts like yours was inaccessible to me, and I feel like it was a language barrier, and I would like to work with you and your team to help make the power of now accessible in major African languages, because it has really, in my own personal journey,

first of all, being able to ... I've grown up speaking English, and being able to access your perspective.

I grew up Christian, but being able to access your perspective opened my mind to another dimension, and I was able to heal my deep, like Kim says, laundry. There's a bunch of laundry I was able to heal, but after healing my laundry, I came to the realization that, okay, there are a bunch of these amazing things I want to communicate with my parents, but I really can't, because I speak English to them. English is not their first language.

It's like, speaking of unconsciousness, slavery and colonization, it's like a second or third language for them, and so there are some things that are not accessible, but the weird thing is I started learning my native language, and there's some weird thing that started going on. It's like, the same thoughts you were saying is actually accessible in other languages that already exist, and I'm like, oh, my God, and I started speaking my language to my parents, and it's bringing so much peace to them, and it's like, what you're saying is actually true. Ancient wisdom and ancient civilization, those things are real, so I would love to work with you and your team to make this accessible, so please, languages, digital media, and power.

[Speaker 1] (9:13:10 - 9:13:30)

Thank you. Wonderful proposal, and that will help perhaps millions of people. However, I must confess that I have forgotten your first question.

[Speaker 8] (9:13:35 - 9:13:49)

Your understanding of several languages, does that help in accessing wisdom from the conscious dimension, and does that help in communicating that in accessible ways? Right.

[Speaker 1] (9:13:49 - 9:21:32)

Well, just, when was it, three weeks ago, we had a retreat in Mexico, and for the first time ever, I wanted to challenge myself, and I decided to do the entire retreat in Spanish, and that was, I learned Spanish a long time ago, over half a century ago, and haven't used it very much since, reading, occasionally reading a book, and I experienced the, at first, it was very hard for my mind to find the words that, there's an intuition that comes, before you speak, it's very hard to describe, before language happens, you already know what wants to be said, and at a non-verbal level, and then, this knowing what wants to be said, which is a non-conceptual knowing, then it gets translated into concepts and words, and with a, in English, they say, your, your, your language is rusty, when you haven't used the language for a long time, you say, it's rusty, and it's, that's how I experienced it, the, the impulse came to say something, and sometimes, the flow

was there, it was fine, and then, so, can't find the right word, immediately, the mind has to work overtime to find an equivalent or similar word, and it slows you down a bit, but that was fine, so, I was able to reach, and after a couple of days, the flow came back, and it went much more easily, quite enjoyable, reaching people in their own language, that makes a difference, if you can reach people in their own language, rather than have it translated into their language, this is why I wanted to do it, so, I was able to, and people were grateful that I made this effort, normally, I'm not into efforting at all, but, it, I made an effort to speak Spanish, and it, it worked, and that was good, similar thing in Germany, years ago, I, so out of touch with the German language, that I spoke as a child, and I said, I cannot possibly, that was 20 years ago, I said, I cannot possibly give a talk in German, it's just, the words are not there anymore, and, at the first event, I had a translator, I spoke English, and the translator interpreted it into German, it didn't feel quite right, and a few times, I knew the translator wasn't correct, but I couldn't, but I couldn't say anything, and at the second talk, the organizer said, why don't you tell, tell your, just say a few words in German, and explain to them why you are not going to speak German, and that, that's a good idea, so I started, and I talked, the reason why I'm not going to speak in German, I said in German, the reason why I cannot speak in German to you, because I haven't used the language in 60 years, or whatever, and so, and then, I continued on, and talked, and talked, and 15 minutes later, I said, oh, I'm still speaking German, and then, they continued, translation was unnecessary, the flow was there, it was a miracle, and so, after that, I've always, whenever I go to Germany, Switzerland, I speak in German now, that's good, but the language is a strange thing, it's of course, it's an, it's an abstraction, language, I use language to teach, and the, the words that one uses were in spiritual discourse, the, the words have a different function from the function that words have in ordinary discourse, in spiritual discourse, the, the words are, are not the thing, they are all, they only point to the thing, they, all the words are pointers to something that is beyond words, so I'm using words in order to point something that is beyond the words, even when I say stillness, the word stillness isn't stillness, so it's a, it's a pointer, when I say to, to, to the awakening, spiritual awakening, presence, whatever it may be, they're all, they're all just pointers, they're not, not something to be believed in, it's not, you cannot learn the terminology of spirituality, and then believe, because you have mastered the words that are used in a spiritual teaching, then you have mastered the spiritual teaching, in ordinary subjects, this is how it works, you learn, you learn the words, and in exams, you regurgitate what you have learned, you write it all down, and you pass your exam, and so, to learn the words is, you become proficient in spiritual discourse, if you learn the words, you might become proficient in spiritual discourse, but it hasn't done anything to your state of consciousness, there are actually people around these days, who, who give talks, spiritual talks, I've seen a few on YouTube, who have mastered the spiritual discourse, especially in the area of what in, in India, India is called Advaita, Advaita Vedanta, people who have mastered the terminology of Advaita, and they can beautifully explain it, whatever you say to them is, yeah, that's obviously, it's all delusion, of course, it's all totally, it's all, everything is

denied, it's very easy to, to make sense, apparently, but it doesn't make sense at all, and you can see it hasn't done anything to the state of consciousness, but they have mastered the terminology, so the language, language has a different function in spiritual discourse, and so that's, I don't know whether that has anything to do with the answer to your question, but that's what, that's what came to me, when you talk to your parents, did you talk to your parents, do you speak English to your parents?

[Speaker 8] (9:21:33 - 9:22:15)

Growing up I did, but I always felt they didn't really understand me, but when I started like, because it's the same thing you're saying, so, because I'm still not fluent in my native language, so I go through the exact same process, there's a pause, you're searching for the word, and then the word just flows through you, and there's a silence from them, to show that they, like, in English, it's like a debate, the conversation feels like a debate, but when I speak in their language, there's a silence, a pause, and an acknowledgement, and a, hmm.

[Speaker 1] (9:22:16 - 9:24:03)

That's good, very good, that's wonderful, because this is means, because you haven't quite mastered the language, the communication is not totally obscured by concepts, there are gaps in the concepts, and this is why you can actually communicate better that way, although you are not proficient at the language, that's actually a plus, especially when you communicate something even remotely connected to spirituality, that's a, it's a great, you're lucky, that, I don't know whether, Kim has mentioned to you, it reminds me of Kim's, I don't think it's a secret, she has spoken about it before, Kim has a very good relationship with her mother, her mother is 99 years old, still very active mind, very, also physically good, but Kim as a child, because she was a minority in her, at school, at that time there were very few Asian people, she decided when she was six or so, or seven, she didn't want to speak Chinese anymore, not speaking Chinese, because she did, she wanted to fit in with the others, so she refused to speak Chinese, so she lost most of her Chinese completely, as a result now, communication with her mother is virtually impossible, except for very elementary things, and her relationship is wonderful, no problem arises ever, so that's a big, a big plus, and yours is not quite as extreme, but it's similar.

[Speaker 8] (9:24:08 - 9:24:23)

So, exploring your mind, do you have thoughts on how social media, digital media, can result in more consciousness? I think this is going to help technologists like me design things for the next generation.

[Speaker 1] (9:24:23 - 9:38:59)

Well, I am not an expert on, I'm not only not an expert, I am computer, almost computer illiterate, but I'm observing things, I know how these things function, how they work, I don't have a creative solution as such, I do know that a few things that appear in the virtual world are actually helpful, there are apps that can teach you to meditate or to breathe consciously, to bring you back into the present moment, also there are talks by Eckhart on YouTube, I was, not long ago I was going for a walk, and you know that people have different conceptual identities, one of my conceptual identities is I'm a writer, when people ask me, I usually say I'm a writer, or if I don't want any further questions from them I'll say I'm retired, which is not a lie because I've been retired for many decades, in a deeper sense, so I'm a spiritual teacher, I rarely say I'm a spiritual teacher because I'm not a spiritual teacher except in the moment when spiritual teaching happens, I don't carry around with me a conceptual identity in my head, I am a spiritual teacher.

I'm an author, I suppose, okay, anyway, I was walking, a young man was coming with his partner, opposite direction, and the man stopped and he looked at me and said, I know you from somewhere, what's your name? I said, Eckhart, oh, I watch you, I read you on YouTube all the time, and then he said to his girlfriend, look, this guy is a famous YouTuber. And then I realised I have a new identity now.

So sometimes the virtual world is used for good purposes, this is not the only example, of course, but there is an inherent danger in the medium itself, it's hard to describe, even a simple thing, when I occasionally read, I love books, the physical presence of books, but sometimes when I travel, I have things on my iPad or virtual books, because books are heavy otherwise, it is not quite the same to have the experience of reading on a screen as to have the experience of a book.

I find it hard to describe what the difference is, it's almost as if I was leaking energy when I'm engaging with a screen, I have sometimes the feeling there's an energy leakage, that energy pours out, it's kind of, the screen sucks it out, and perhaps to some extent this happens to everybody, because the energy is directed onto that screen, and energy, attention is energy, so there's an outflow of attention onto there, and so I don't know what the screen does with it, here we have a nice idea for a science fiction movie, that the screens are sucking up human energy, it's the Matrix. I don't know if I finished, probably not. The, somehow to, nobody can control what people put out there, there's nothing you can do about that, if people are very unconscious, what they communicate will reflect their state of unconsciousness, so there is not much you can do, to censor people becomes problematic, although obviously there are already laws against threats of physical violence or slander and things like that, then to, in an ideal world one would say, oh, let's only allow polite and nice messages to come through, anything other, we need to censor, that would not be the right way to go, but I have no solution except to encourage you to apply your presence that is already there, and apply it so that you have creative insights into what is possible, use the presence instead of looking to me

for an answer, because it appears that I don't have one, instead of looking to me for an answer, look to, go into that stillness, that presence, and see what arises, because creative solutions, creative answers come from there, so trust yourself, not the personal superficial self, but trust in the depth of your being, where intuition resides, the source of all creativity, become present, become still, direct your attention, have a question, what do you want, a creative answer to allow the virtual world to become a helpful tool in the development of human consciousness, or whatever your purpose is to direct it, and then you become still, you ask the question, the question is, you let go of the question, it drops into the stillness, this applies to any creative solution that you may need, you ask a question, and then you become still, and perhaps not immediately, perhaps after several days, weeks, or months, an answer arises, and repeat that process several times, ask a question, so you focus, and then be happy with not having an answer, allow the answer to come up, so what you're asking, the question you're asking me, is what you should be asking yourself, you will find a creative solution to that, I can sense that that will happen, and the African languages, reaching people in their own African languages is a wonderful idea, so please connect with us, so that we can pursue that.

Becoming aware of your own presence, becoming aware of yourself as presence, rather than being aware of yourself as a person, with a history, when you sense your own presence, which is the presence of yourself as consciousness, you don't have a history, there's no history in presence, and what is history, other than thought, thinking, so our meditation, the essence of our meditation, is the shift, to go through that shift, from thinking to presence, the usual human state is identification with thinking, and you only know yourself as a thought-based entity or being, in other words, you're always aware of yourself as something or somebody, and you're aware of other things that arise in your consciousness, but you're never aware of awareness itself in the normal state, you're never aware of yourself as awareness, never is perhaps very slightly exaggerated, there may be moments when you are aware of yourself as presence, but in most cases, people who don't know what that is, misinterpret it, and it's confused with something else, you could be climbing a mountain, and you stand at the mountaintop, but the sun is just setting, and the exertion of climbing, and this moment of incredible beauty stops your mind, and then you go, wow, and you may think it's caused by the beauty, but the joy and the intense aliveness and the peace, the alive peace that you sense, isn't really caused by the sunset, or caused by your surroundings, even by the activity of climbing, but that which had obscured that awareness is suddenly removed, the continuous stream of thinking, and then what is underneath is the vastness of formless consciousness, that is suddenly there, and that gives you that sense of intense aliveness, peaceful, alive presence. In India, satchitananda it's called, which means being, consciousness, bliss, another word for bliss would be joy, intense aliveness, being, consciousness, bliss, meaning satchitananda, being, satchitananda, being, consciousness, bliss, you string it together, it's one word, because it's a single thing or a single no thing, you're aware of being, you're aware of consciousness, but not in a

duality, when I talk about it, it becomes duality, it says, I am aware of consciousness, but that's not really how it is, language operates within the realm of duality, but this isn't the realization of non-duality, it's only when you talk about it, it becomes duality again, as if you were aware of something, no, you are aware of the awareness, the awareness becomes self-aware, the consciousness becomes self-aware, there's no object, there's only subject. We are here to give up waiting as a state of mind, normal state of mind, and that there's another state of mind, or rather, no mind, in which you're not waiting for the next moment, that's why we're here, to discover that state of no mind, awareness, you could call it,

[Speaker 2] (9:39:02 - 9:39:03)

or deepen it,

[Speaker 1] (9:39:12 - 9:39:30)

we are not here to add anything to what we know, we know enough, enough to have come here,

[Speaker 2] (9:39:50 - 9:39:52)

so we are here to discover

[Speaker 1] (9:39:58 - 9:41:23)

that thinking is not the only possible state for humans, and not the highest state, and as we go through the shift from thinking to awareness, thinking, first of all, loses its predominant place in our lives, and as a side product of losing its predominant place in our lives, it actually becomes more effective, thinking becomes more effective, less destructive, not destructive anymore, so no answer here is going to come if you're looking for the answer on the level of thinking, or on the level of adding something to your mind, the answer lies in stepping beyond thinking,

[Speaker 2] (9:41:30 - 9:41:42)

simply by allowing what is, which is now,

[Speaker 1] (9:41:44 - 9:41:51)

allowing what is to be as it is,

[Speaker 2] (9:41:54 - 9:41:55)

because it is,

[Speaker 1] (9:41:58 - 9:43:50)

and you discover that the compulsion to think is to a large extent connected with not being willing to allow what is to be as it is now, because there's a little mind-made entity consists of thinking and accumulated thought patterns that thrives on resistance to what is, and on reactivity, and is always looking for the next thing to get a little bit bigger, it's never quite enough, this little me is never quite enough, most of you have come here because there is at work within you something that goes far beyond the personal, something that is an expression of the evolutionary impulse of the universe, on the surface level it looks as if a person had chosen to come here, but it is also possible that one or two have come here expecting something they're not going to get, what's that? More, more experiences, more knowledge,

[Speaker 2] (9:43:55 - 9:43:58)

more beliefs, more opinions,

[Speaker 1] (9:44:09 - 9:45:48)

so if there are one or two who have come here expecting more, then they might want to leave, as soon as they discover there's no more, or they suddenly after, if they can endure the discomfort that arises when the need for more is not met, and don't run away immediately, they can endure the discomfort, they may be able to break through that mind pattern, please pay attention not just to the words, but to the silent spaces between the words, that's where the shift happens, in that alertness that is required to acknowledge or to listen to that dimension of stillness that underlies the words and is in between the words, that is why we're here, and that's not an adding to, because that is discovering something that's already there, but had been ignored, just as I was coming here this beautiful night, in this incredibly beautiful place, I took off my shoes and I looked up at the sky, clear sky,

[Speaker 2] (9:45:49 - 9:45:55)

stars, brilliant points of light,

[Speaker 1] (9:45:58 - 9:47:54)

and there is something when you look up there, there's something that is so easily overlooked, but should be obvious to anybody who looks up there, it can tell you something about the nature of the universe, when you look up, what do you see?

You see little points of light, you see basically there are two dimensions there, objects, celestial objects, suns, planets, the moon, galaxies, billions, trillions, so there are celestial objects, things, objects in space, and there's space, the universe consists of things, you can look, it's so obvious, there are things in space, and there's the vastness of space, the things are that which is manifested, but when you look up there, what produces the feeling of awe, of the feeling of infinity, is the vastness of space, the depths

of it which is inconceivable,

[Speaker 2] (9:48:00 - 9:48:01)

has no end,

[Speaker 1] (9:48:04 - 9:49:55)

that is such that even our neighboring galaxy, our next door neighbor in terms of galactic neighbors, the Andromeda galaxy, if you traveled at the speed of light, which is very fast, 300,000 kilometers per second, which is the distance from here to the moon in one second, is the speed of light, if you traveled at the speed of light to our neighboring galaxy, and there are billions of galaxies, the closest one to us, it would take you 2.3 million years to reach it, at the speed of light, 2.3 million years, such is the depths, the vastness of space, and what is out there, applies also the so-called external universe, applies also to the so-called inner universe, there is also within you, things, let's keep it simple, things, and space, in your life, now, things, it is obvious that your life is surrounded by things, there are many things in your life, physical things, in many people's lives there are so many physical things to deal with,

[Speaker 2] (9:49:56 - 9:50:00)

that they are constantly running after the next physical thing that they need.

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[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 2:18:19)

Need to deal with, they may have a house, they may have this and this, and everything demands attention. Their entire attention is absorbed by the things that surround them. And it's just at the moment, just talking about physical things.

This is needed and that's needed and that, and then there's the belief that there are not enough physical things yet. I need some more because I don't feel quite complete yet. And then there are other things in a wider sense, all the things that make up your life situation, conditions of your life, events, things are constantly happening and constantly new things pop up.

Oh, thanks. So it's not just physical things, all kinds of things make up your life situation, what people call my life. But I say, it's only your life situation.

They don't know what their life is. Their life situation consists of an accumulation of events, things happening, situations, demanding attention, everything saying, this is important, give me attention. So there's the pull of things, not just physical things, there's a pull of situations of demanding it.

So it's the world, the world, your world, consisting of things that need to be dealt with. And it's never quite enough time to deal with it all. And when you've dealt with one thing here, there's three more things dropped up there.

And so that's, people go through life with that pull into the world of things, doesn't leave you alone for long. And on a primordial level, on a basic primordial level, all the world of things starts with thoughts. Because all the things, whether they are physical or events or situations in your life, really only exist in you as thought.

Nobody knows whether actually there's anything out there at all. Because what reaches you, they say sense perception happens, visual, auditory, and so on, is translated into nerve impulses that reach the brain. And it's then those impulses are decoded.

And then some kind of world picture emerges. Oh, this is what's going on. Nobody actually knows what's out there beyond the impulses that are being received and decoded.

And so some kind of world picture is put together so that some philosophers have even doubted that there's anything out there at all. And it could just be a dream. And there are certain indications that it is a dream.

It's in the nature of dreams to be fleeting, to evaporate very quickly. It's in the nature of situations in your life, whatever condition, any situation, everything is fairly fleeting. It's

there, one moment, it has gone the next.

Where was yesterday? What happened yesterday? When you first wake up in the morning, you might think, was it a dream or did it happen?

And then you meet some other people who agree that it did happen. But it could be that these other people are part of your dream. So all the things that seem to be out there, the world of things is really an inner phenomenon.

It's to do with mind, it's to do with thought. We don't need to take any position here. We don't need to say, yes, the external world exists or no, the external world does not exist.

Very often, the answer is both or neither. The answer is not yes or no. From one perspective, it's yes.

From another perspective, no. So most people's life is filled up with things, which on the most basic level means thoughts, mind movement. One could say objects that appear in your consciousness, one after the other.

And sometimes they are battling for this. One thought, another thought. So people's lives are crammed full with that mind stuff.

And you can see it in people's faces, the way they lead their lives, the way they interact with others. What you can see is very often the absence of space. Well, it can't be absent, but they don't know it's there anymore.

All they know is things that appear, that any sense of space is gone. And so they experience their life as a continuous dream of, I'm quoting Churchill again, as I love to do, who defined history as one damn thing after another. Oh.

And if you ask many people about their personal lives, they might give you the same answer. How has your life been up to this point? One damn thing after another.

And the next damn thing comes just in the moment when you thought now you've made it. Success at last, recognition. Everybody loves me.

And then everybody wants something from you. Now, what remains? You can't say what remains, but you know what remains directly.

A sense of presence cannot be defined. A sense of beingness. This is the most beautiful thing.

These moments without thought, but it's not loss of consciousness. It's loss of thinking when it's not needed because thinking is useful for many things. And destructive for many other things.

And so you discover when it's useful and you let go of it when it's destructive, when it destroys your enjoyment of life, your enjoyment of the present moment, your ability to just be, to acknowledge the aliveness of things around you, to acknowledge the present moment, to have some gratitude for the richness of life and all life around you. All this you lose when you're continuously absorbed only in thinking. What remains then when thinking subsides, awareness remains or presence, whatever you want to call it.

In religious traditions, in mystical Christianity, it's called the Christ within. In some Buddhist schools, it is called your Buddha nature. These are just names to talk about it.

That's what remains when thinking subsides and there's only a sense of spacious presence like now. And in that spacious presence, strange thing is you don't know anything anymore, of course, because there's no concepts anymore in your mind. You don't know anything on the level of concepts.

And yet that is the essence of who you are, this beingness or presence. So you don't know yourself anymore as an object, which is when you live through the ego, then you become an object to yourself and your consciousness and you have a relationship with yourself. You can say, I love myself, which is better than hating yourself, but you still have a relationship with yourself.

You're not yourself. You have a relationship with yourself. It's better to love yourself and to hate yourself, true, but you still have a relationship with yourself.

There's two, I love myself, I'm two. But when you, with the realization of being, you are yourself. And so you cannot know yourself as an object of knowledge, but you can know yourself as the eternal subject of all knowing.

And that's where wisdom arises. This is the source of all real knowing. And the source of all true intelligence is in this non-conceptual vast intelligence, which is the intelligence of consciousness itself, which is one with who you are.

And then when you can link into that, you become inspired. It can inspire your mind. Your mind can create when it's linked into that.

You have creative thoughts. You have creative input, ideas. You take action that is wise rather than, or as the Buddhists say, skillful, skillful, wise action rather than unconscious action that produces more suffering for yourself and others.

Perpetuates karma. So this realm of true intelligence is the non-conceptual realm. Yes, you need concepts and you can use concepts, but don't lose yourself in concepts.

Don't look for yourself in concepts and then have a narrative in your mind that says, this is who I am. It's just a story of one concept linked with others' concepts. The story of yourself is not essentially who you are.

It's a story versus this limited entity, the person. It's a surface phenomenon. It's not who you are, but it's the realization of who you are.

That's the awakening. But it's not conceptual. So look for the cessation of thought.

Look for it in little moments, like now. Whenever you look at something natural, the sky, a tree, the ocean, any plant or flower or animal, don't label it. Just be alert and present and perceive it.

And as I said before, when you go into anything natural, when you go into nature, you can then sense something that is almost awe-inspiring. I'm not romanticizing nature. I also, of course, nature can also kill you, but there is something there that is holy or sacred.

And humans have to find that urgently because then they are not going to destroy nature anymore. Ultimately, humans have been destroying nature for some time because they have lost the ability to sense what's there. And then you can cut down.

There are old forests, some are still here in Canada and other parts of the world. There are forests that have been there with gigantic trees that have been there for thousands of years, thousands of years. They are sacred spaces.

And, but if humans cannot sense it anymore, then all they see is possible profit. What can we do with it? What can we do with it?

They look at the whole world in terms of doing, what I can, what can I do with it? Because they have lost sense of being. It's a terrible loss.

So, but you've also lost it with reference to yourself. You can't sense your own being. That's why you cannot sense the forest.

You can't sense your own holiness. And that's why you cannot sense the holiness of the forest or the sky or the ocean. So it's not impossibly difficult.

What I am suggesting is the most important task in your life, which has become particularly almost one could say urgent at the present time. This is a task of realizing the transcendent dimension to who you are by the simple, very simply by realizing that you do not have to think all the time. That there's always a possibility in yourself.

It's just waiting to be discovered. You are waiting to be discovered, so to speak. That dimension is always there.

The moment thinking subsides, you feel that stillness. It's another word you can use. There's a stillness.

I wrote a little book called Stillness Speaks. It's a small book designed for meditative

reading, not consecutive reading, just little entries. The first sentence in the book, if I remember correctly, is you are never more essentially yourself than when you are still.

So this is the same thing. It's just another term pointer to describe it. We are still when the mind subsides, but awareness is not lost.

In fact, awareness has grown. Consciousness, awareness. This is the light of consciousness that Jesus said, you are the light of the world.

It's in one of the gospels. In another gospel, he also said, I am the light of the world, both statements. What is he talking about?

You are the light of the world. You are the consciousness of the universe. That's what he said.

You are the consciousness without which there wouldn't even be a universe. You are essentially not a person. You are the consciousness of the universe disguised briefly as a person.

But the consciousness of the universe wants to realize itself through you. This is very strange. So in other words, the universe is in the process of an awakening.

It's an awakening of consciousness. One could almost say the universe has led a dreamlike existence for a very long time when forms were identified with just the form without a gradually loss of realization of the essence. With humans, that has become very extreme.

And a tree is still rooted deeply, not only in the soil, but in the beingness of life. When you look at a tree, you can sense it is one with itself. It doesn't, it's just, you have to be still to be able to sense that there is something there that beyond sense perceptions, the presence of the tree.

It's a manifestation of consciousness too. Or even an animal, you can look at an animal without always having to label it. And you just look or touch or listen and it also is a manifestation of the one consciousness.

And it's still more rooted in being than a human, even your dog. And the dog is already kind of becoming humanized in many cases, but even the dog or the cat, they are still more deeply rooted in the beingness of themselves than humans. Humans have gone out a long way, lost themselves in mental abstractions, but it's all fine.

It all was meant that way. It's all necessary. But what's necessary now is the next step, the shift in consciousness.

Jesus called that the repent, which has been mistranslated, metanoia is repentance. It's a Greek term used in the Old Testament. Repentance, an important concept in the

teaching of Jesus.

Repentance is a shift, a turnaround of consciousness, which is not, they translate it as repentance. And then they thought it means you say, oh, I'm such a miserable sinner, which, well, you probably are because your mind is dysfunctional. But then if you create an image of yourself as a miserable sinner, you're stuck again in delusion.

So metanoia is the ancient Greek term, traditionally translated as repentance, but really means an inner shift in consciousness. And that's what it's all about. And it's a great opportunity now, especially if you want to first avoid further suffering for yourself and avoid contributing to the suffering of the world or humanity, they go together.

If you don't want to contribute to the madness, because there is at the present time an increasing craziness in the energy field, you can either become part of it and contribute to it or you begin to dissolve it in yourself. So the key is become aware of yourself as a conscious presence, consciousness. Become aware that you are conscious.

For example, one could say that there's no doubt that even if your entire life is a dream, including this moment, there's no doubt that in order for the dream to happen, there needs to be a consciousness, the light of consciousness in which the dream appears. And you are that, whether you call it a dream or reality, it doesn't matter. You are the light of consciousness in which this appears.

So everything can be doubted except consciousness. You can doubt everything about yourself except that you are conscious right now. And even that, when you use language, we distort things.

Even to say you are conscious is not quite correct because that would imply that there's two of you. There's a you that is conscious or even to say I am conscious is not quite correct because language so easily creates duality. I am conscious means there's an I and there's a consciousness but that's not right.

I am consciousness is the most accurate way of saying it instead of I am conscious because you are not separate from consciousness. You are consciousness. There's no you without consciousness.

You are the light of the world. And a person, by the way, you're also a person. But if you're a person that is rooted in the realization that you are the light of the world, at all times, then you become, by the way, a much better person too.

It's the icing on the cake. It's a side product. It's a side effect of awakening.

You're no longer a totally crazy person. You're not part of the craziness anymore. Well, that's a wonderful thing.

Not being part of the craziness of the world. That's your task, especially now as the craziness is increasing. Your task is not to be part of the craziness.

So the key is awareness, presence. And that is be aware of yourself as a conscious presence and then recognize that conscious presence in everywhere else, every other human, every life form, you can sense there too is the same conscious presence in a different, one could say different vibrational frequency, but you have to become still. Thinking needs to subside if only for a moment.

And awareness remains, become still. Take a breath, one conscious in breath, one conscious out breath. And notice, if you observe, this is a lovely mini meditation.

Observe the breath going into your body and coming out of your body. During that time, you're not thinking. And so that's the way you can use your breathing by being aware of that you're breathing.

And you can, that becomes part of being aware that you're aware. As you know, I also recommend to feel your inner body, the energy that pervades your entire body, which is consciousness. And so you become aware of this inner energy field of aliveness that pervades your hands, your arms, your legs, your feet, entire body.

But it's not the body anymore. It's the unseen. You can't find that when you could cut open the body and you can't find that.

It's beyond what can be perceived. It actually exists in another dimension. That invisible presence that you are, that you cannot find when you cut open the body and look for it.

This, the invisible presence that is the essence of who you are, it does not actually exist in this dimension. It exists in another dimension. Even that you can say that the dog, what you love in the dog is yes, the dog may look nice or the cat may look nice, lovely to look at, but you can sense there is an inside to the dog.

There is, the dog has an inner being, but you cannot cut open that dog. Let's say the dog dies or does, you cut open and you look for that inner being. You can't find it because all you find is bones and blood and flesh.

Where's the dog? It's not in the bones and the blood and the flesh. It doesn't actually exist in this dimension.

It's in, it is another, you are a being and every, it's from another dimension. And only the outer part comes into this dimension. You are, as you know, you're essentially invisible.

You are invisible. The essence of who you are is invisible. Even just thought is already invisible.

You can't find a thought by looking for it with instruments, let alone the deeper

consciousness of who you are, you're invisible. You can then sense intuitively that this presence is not subject to decay or time or death. But when you only know yourself as a person, then you continuously have the fear of death.

And ultimately all fear comes down to the fear of death. So the, if you want to lose the fear of death, know yourself as this invisible presence that actually doesn't even exist in this dimension. That's already in another dimension.

And you, and you realize if you had to talk about it but you don't have to say it, that ultimately there is no death. And to know that it's a direct knowing, that means all fear goes, because if the fear of death goes, then ultimately, because that's the root of all fear, the ultimate loss. And then the virus and all that is not a threat anymore.

You can take action if action is needed and often it's not needed. So that's the secret of awakening, bringing about a shift in consciousness in yourself and bringing about an end of the craziness and restore or restore sanity. Hasn't been here for, on the collective sporadically, there has been some sanity, but a lot of insanity in the collective energy field.

And there are times when the insanity increases as it did in the first half of the 20th century. It was to the two world wars and other dreadful conflicts, huge amount of collective insanity. And then it got in the Western world, at least got better for quite a few decades.

And now we're entering another period of insanity, but this, we are more ready for it now. Many humans are more ready to awaken now than before. And of course you are one of them.

Otherwise you wouldn't be here unless somebody dragged you here and you can't stand it anymore. So meditation ultimately is, yes, it's very helpful. But we are talking about is the meditative state as your normal state of consciousness.

So you're all, there's always a background of awareness in your life, even while you're talking about the upcoming elections in November, big challenge. Background of awareness, while you put forward your, how you see things, if you feel like doing it, but often there's no point. So always background of awareness and aware presence.

And then you return to just aware presence and you look around. And then it means more and more present moment living. The present moment is actually usually not bad at all.

Global meditation. Thank you very much. Just to learn to be present, to have your attention in the present moment instead of having your attention continuously being absorbed by the thinking process, the thoughts.

So this is our global live healing meditation, particularly helpful. I would say at this present time, as we are finding ourselves in a time of global disruption, many global challenges arising and likely, it's likely that the challenges will remain with us and new challenges will come as we are moving into a period of global turbulence. And that's fine.

It's a unique opportunity for spiritual awakening, a unique opportunity for disidentifying from the egoic mind and finding the transcendent dimension to who you are. The motivation for awakening, for going deeper grows for human beings as the challenges grow. And this is a reason why this is potentially an auspicious time.

When humans are not being challenged, then the motivation to evolve is not there, it's lacking because you're relatively comfortable in your little comfort zone. But when you're taken out of your comfort zone, when things get disrupted, a huge amount of uncertainty comes into your life. Loss comes into your life or the possibility of loss.

And that's often the same thing for people because the possibility of loss is a projected future and you suffer just as much as if you were already in that situation, which may never happen. But all these things potentially become the motivating force for deep, profound inner change, for a shift in consciousness, for a step forward in the evolution of your consciousness, which is the consciousness of humanity. So we need to rise up to the challenge of our present time, because if we don't, or if you don't, then it will affect you in a very unpleasant way.

You suffer more and more, as already millions of people are experiencing suffering. For example, an enormous amount of fear in the collective energy field. Many people are in a state of fear, for example, connected to the virus.

And so there's a disruption that occurs on the outside and there's also a disruption that occurs in human consciousness. The most important realization is to become aware of the fact that the most primordial thing in your life, ultimately, the one thing that determines how you experience your life or your reality, determines how you respond or react to events and situations and circumstances. The most primordial fact is not what happens around you.

The most important fact or factor is your state of consciousness, the state of consciousness with which you meet the circumstances of your life, the situation of your life. And so if people live unconsciously, they're not aware of this, it's very easy to become a victim of your circumstances. And many, many humans are victim of their circumstances.

What does that mean? Their inner state of consciousness is completely determined by the external world, by other people, by what happens on the outside, both their personal situation and the collective situation in the world. So they're at the mercy of circumstances.

Even on the smallest level, at the mercy of another human being, you meet another human being who is angry. If you are not sufficiently present, this human being who is angry will trigger the same emotion in you. And so you are at the mercy of somebody else's state.

That's just a small example. And it happens all the time. And then you have the, whatever you absorb through the media these days, the mainstream media, social media, and mainstream media, for example, generates an enormous amount of emotion.

It's there because emotion sells, it sells people tune in. It has an almost addictive quality to it. And so without knowing it, I don't believe the people who run the media, the mainstream media are probably not aware of what they're doing, but they themselves are in the grip of this collective energy field underneath the surface of things.

And there's a huge amount of collective fear running through. And if you are not sufficiently present, then you have no immunity to what goes on around you. And you are susceptible to catching, so to speak.

I'm not talking of a virus because there's another kind of immunity that is of a different kind that is within your consciousness. You are then at the mercy of whatever mental virus is floating around in the collective energy field. And without knowing it, it infects you.

So you absorb by watching an excessive amount of news, television or whatever device you use, you absorb all that collective energy field that you can't see. It is underneath the surface of things. And you're then taken over by a mental emotional energy field.

Without knowing it, you think that's you. You're identified with this collective energy field. So you've been taken over by what could be described as a virus, a mental virus, a mental emotional virus.

And you find yourself in a state of either fear or a state of anger or anxiety. And so, and that's this, when you identify with that state of anger or anxiety or fear, you become it, so to speak, or it becomes you. It becomes part of your identity.

And spiritually speaking, we call that unconscious living. To be unconscious is to completely identify with a mental emotional energy field. Identify means you seek yourself in it.

It takes you over. You don't know yourself except through that. Your consciousness is completely identified with that energy.

And that's a terrible state to be in. Now, a state of quite normal. It's very important.

Then when this becomes more and more unpleasant, fear grows, anger grows. Then it's

easier for humans to suddenly become aware of what's happening to them. And that is the motivating force that helps people to step out of the identification with this collective streams of emotional mental streams.

So that's the most vital thing. You need vigilance so that you are not drawn into these unconscious collective energy fields, which are really very much like a mental virus collective. So there's an equivalent on a mental level to what we have on the physical level.

On the physical level, we have the virus that we all know about all over the world. And the equivalent of that on the mental level is a virus of destructive, negative thought forms and emotions that people get taken over by. And that makes life very unpleasant.

It can also lead to an intensification of external problems. When more and more people are being taken over by negative energy fields without knowing it, then they create in the external, they create whatever corresponds to their inner state of consciousness. So this is a time of very critical time, but it is the most critical element of it, as I see it, is not in the external.

Yes, there are external problems, but more fundamentally, it is a problem of human consciousness. And it can only be tackled there. This is the root, the causal realm is human consciousness.

And in order to inhabit a better world, you need to go to the causal realm of your own consciousness and not seek a better world in the realm of effect, which is the external realm. It doesn't mean you cannot do things in the external realm. Factor in any action that you take is, so if it is action to be ultimately really helpful and beneficial, if the underlying mental emotional state out of which this action arises is one of anxiety or fear, it's not possible to take wise action and make wise decisions out of a state of fear.

So also many people want, they have good intentions, they want to create a better world, and that is wonderful. But if you neglect the causal realm, which is your consciousness, then whatever you do on the outer, you might be very angry. And out of your anger, where you want to create a better world, that's dangerous.

It's understandable, but it's dangerous because any action you take is contaminated by the energy field of anger and creates, in Eastern terms, would say creates more karma, more suffering. So the important thing for us is not to be taken over by the collective virus that's floating around and that's everywhere in the media and so on. So be very vigilant.

Vigilance is required. It's ultimately, and this is what meditation is all about, and this is what healing is all about. Healing in a wider sense, normally healing refers to physical healing, which is wonderful too, but the deeper healing is a healing of your

consciousness, the healing of a fragmented consciousness, the healing of the suffering that arises when you completely identify with mental, emotional streams that come to you.

They take you over. And so then you identify with all your, every mental positions. You have political views, mental positions, and you derive your sense of self from your position and the other becomes the enemy.

It does not mean as you awaken out of that, it does not mean that you no longer have any mental positions. You continue to have certain views, for example, with regards to the political situation or the social situation, you have certain views and that's fine. It would be virtually impossible to say, I'm now giving up all my viewpoints completely.

I'm no longer having any viewpoint and you can't do that, but you can recognize a mental position as a mental position without deriving your sense of self from it. Then when you become involved in a discussion with someone who holds, for example, in the United States at the present time, there's a huge division. There's almost like two, gradually two universes are developing that are separate as a fragmentation.

And if you're unconscious, which means you're identified with your mental positions, then when anybody questions your mental position with an opposite mental position, the person becomes your enemy. If millions of people live in that unconscious way, a civil disorder, even civil war is not impossible. That means millions of people are so identified with their positions that they're completely unaware that they are being taken over by an energy field.

And so the answer is to become aware of the positions that your mind is taking and saying, well, this is my position. You can then have a discussion with someone without making the other into an enemy, without attacking the other, either emotionally, mentally, or even physically in the case of very unconscious people. You can have a discussion and perhaps you can arrive at some kind of, you can meet at some point in the middle if you're conscious.

If you're unconscious, which means completely identified with your mental position, there's no meeting anymore. You cannot meet the other because the other is the enemy. So the primordial problem, and this is where the healing also comes in, is healing is really to be restored to wholeness, not to be fragmented and lose yourself in the fragmentation of your mind.

And so how does this happen? How can I have a mental position, for example? Even I have certain positions, obviously every human has with regards to politics.

I don't talk about them because who cares what my mental position is? That's not important. I'm here to guide humans to a higher or deeper dimension where they are no

longer completely identified with and absorbed by their mental positions, their minds, their thoughts.

Then you can have the thoughts, but the thoughts exist within a greater wholeness, which we could call the awareness. And your identity lies in the awareness, the presence, the consciousness, not in the position of the mind. Then you can still have your position, but you're no longer threatened in your sense of identity if somebody questions your position or contradicts.

So that's the, and that's the essence of meditation also. The essence of meditation is to find that, to discover that transcendent dimension to who you are. The being of yourself and you discover it.

And this is, as I speak, there's an opportunity for you to realize this within yourself as I speak here and now. This transcendent dimension to who you are, the unconditioned being is something that you do not need to bring about through arduous discipline. And you cannot generate it by being, a good person.

It comes before all that. It's already here. You, at that level, you are already complete, perfect, or to use this word, whole.

Whole, you are already whole. On the level of being, you are already whole. Now that's an interesting word, whole, W-H-O-L-E, whole.

On this, on the personal level, the conditioned mental emotional entity, you are not whole, you are, there's a lot still that you could do and many things you cannot do. And you can improve your life on the level of the person. Of course, it's a good thing to improve your life on that level.

But if you miss the fundamental dimension of the transcendent, which is the spiritual dimension, then nothing on the level of your personal self will ever ultimately satisfy you, no matter what you achieve on that level. It doesn't mean that you should not strive to achieve things. It's a good thing to try and achieve things as a human being, to learn new things, experience new things, to grow, that beautiful.

This is part of why you are here, but it's not enough. And in fact, it's frustrating ultimately and not satisfying if you miss the more fundamental task, the more fundamental human task, which is to awaken to the deeper dimension of who you are beyond the conditioned person. And that's the healing, that's the wholeness.

Do you realize on that level, you are already whole. Healing and whole go back to the same root. If you go back, the etymology of the English, healing and whole come back from, to go back to the same root, which lies in old English, old high German and Norse, which is Scandinavian language.

They all go back, healing and whole go back to the same root. Sometimes wisdom is embodied sometimes in language. See if you follow it to its root.

So healing and whole have the same root. And then there's another word that's part of that, that comes out of the same root. And that's the word holy.

So the word healing, whole and holy have the same, etymologically have the same root. So you discover a dimension that has always been there, is not subject to time. Discover a dimension within yourself that is also the realm of the holy.

And you cannot define that. Holy points to the fact that you are intrinsically connected to the source of all life, which traditionally is called God. The holy points to that.

Holy is not a word that you will hear very frequently in our present civilization. It's unlikely that the word holy has ever been used in the past few years on CNN, MSNBC or Fox News, very unlikely. And the New York Times also haven't seen the word holy.

I've been looking for it a long time. No, it's not there because humans no longer know, even know what that means. You can only get a glimpse of what that means within yourself beyond conceptualization.

When you go out into nature and you're in a state of pure awareness and you look at the totality of nature that surrounds you, no matter where you are, there are trees or there's a landscape or there's the ocean or there's a mountain or just a field or even just a park or even just one tree, you give it your complete attention then without labeling it, without analyzing it, without calling it anything, you give it your complete attention. Then you can sense that beyond that, which you see in nature with your senses or what you can hear, see, hear, take in with your senses, there is something, there is an essence in nature.

There is a presence in nature that can only be described as holy. And you're in a state of awe. I like that word, awe.

When you're in nature and you go, ah. And of course, at that moment, your mind stops. You're just conscious.

You're not labeling what you perceive. And then you sense the, every sense perception is a surface reality. But beyond the surface reality, there's a deeper reality and you can sense this deeper reality, which ultimately, what is that?

It's the universal consciousness that manifests itself through countless millions of life forms. But underneath it, there is the one, ultimately the one consciousness, the one being. And you can sense that when your mind is still, you can sense that in nature.

And then you can sense that there's not a separation anymore between you and nature.

The same consciousness, but different frequency. Yes.

Is alive in you as you, as the consciousness that manifests as a plant, a tree, a flower. And so you sense that connection. That is the awakening.

That's the restoration of wholeness, the wholeness of life. When the fragmented entity, the ego, subsides and you become restored to the wholeness of who you are. That's the, this is what is needed for sanity to come back into human interactions.

The only thing that can save the world is this shift in consciousness. This realization. It begins with you and it begins here and now.

And how does it begin here and now? It begins, and I'm inviting you now, perhaps it's already happening in you, but you're not quite aware of it. It begins with a moment of no thought, but just pure presence or beingness, like now.

That's meditation. Meditation is thinking subsides, awareness remains. And when thinking subsides, the entire self, what we could call the self, the egoic self, the person, the personality also subsides because it's created by the movement of thought.

So when thinking subsides, even for a moment, in that moment, the conditioned entity, the personality also subsides and something else arises. And there are many names that we could use to describe that something else that arises, that is much deeper, much more fundamental than the person. Many words have been used over centuries and millennia to describe this.

The most neutral term you could use is the being of you or the beingness of you. It could also be called the Atman, the innermost, the divinity within. That is from Indian spirituality, the Atman.

Now, Jesus had certain words for it. He called it, sometimes he called it the kingdom of heaven, which is a dimension of consciousness. It's not something you can see.

It's here or it's there. He clearly said, you can never say it's here or it's there because it's inseparable from who you are. So the kingdom of heaven is another term.

You can use it to describe that dimension. The entire teaching of Jesus was about finding that dimension within. Sometimes he called it other things.

He also called it eternal life. And he said, I want you to have eternal life. This is that my teaching is this eternal life.

What does that mean? It doesn't mean that the person goes on and on and eternal means timeless, the timeless dimension of who you are. And then the Buddha came and the Buddha refused all positive terminology, like kingdom of heaven or the Atman or eternal life, because he knew that humans would fall into the trap of transforming any

positive statement into a mental idol.

So he refused to make any positive statements. He used only negative statements. He denies everything that is ultimately not it.

So Buddha described it as a no self. This is a no self. That's the ultimate teaching of the Buddha is to discover within yourself the unreality, ultimate unreality of the person, the personal sense of the egoic sense of self, the self, which also Jesus said when he made the important statement, deny thyself.

That wasn't the Buddha. I thought it could have been said by the Buddha. Jesus said it, deny thyself, deny yourself, meaning what denies a strange word here.

It doesn't mean that you decide to say, oh, I don't exist, that's not it. Deny means, as he uses it, recognize the unreality of the self that you thought you were. That is the denial of self.

Deny thyself, recognize it. Ultimately, that is not really who you are. This is just a surface phenomenon.

It's, you find that it also has its place. You have to live with it for a while, but the deeper dimension is that that is not who you are. So it's vital for humans, especially now as we are moving into a critical time period for the totality of humanity, which is also an incredible opportunity for disidentifying from the unconsciousness that otherwise governs the world.

So how do you do it? In a way, you don't even do it. It's just a cessation of, one could almost say the cessation of doing and the realization of being.

And doing, on a primordial level, is thinking. Humans are thinking all the time, except in dreamless sleep. They're thinking and thinking and thinking and thinking and thinking.

It's no cessation. And then life gets more and more difficult. Then you watch more and more in the news on TV and whatever it's called.

The news is not the news anymore. It's just opinions. It's just stupid manipulation.

And you watch him and you get drawn into that and you think it's all so real. And then you see anxiety arises, anger arises, suffering arises. And that's, and as humans, as the suffering increases, as I said before, the motivation to awaken in many humans also increases.

So we are here to realize this and to actually welcome the challenges we are confronted with externally, because they are a great opportunity for the awakening of consciousness. Yes. Humans don't awaken, except through difficulties, obstacles, problems, challenges.

And then your state of consciousness, the state of consciousness with which you meet the external situation changes, which means how the way in which you experience an external situation changes. And, now this sounds a little mystical. What subsequently happens on an external level is also to a large extent determined by your state of consciousness in the present moment.

What subsequently happens in the so-called future, which never comes, because you can only experience the future as the present moment. So you can never experience the future, except as a thought form. Interesting to realize this, the only reality the future has is as a thought form.

You cannot actually say, oh, there it is, because the moment you say there it is, it's the present. So the, how things evolve in the so-called future are linked in very fundamental way to your state of conscience in the present. So if you meet a difficult situation or a difficult person in a state of consciousness that is not reactive, but in an awakened state of consciousness, which means present, alert, then it changes also the situation, the external situation, how it develops from there onward.

Or you can, but if you're unconscious, you face an external situation and you amplify the problem of the external situation that you're facing by your unconscious reactivity of the egoic self, it feels threatened in the situation, has a new small anxiety, then all the things that you do in order to remove the situation or make it better actually makes it worse. So it amplifies when you're unconsciously reacting all the time, and you can observe it even just meeting with a single human being, a difficult human being, and many human beings are very difficult, you might've noticed. So you meet a difficult human being, how you react if this difficult human being triggers the same in you, an angry human being triggers anger in you, then you amplify his or her anger, and then it grows and grows and grows, might become violence.

And this applies to any situation, what if you are in a reactive unconscious, the unconscious state of reactivity, then you amplify the problem. And this is what happens a lot on every level here. This is an unconscious way of dealing with things.

Whenever you're motivated by fear or anger, this is what happens. You think you're resolving the situation, but you're amplifying it. Terrible.

So the key is then to realize this dimension within yourself that is beyond the thinking mind and all the mental, emotional turbulence. And this happens very easily in a moment, like now, when your mind, your thinking mind, subsides, comes to a stop. Now, what remains?

You can't say what remains, but you know what remains directly. The sense of presence cannot be defined. The sense of beingness.

This is the most beautiful thing, these moments without thought, but it's not loss of consciousness. It's loss of thinking when it's not needed, because thinking is useful for many things and destructive for many other things. And so you discover when it's useful and you let go of it when it's destructive, when it destroys your enjoyment of life, your enjoyment of the present moment, your ability to just be, to acknowledge the aliveness of things around you, to acknowledge the present moment, to have some gratitude for the richness of life and all life forms around you.

All this you lose when you are continuously absorbed only in thinking. What remains then when thinking subsides, awareness remains or presence, whatever you want to call it. In religious traditions, in mystical Christianity, it's called the Christ within.

In some Buddhist schools, it is called your Buddha nature. These are just names to talk about it. That's what remains when thinking subsides and there's only a sense of spacious presence, like now.

And in that spacious presence, strange thing is you don't know anything anymore, of course, because there's no concepts anymore in your mind. You don't know anything on the level of concepts. And yet that is the essence of who you are, this beingness or presence.

So you don't know yourself anymore as an object, which is when you live through the ego, then you become an object to yourself and your consciousness and you have a relationship with yourself. You can say, I love myself. Which is better than hating yourself, but you still have a relationship with yourself.

You're not yourself. You have a relationship with yourself. It's better to love yourself than to hate yourself.

True. But you still have a relationship with yourself. There's two.

I love myself. I'm two. But when you, with the realization of being, you are yourself.

And so you cannot know yourself as an object of knowledge, but you can know yourself as the eternal subject of all knowing. And that's where wisdom arises. This is the source of all real knowing.

And the source of all true intelligence is in this non-conceptual, vast intelligence, which is the intelligence of consciousness. Which is one with who you are. And then when you can link into that, you become inspired.

It can inspire your mind. Your mind can create when it's linked into that. You have creative thoughts.

You have creative input, ideas. You take action that is wise rather than, or as the

Buddhists say, skillful, skillful, wise action, rather than unconscious action that produces more suffering for yourself and others. Perpetuates karma.

So this realm of true intelligence is the non-conceptual realm. Yes, you need concepts and you can use concepts, but don't lose yourself in concepts. Don't look for yourself in concepts.

And then have a narrative in your mind that says, this is who I am. It's just a story of one concept linked with others' concepts. The story of yourself is not essentially who you are.

It's a story versus this limited entity, the person. It's a surface phenomenon. It's not who you are, but it's the realization of who you are.

That's the awakening, but it's not conceptual. So look for the cessation of thought. Look for it in little moments, like now.

Whenever you look at something natural, the sky, a tree, the ocean, any plant or flower or animal, don't label it. Just be alert and present and perceive it. And as I said before, when you go into anything natural, when you go into nature, you can then sense something that is almost awe-inspiring.

I'm not romanticizing nature. I also, of course, nature can also kill you, but there is something there that is holy or sacred. And humans have to find that urgently because then they are not going to destroy nature anymore.

Ultimately, humans have been destroying nature for some time because they have lost the ability to sense what's there. And then you can cut down. I mean, there are old forests.

Still, some are still here in Canada and other parts of the world. There are forests that have been there with gigantic trees that have been there for thousands of years, thousands of years. They are sacred spaces.

And, but if humans cannot sense it anymore, then all they see is possible profit. What can we do with it? What can we do with it?

They look at the whole world in terms of doing. What can I do with it? Because they have lost sense of being.

It's a terrible loss. So, but you've also lost it with reference to yourself. You can't sense your own being.

That's why you cannot sense the forest. You can't sense your own holiness. And that's why you cannot sense the holiness of the forest or the sky or the ocean.

So it's not impossibly difficult what I am suggesting is the most important task in your

life, which has become particularly almost, one could say, urgent at the present time. This is a task of realizing the transcendent dimension to who you are by the simple, very simply by realizing that you do not have to think all the time, that there's always a possibility in yourself. It's just waiting to be discovered.

You are waiting to be discovered, so to speak. That dimension is always there. The moment thinking subsides, you feel that stillness.

It's another word you can use. There's a stillness. I wrote a little book called Stillness Speaks.

It's a small book designed for meditative reading, not consecutive reading, just little entries. The first sentence in the book, if I remember correctly, is you are never more essentially yourself than when you are still. So when you're, is this the same thing?

It's just another term pointer to describe it. We are still when the mind subsides, but awareness is not lost. In fact, awareness has grown.

Consciousness, awareness. This is the light of consciousness that Jesus said, you are. This is our live meditation, which basically is learning to stop thinking, which sounds a little paradoxical because usually learning involves thinking.

So it's more like unlearning because we are conditioned to think continuously. And a lot of the time it's not only unnecessary, but also destructive. Cuts you off from the depths of being, of who you are beyond the thinker.

The most dreadful limitation for a human being is to know him or herself only as the thinker with its opinions and beliefs and reactions and whatever else the mind continuously comes up with. And that cuts you off from that vast dimension of consciousness that is there beyond thinking, not separate from thinking. It makes thinking possible, but it's deeper than that.

And here as we meditate, which is probably not the right word because it sounds as if we were doing something, but we're not doing anything. We're not doing a meditation, but we're here to realize that beyond doing, there's another dimension more vital. And that we could call being.

And to sense that in yourself, there needs to be at least a gap in the stream of thinking. Even a few seconds is already a slight deepening and a little bit of peace and aliveness and a little bit of joy coming through the cracks, so to speak, in what is otherwise a solid wall of thought. But we are here to go beyond that, not just wait for the little cracks to appear occasionally, but to embrace that dimension without which your life is not really that enjoyable, frustrating, in fact, pointless, that continuous worry and upset, anxiety, complaining.

That's what most people's lives consist of. Maybe, yes, the occasional crack is there. Or maybe when they get tired, they feel a little bit better because they can't think anymore.

And then they go to sleep. But really, without that deeper dimension, life, is it worth living? I don't think so.

What for? Do you think you'll ever sort out the problems in your life? You sort out one and another two appear.

So there's nothing more important than this. And realize when you stop thinking, or thinking subsides, we could say, you essentially are still there as a conscious presence, a still, conscious, aware space. And that still, conscious, aware space needs to be there in daily life, in the background.

Doesn't mean it can only be there when you don't think. You access it most deeply when thinking subsides. But as you sense it, you realize even when you think again, it doesn't go away completely anymore, that conscious, aware space can be there even while thinking happens, or while you're talking to someone, or dealing with things that need to be done.

And then you can enjoy life every moment. But the enjoyment doesn't come from all the things that happen in your life. It comes from a deeper place.

And then what happens or does not happen is of secondary importance. You're not dependent on what happens or is not happening that you want it to happen. And then you move through life embodying two dimensions, the dimension of form, which is thinking and doing, and the dimension of the formless presence, the conscious, aware space.

The two are there simultaneously. The conscious, aware space interpenetrates, if that's the word, the world of form. Then perhaps you realize the truth of the ancient Buddhist scripture, one of the most famous sutras, which says, form is emptiness, emptiness is form.

Form and formlessness being there as one. And so the way I put it occasionally, you may have heard it before, it's not the absolute truth. It's a way of talking about it.

There's two of you in any moment, in any situation. There's the person who thinks and does things and deals with life situations and people. There's you as the person.

And then there's the other you as the conscious presence. So you can still deal with things as a person, but behind that and even within that, there is the aware space. So you become a spacious person, so to speak.

Anybody who has not realized that dimension within themselves are not spacious. And of

course that still applies to many humans. They are not the opposite of spacious.

Let's say they are dense, the density of the person. You can look at anybody that you know, or even strangers when you observe them, how they go about life, how they deal with things, how they interact with people, how they react or respond to changing circumstances, especially when things go wrong, so to speak. By just observing them, you can sense and see how dense or how spacious they are.

And it's not a judgment. You just see it in just the same way as you see whether it's light or dark. You're not judging when you say, oh, it's getting dark.

It's not a judgment. You just see it. So you can see it in others.

And sometimes so-called people who are into spiritual awakening, even they can sometimes very quickly when they are challenged by events, become very dense. The spaciousness is lost. So that's your spiritual practice.

Of course, it's everyday life. Can you embody the spaciousness in addition to being a person? So you don't need to achieve perfection as a person.

The person will always have certain limitations and shortcomings. And when Jesus said, be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect, he doesn't refer to the world of form, but the deeper perfection, the wholeness that is spacious presence. In ancient Greek philosophy, they often use the term, the good.

What is the good? Where is the good? And of course, we know what it is and where it is.

The good is not in the world of form. The world of form is good and bad. Nothing stays good for that long.

It either disappears or turns into its opposite. The good is within you and it is the formless presence, the source of aliveness, of joy, the source of identity, the sense of who you are. The source of that is beingness, presence, spacious awareness, I am.

They all point to the same experience, which is not ultimately negative. It just seems negative when you are in it, but it is part of a larger purpose. It's part of the awakening, not for everyone.

It doesn't have to be, but often it is part of the awakening process. The dark night of the soul is a term from, it goes back a long time. Maybe it goes back to the Spanish mystic, Saint John of the Cross.

I'm not sure if it does, but it goes back a long time. It describes something. Well, the questioner seems to imply that he or she is going through something like this at the moment.

The dark night of the soul, which, yes, I have also experienced, that's a term then used to describe a, what one could call, a collapse of a perceived meaning in life, an eruption into your life of a deep sense of meaninglessness. And the inner state, in some cases, is very close to depression. Maybe some dark night of the soul often to do with what is conventionally called depression.

But it is basically a sense of emptiness or meaninglessness. Nothing makes sense anymore. There's no purpose to anything.

And sometimes it's triggered by some external event. Some disasters, perhaps, on an external level, external rather than within. The death of someone close to you could trigger it, especially premature death.

For example, if your child dies or you had built up your life and given it meaning, and the meaning that you had given your life, this is what my life is about, your activities, your achievements, where you're going, what is considered important. And so the meaning that you had given your life for some reason collapses. So as I said, it can happen if something happens that you can't explain away anymore.

Some disaster which seems to invalidate the meaning that your life had before. And really what has collapsed then is the whole conceptual framework for your life, the meaning that your mind had given it. And so that results in a sense of darkness, a dark place.

But people have gone into that. You're in that dark place for a while. And then you emerge out of that.

There is the possibility that you emerge out of that. You can emerge out of that into a transformed state of consciousness where life has meaning again, but it is no longer a conceptual meaning that you could necessarily explain. It is often from the dark night of the soul, not necessarily, but quite often, it's from there that people awaken out of their conceptual sense of reality which has collapsed.

They awaken into something deeper which is no longer based on concepts in your mind. The deeper sense of purpose or connectedness with a greater life that is not dependent on explanations or anything conceptual any longer. It's a kind of rebirth.

And the dark night of the soul is a kind of death that you die. What dies in the dark night of the soul is the egoic sense of self. And of course, yes, death is always painful, but nothing real has actually died there, only an illusory identity.

Now, it is probably the case that some people who have gone through this transformation, they have been through the dark night of the soul and they discovered that out of that, a new self emerged that was a non-conceptual self, but a deeper being, the awakened consciousness. And they somehow, looking back, they realized that they

had to go through that. Not everybody does, of course, have to go through that, but some people do.

And they've even, in some spiritual traditions, they try to recreate the experience of the dark night of the soul in order to bring about a spiritual awakening. And that was probably part of the so-called mystery schools of ancient Greece and Egypt, which were designed, they even survived into Roman times, mystery schools with rituals and so on. Not much, we don't know much about it because they were kept secret.

Not much was written about it. And in one tradition, you spend a prolonged period of time in darkness, sometimes even in a coffin, coffin-like place, in complete isolation and darkness. That is an attempt, I would say, on the part of someone who has gone through the natural dark night of the soul to recreate the experience of it in a kind of artificial, more artificial way of actually experiencing that utter darkness where things break down.

To what extent that worked when it's not a natural experience, but a created experience, for how many people that worked and actually did bring about an awakening and a collapse of the mind-made self, I don't know whether it truly worked for many people, but it must have worked to some extent because the tradition went on for a very long time. There are other, in other forms of, in mythological forms also, they speak of similar things, sometimes described as the night journey in mythological tradition or also the descent to the underworld. They all point to the same experience, which is not ultimately negative.

It just seems negative when you are in it, but it is part of a larger purpose. It's part of the awakening, not for everyone, it doesn't have to be, but often it is part of the awakening process. The death of the old self, the birth of the true self.

So once you know that, if it should come or if you should even be in the middle of it now, you can just, the more you surrender, the more quickly you go through it. Surrender means don't judge it anymore. You accept whatever it is.

It's your experience at this moment. But as I said, not everybody has to go through that. For many people, the awakening process starts and begins without that.

Sometimes even after the awakening process begins, it might still happen, and then finally you will break through, but that's fine. Allow life to do what it does. You don't need to seek that, and we don't need to recreate it in some artificial way, so don't shut yourself in a dark room for days on end.

It's unlikely to work. It's unnecessary. The first lesson in the Course in Miracles says, nothing I see in this room means anything.

And you're supposed to look around the room at whatever you happen to be looking at. You say, this doesn't mean anything. That doesn't mean anything.

This table doesn't mean anything. This hand doesn't mean anything. What's the purpose of a lesson like that?

Well, that's a little bit like recreating what can happen during the dark nights of the soul, which is the collapse of a mind-made meaning, conceptual meaning of life. Believing that you understand what's it all about. So with the Course in Miracles in Lesson One, it's a voluntary relinquishment of the human mind-made meaning that is projected, and you go voluntarily into saying, I don't know what this means.

This doesn't mean anything. You wipe the board clean. In the dark night of the soul, it collapses.

And in some spiritual traditions, then you can actually, you're encouraged to relinquish your conceptual reality. And so you're then meant to arrive at a place of conceptual, one could say meaninglessness, or one could say a state of ignorance, where you don't, things lose their, the meaning that you had given them, which was all conditioned and cultural and so on. And you can then look upon the world without imposing a mind-made framework of meaning.

Is there some type of discipline that is needed to be successful with conscious manifestation? If so, can you describe what the discipline is that is needed? Well, basically, I have already described the discipline that's needed for, in your daily life, to be aware of yourself and of your own state of consciousness.

Also, an important factor, perhaps, that is implied in what we've been saying, but it's worth pointing it out explicitly, is the importance of what is conventionally called gratitude. But there could be other words. Gratitude is a very powerful transformational tool and also one of the most powerful tools for manifesting better things in your life.

Now, what does that mean? The gratitude is to acknowledge the good in your life now. And it's surprising how many people don't do that, who can only see the bad in their lives or only complain, but it's extremely powerful to acknowledge the good that's in your life now.

Now, let's talk about this for a moment. This does not mean that you have a conceptual idea of what your life is, and then you compare it to somebody else's life, and you say, oh, really, I should be happy because I have it so much better than look at these people. Their life is worse than mine, so I really should be grateful for my life.

That's not it. That's not real gratitude. That means you're moving within the conceptual realm and your feeling of well-being is dependent on somebody else who has less than you or is suffering more than you.

So gratitude is not if you compare yourself because that's a misconception, very common misconception of gratitude is you compare yourself to somebody else or even a

whole group of people, so you look at people in the third world, I really should be grateful, we are so much better off, even though I may be poor, but I'm still better off than, so let's be grateful. No, that's not real gratitude. You're depending on others to be worse off than you, but you can feel gratitude.

It's crazy. It feeds the ego. No, no, gratitude is to acknowledge the good that's in your life now, now, this moment.

Okay, so it's not the good in your life situation, I'm fine because I have achieved this or that or whatever, no, at this moment. And that's simple things. It really comes down to simple things.

What can I be grateful for at this moment? Wow, there's so much I can be grateful for. Now, what is it?

To be grateful is to acknowledge something, to give it attention and to appreciate it. I have this, you can't see it, but I have a nice round table here. And it's lovely, I touch it, it's made of wood and it's lovely.

It's not spectacular, it doesn't need to be spectacular, but it has a presence and a beingness. There's light coming through the window there and from behind me. I often sit here, I'm lucky to have these trees here and I often sit here, there's a little screen too, otherwise there's too much glare, but I often sit here, I look at the trees for 10, 15 minutes and there's a continuous feeling of goodness because, and we could call that gratitude, but I don't say in my mind, I'm so grateful for these trees.

I simply appreciate the wonder and aliveness, the beingness of these trees. So I acknowledge the good in this moment by appreciating the wonder, the miracle of these trees. It's just, you can look at the sky here today, happens to be completely overcast, but very, and that's fine too, because there's light filtering through.

There's more light in a way today than when the sky is blue because the light is dispersed by the cloud, it's everywhere, it comes from the sun, it filters through the clouds. Now you appreciate that. You look at a potted plant, you become, you're grateful for that, you're grateful for all the little things.

You hear a bird, you drink a glass of water, acknowledging all the, you're breathing. So that's gratitude, is the appreciation of life that's around you. So you can say the gratitude for being alive, for to feel that you're alive in your entire body, the inner body, the invisible presence that inhabits the body to feel that.

So all my, all the little things, gratitude is best applied to all the small things that continuously surround you in life. And then you see the goodness of it all, or you can just, let's say you have little or no money, so, and you're looking for abundance. So how do you bring abundance into your life?

You have to discover, to acknowledge the abundance that is already everywhere around you. You walk past this, you go, you're walking in the street and there's a flower store, there's flowers on display and potted plants outside if you live in a city. An abundance of life, the flowers, they're just amazing.

There's abundance and you can look everywhere and see abundant life. Jesus used that term. He said, I want you to have abundant life.

In other translations, he says, the same term translated in a different way, I want you to have the fullness of life. Jesus promises the fullness of life or abundant life. Now, true abundance, which many people are looking for, and they think abundance is to do with having many things, it could be that quite a few things come to you when you access the source of all abundance, which of course is within you.

It's the feeling of the fullness of life. Now, once you get this feeling in the present moment, then this is perhaps the very core of gratitude is to feel the aliveness of life within yourself.

[Speaker 9] (2:18:47 - 2:19:46)

Thank you for this opportunity, for being here and allowing us to become more aware. And my question is a little bit of a follow-up from what you've just said. I know you work with psychotherapists and therapists and helping others.

And my question is, how can we follow up on the analogy of the caterpillar? How can we support others? How can we know if they are there, if they are not there?

Is it possible to help? I don't know what the question is, but it's, can we support someone in this process? You obviously are, and Kim is obviously supporting us.

So is there different stages that we can support different people in different processes?

[Speaker 1] (2:19:46 - 2:31:23)

The moment the spiritual awakening, if we want to call it that, happens in you, which is the disidentification from the thinking mind and certain degree of arising of presence. Well, not the moment it happens, but a little bit after that, as this process continues, you, many people find that more and more people come, you meet people, sometimes seemingly accidentally, or it might be people who you know already who need you, who also are at a stage of readiness, but don't know it yet. And you may find and will find that these people are drawn to you.

You may not immediately recognize them. In fact, you may think, listen, this person is not going to awaken in this lifetime, but you can get big surprises. Sometimes the most unlikely people can come to you and you know that it's happening.

There's a moment usually when you notice there is a transmission either of presence as an energy field, or they ask you a question, you give an answer, and the answer has a certain power or aliveness to it. It comes through you spontaneously, because the question was a genuine question and there was an opening in the other person. If it's not a genuine question, if it's a question asked out of curiosity, what's that spiritual stuff all about that you do, or whatever, or tell me about that spirit stuff, but there's no real opening, then your answer will not be good, or there may be no answer.

But if it's a real question and there is some degree of presence in you, then there will be a real answer. And the helping then comes in two ways. One is through the energy that you emanate as you are present.

The second is through what you say to them. And that is the beginning of you becoming a spiritual teacher. And many of you, some of you are already spiritual teachers, whether formally or not formally, some of you will become formal spiritual teachers because the world is in great need of you.

Humans want you, they may not know it yet, but everybody, even if you do not become a formal spiritual teacher, you will do some teaching informally through everybody you meet, because you spread, your state of consciousness spreads to others. That applies both to unconscious people who spread their negativity or the viral infection of their minds, and to present people who spread presence. And it's not that you are doing it.

So an important obstacle could be if you think that you need to do something to help them. This is very seductive because it's a wonderful thing to help others. But the obstacle is you think that it is up to you to help them.

It's not. In fact, you wouldn't know how to. I wouldn't know how to.

So you have to allow it to happen by holding the presence, especially when somebody comes to you, asks a question, or you say something, hold the presence and then see what happens. So it's not you who is doing it. Sometimes I've met some people who said they've been asked to, first they saw some individuals, helped them, they're growing and growing in presence.

And then somebody approached them and said, can you give a talk to our little group? And then they came to me and said, I don't think I'm ready to give a talk to a group. Somebody asked me to give a talk to a group.

I think I'm not ready. And I said, if you think you're ready, then that's not a good sign. And I said, if you think you're ready, Because there's probably a little ego in there Because there's probably a little ego in there just come to me and I will heal you.

But if you feel that the most powerful place, whether you are with one person or with a group of people, the most powerful place is to not know. But you have to be comfortable

with not knowing. If you're uncomfortable with not knowing what to say, what to do, then you go, oh dear, what should I say?

The mind says, quick, say something useful to this person. And then you think of things you've read in a book. Well, Eckhart says that it doesn't mean you should never quote, but it's always more powerful if it comes from you.

So it only comes if you are comfortable with, enter that space of not knowing, which is basically you surrender thought and you just look at the person and you listen and then see what answer comes, then see what you say, if anything. In some cases, you might not say anything. So the help allow it to move through you.

And that's a big relief. It means you don't have to do it. You only become a vehicle for it, an opening for it.

You become an opening for consciousness. So you don't have to heal people, help people. I mean, you can help physically, that's a different matter.

You can give somebody food or money to help, but at a deeper level, you can't do anything. So getting out of the way, and then it will happen through you. And in the Course in Miracles, it says the moment you become a student of the Course in Miracles, which by the way is a lovely teaching, but not for everybody.

So don't believe that because I mentioned it now, you have to go and get it. It's great for some people. It's a beautiful spiritual work, but for others, it's not the right one.

Nothing is right for everybody. Course in Miracles, however, says, the moment you start studying the Course in Miracles, which really implies the moment you begin to disidentify from the conditioned mind, you become a teacher of God. Now the ego, of course, would probably love that term.

That is why I personally would not use it, but there is some truth in it. It's not a terminology that I would use, but the moment the presence arises, you begin to teach presence, but really presence does it through you. Thank you.

Thank you. This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

Here's a question about the teachings of a spiritual teacher called Joel Goldsmith, who taught in the 50s and 60s. He wrote books like The Infinite Way and other books using Christian terminology, but going far deeper than the kind of Christianity you would encounter in most churches. So he's taken Christian terminology and used it in a deeper sense.

I studied Joel Goldsmith's teachings for many years before I came to your teachings. He was very much a healer, a spiritual healer. This is true.

Now I'm in a healing field, massage therapy, and would like to hear you talk about healing, physical and spiritual. I can get involved in trying to fix my clients' aches and pains and need guidance. Yes, that's interesting.

Healing, physical healing. Physical healing not infrequently comes naturally with the arising of presence, and not only physical healing, also the likelihood of being ill diminishes as presence grows, because many illnesses are actually caused by dysfunctional states of consciousness, which are egoic, and dysfunctional states of consciousness affect the body in a negative way and decrease the body's ability to fight disease, the immune system.

So not all illnesses, of course there are other reasons why people become ill, but very often a dysfunctional state of consciousness makes you, yet generally, a dysfunctional state of consciousness makes you much more susceptible to disease. It does not mean that when you are present, there is a guarantee that you will never become ill. As the body grows old, at some point, it is in the nature of things, at some point, something will fail.

At least so far it's happened to humans. I'll let you know if it doesn't happen to me.

[Speaker 7] (2:31:25 - 2:31:29)

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (2:31:30 - 2:38:56)

The, and healing also, as I mentioned the other day, healing is often experienced, that kind of spontaneous healing, when people surrender, they no longer, not surrender to the idea of illness, surrender simply to the present moment, to what is in the present moment. Then something is generated that is very healing. Peace itself is healing, to be in a state of a peaceful state of consciousness is healing.

So that is all true. So some of you may have heard me telling the story that for, I think, I can't remember for how long, for a couple of years or so, I was a spiritual healer for a while. And the reason was that a few years after the awakening, people started coming to me.

And one lady who used to come once a week for to sit with me, she was sensitive to energy. And as she was talking about her problems, I was in that state of blissful, intense presence, listening to her with a smile on my face, which she didn't mind, but other people mind it, because I've always had this smile on my face when I was listening to people's problems. Not because I was thinking that the problems were funny.

I could just sense that at a deeper level, the problem didn't actually exist. And so some people got angry and said, why are you smiling at me? I'm telling you about my sufferings and why are you smiling?

What's going on in your mind? And I said, there's nothing going on in my mind. That's why.

And that's why I'm smiling. And so I was sitting with her and she was talking and suddenly she stopped talking and said, oh, you're doing healing on me. I said, am I?

And she said, yes, I can feel it. It's just wonderful. And she didn't talk for a while.

And then she felt so much better. And then she said, you're a healer. I said, oh, I didn't know that.

And then she recommended that certain people should come to me. By word of mouth, it started with her. You must go to this spiritual healer.

He will free you of your pain, your illness, whatever it is. And more and more people came to me who said, oh, I've got this pain here. Can you take that away?

I've got migraine, headache. Please help me. I've got a lump on my foot.

Please remove it. And for a while I did it. I kind of was present.

That's the only way I could do. And then a few people experienced healing. Some didn't.

And then more and more I realized most people that were coming now just wanted to be relieved of certain symptoms, illnesses. They didn't seem that interested in awakening anymore because they wanted to be free of their pains, physical pains, which is fine too. But I realized that that was not my function in this world.

And so I said, I'm no longer a spiritual healer. And I know that healing still sometimes happens to people naturally. But to focus on that so much, I believe, is not my function.

Maybe somebody else's function. Joel Goldsmith is a great teacher, was a great teacher. One thing where his teaching was perhaps slightly unbalanced is there was an excessive emphasis on physical healing.

And that was always regarded as a criterion for how successful you are. And apart from that, his teaching is great. But because of the excessive emphasis on physical healing, so his teaching was associated very strongly with that.

One reason being that he came out of, for several years he was a practitioner of Christian science and his teaching still has certain similarities with Christian science. So that's some balance, something a little bit unbalanced, excessive, in my view, emphasis

on spiritual healing, which resulted, for example, in strange things like when he had a heart attack, it had to be kept secret from the followers because they would have been disappointed. And so you can see the loss of balance, too much emphasis on physical healing.

But of course, when finally he had another heart attack and died, they had to finally say, he died. That's it. But if you disregard that, then it might help you.

You might read Joel Goldsmith and become suddenly physically healed. So that's great. There's some many people, the book, I don't know how many people are familiar with Christian science.

I don't think I'm familiar with it, but the foundational book for Christian science, Mary Baker Eddy, was kind of channeled, and you can read it. And quite a few people have claimed, may still claim, that just by reading some chapters in the book, they suddenly became healed. The book stresses, as Joel Goldsmith does, that basically illness is an illusion, and ultimately even having a physical body is an illusion.

On the deepest level, that is true. But you don't even, I don't usually approach it from that angle. The arising of presence is enough.

And where the identification with the body ceases. I'm not trying to convince anybody that the physical body is an illusion. And then we go, really?

Feels so real to me, especially the aches and pains.

[Speaker 2] (2:39:27 - 2:49:55)

Hi, let's get ready for a approximately 10 minute guided breath meditation. So here you are, sitting at your computer screen, and just come forward to the edge of your seat. So you're sitting right up onto your sit bones.

Your feet are flat on the floor. You can place your hands either face down or facing up on your lap. And then just gently close your eyes.

Sitting up nice and tall with your eyes closed. Bring your attention to your breath. Now at this moment, we're not trying to change the breath.

But just simply become aware of how you are being breathed at this moment. Perhaps there's some tightness, perhaps your breath is shallow. Just be aware, and then become aware of your body.

If there's any tightness, tension, bring your attention to those areas of tightness or tension. And consciously relax your body. So you're relaxing your jaw, your forehead, the shoulders, your entire body.

And then bring your attention back to your breath. And let's together deepen the breath. And as we're doing this, you're bringing calm, a calmness to your body, relaxing the body.

So we will inhale for a count of four and exhale for a count of four. So at this moment, we're just going to even out our breath. And for those who are beginning, just beginning their practice in meditation, you may wish to count, actually count out your inhale and count out your exhale.

So I'll count with you for the first two or three breaths. And then you can count just on your own. And for those who have been practicing meditation for a while, it's just simply consciously aware of your breath as you inhale and as you exhale.

Feeling the breath moving in and out of your body. Feeling the breath as you breathe in through the nose and exhale through the nose. So let's empty our breath, empty our lungs with an exhale.

Exhale. Then inhale two, three, four. Exhale two, three, four.

Inhale two, three, four. Exhale two, three, four. and continue like this on your own.

Notice where you're breathing when you inhale, where the breath is going in the body. See if you can actually inhale through the belly so when you inhale your belly rises and when you exhale your belly falls inward. If you become lost in thoughts just gently guide your attention back to your breath.

Now let's increase the inhale and the exhale to the count of six. You may notice as you deepen your breathing and you inhale it goes into the belly, into your chest and rises to the shoulders and as you exhale your shoulders fall, your chest falls and then your belly falls. Now just see if you can just stop the counting and simply be aware and feel.

Feel your belly rise as you inhale, the chest rise, the shoulders rise and feel your chest fall, your belly fall as you exhale. Feel the body relax as your breath evens out. Notice the space around your breath.

Notice the space in this moment and when you're ready you can slowly open your eyes, taking in the world of form, still keeping some attention on your breath and as you go about your day just practice keeping some attention inward on your breath and if you feel like you just want to keep sitting here meditating on your breath feel free to do so.

[Speaker 1] (2:50:26 - 7:03:48)

As you look at me or the image on the screen or look into my eyes, feel, sense your own presence. So you pay attention to that presence without which you would not be able to perceive anything. The prerequisite for all perception or experience is that presence.

Another way of putting it, there is a, you're giving attention to what appears in your consciousness at this moment. You're giving it attention and that attention is your presence, is awareness and that's more important than me looking at this image on the screen. So while I'm looking, it almost seems that I'm looking at you and in a way I am.

It took me a while, just a little comment. It took me some time to be able to speak into a camera rather than to a live person or live audience until I was able to sense the camera as a kind of wormhole, to use a science fiction term, through which I reach the consciousness that is you. Because it's essentially, we are an expression of that one consciousness manifesting as the person that I am right now for a little while, the person that you are right now for a little while.

A little while could be anything from how much longer are you going to live, few more weeks, months, 10 years, 50 years, 70 years. It's all a little while. There is an essence that underlies the entire universe.

And that is sometimes in spiritual language called the one. The oneness sounds a little bit more abstract. The one is more direct.

And the one is another term for God. So there isn't my consciousness and your consciousness only when we use language, it appears that there is such a thing when I say, I reach your consciousness. But there's only the one consciousness appearing as this and that and that.

I am that one consciousness. You are that one consciousness. Knowing yourself as that one consciousness is spiritual awakening is if you know yourself continuously as that one consciousness, then traditional terminology that would be called enlightenment.

It really is your natural state. Potentially it is a natural state for all humans potentially. And it is our destiny to know ourselves as the one consciousness.

The one consciousness, in other words, knowing itself through you and me. Becoming aware of itself. Awakening in this dimension.

Coming more and more fully into this dimension from another dimension which is timeless. In this dimension there is time. Paradoxically one can say the timeless one expressing itself gradually, which means time, expressing itself gradually more and more in this universe, in this dimension.

So the universe is becoming spiritualized, you could say. And from the perspective of time that takes a long time. But it's all very simple.

From where you are, it does not take time. This realization is the realization of the timeless. The timeless dimension in you.

That is the spirit, to use an old term. There is something else to you that is the body. And there's also the mind.

They are not separate from spirit. They are expressions, limited expressions of the formless one spirit, one consciousness. And so we have the three terms, mind, body, spirit.

You know yourself as a body. You can touch the body, you can look at yourself in the mirror. You can like or dislike what you see when you look in the mirror.

You can derive your identity or a large part of your identity from what you see in the mirror. Positive or negative, good or bad. You may like what you see, you may dislike what you see.

Either case, it's possible that you derive a large part of your identity from the body. If it looks good to you or better than others, then it's a happy identity. And if it doesn't, it's an unhappy identity.

It's a very limited identity, a sense of self, a very limited sense of self. But for people, it's the main thing that they are concerned about. And then comes the mind.

So the body, physical form, that which can be seen. And the next level is that which cannot be seen, but which can be known. You know yourself primarily as a mind.

The larger part of who you are is not visible. The entire psychological self, the conditioned entity, all the thought processes, all the emotions that go with the thoughts, all the emotions that arise, come and go. It's all the unseen you.

Science as it is at the moment wants to reduce the unseen to that which can be seen or perceived. In other words, it wants to reduce everything to matter. It doesn't really recognize there's anything unseen.

It says if you really look deep enough into matter, you will eventually find everything there. You will find the chemicals that produce the emotions, you will find the molecules that produce certain thoughts. You just haven't found them yet, they say.

We still don't know what a thought is. But eventually we'll find that matter produces thought. It's a byproduct of that's what science, mainstream science believes, believes at the moment that matter, that what we call consciousness is a byproduct of matter, accidental byproduct of matter.

And that is a, I don't want to argue with that right now, but the time will come when we will realize that is an absurd misperception of who we are. And that the entire universe can be reduced to accidental formations of matter is also a misperception. But we can put that aside for our meditation purposes here and go to what we can verify directly

within.

And you can verify that there's a lot of stuff going on inside you or thought processes that give you your sense of self. So the sense of self is derived and partly from the physical body. For some people, it's a large part, for other people, it's a smaller part of their sense of self.

The next step, you derive your sense of self from your mind and the emotions, thought activity, the mental image of who you are, the self talk in the head that you may be familiar with, the storytelling of the mind that you may know, me and my life, listen to my story. And that's where it stops for most people. Sense of self derived from the body plus the mind, which includes emotion, mental, emotional.

And that's about, that's what there is for most people. So you have body and mind, but where's the spirit? Now, for most people, spirit is just a concept.

They might, if you go to church or temple, or wherever you may hear about spirit, you may repeat words that refer to the spirit. But is that anything other for you than a thought in your head, just another thought that's added? Or even one gigantic thought that controls all other thoughts, God, so forth.

There are people in whom the mental concept of God has taken over their mind and has become the controlling thought. And through that controlling thought, they perceive everything else. They think that's spiritual.

Of course, what that really is, is what's sometimes called radical fundamentalism, actually a form of insanity. One thought has taken over and controls all other thoughts. And that is a gigantic ego.

And then you share that with other people who have the same dysfunction. And you have this gigantic collective ego. It's a form of insanity, not uncommon.

But anybody who is not yet aware of a spirit in their immediate experience, partakes to some degree of that dysfunction, might not be as gigantic and as potentially violent as the dysfunction in the fundamentalist or the terrorist. But it is a dysfunction when you only know yourself as the physical body and whatever your mind is telling you, with all its conditioned patterns. But it's so easy to take one another step deeper into yourself and also know yourself as spirit.

And that's so simple as the question I asked you at the beginning of our session today. As you look at me, can you sense that in you, which is looking? And I don't mean the physical eyes.

I don't mean what you're looking at. But the energy behind the looking, the consciousness that makes a looking possible. And that is your simple presence.

And if possible, make sure that you're not disturbed while we're here. And just give this time to yourself. Because really, meditation in a wider sense, just means being with yourself.

And everybody should take time out every day, even if it's only 10 minutes to be with themselves. Now you may ask, am I not always with myself? Throughout the day?

And you might even say, I'd rather get away from myself and my usual preoccupations, worries, anxieties, fears. So what does it mean when I say being with yourself? I don't refer to your usual sense of self, which I call the surface self.

That's to do with all the thinking that goes through your mind throughout the day, the emotions you experience, all the things that happen in your life, your memories of who you are. In every human being, there is a deeper dimension to who they are. And getting in touch with that deeper dimension within themselves.

That's really what meditation is. And if you've never accessed that deeper dimension in yourself, you will always feel that something really vital is missing in your life. Even though you may have achieved many things on what I call the surface reality, the surface level of your life.

Maybe you have recognition, maybe you have wealth, you can buy whatever you like. And yet, you will notice there's something that seems is still missing a certain underlying dissatisfaction or discontent. It may not be there all the time.

But it always resurfaces. And many people, I've met quite a few people who have achieved fame and fortune. And they all told me that after a while after the initial elation of being suddenly wealthy or famous, recognized as important by the world.

And soon, the old discontent came back, a sense of insufficiency, also to do with fear. So no matter what you achieve on the surface level of life, if you haven't found that deeper dimension to who you are, your life is not really fulfilled. And there's so much frustration.

The frustration that people continuously experience in life is not really to do with the imperfection on the outer level of their life, because on the outer level, things can never be perfect, or never perfect for very long. Things come and go, you lose here, you gain something there, you lose something here. So the dissatisfaction is not realizing that there is something deeper within you, that is more truly who you are, than whatever happens on the surface of your life.

That really is the spiritual dimension. And the deeper self also connects you with the underlying deeper dimension of the universe. Because just like you, what we see in this world, the universe, the world, whatever you call it, it's all the surface of reality.

Under that, and the great teachers and philosophers since ancient times have said that,

realized it, there is an unseen dimension. Underneath that, there is a universal intelligence underneath all the phenomena that we experience through the senses. And you are one with that universal intelligence.

And the way to connect with that universal intelligence that underlies all the manifold manifestations of life that continuously unfold around you is miraculous. Underlying all that, there is a, an intelligence, we can call it, there are other names we can use to talk about it. But it's only in you that you can find it, you can't find it out there.

But once you find it in yourself, you recognize it out there. You can sense that that intelligence or that consciousness is in everything. So how, how do you connect with the deeper level within yourself?

It's deeper than thinking. So you can't get there through thinking about it. It's deeper than the emotions.

And yet it's always there. It's always there. And it's not that it's totally hidden from you.

It's that the thinking, the thoughts, the emotions, and the sense perceptions draw all your attention to themselves. So people are kind of hypnotized by those things, especially thoughts. So they no longer can sense the dimension of depths, because every thought really demands your attention.

And you go, you follow it with your attention. And then it leads to another thought and another thought. And every thought is a voice in the head.

It thinks, it thinks, it thinks. And you go, and you think that's your life. All the thoughts that come and talk to you about who you are and what other life is, that's your life.

They're people who they are. And continuously, your attention is being drawn into that mind activity and emotions go with it. And that's, that's the usual surface sense of self.

And it's, it's frustrating if there's nothing else. Everybody has it, has that surface sense of self, of course. But if, if there's nothing else in your life, except that, then your life is shallow.

And the spiritual dimension is missing. So here we are. Because we want to find the dimension of depths within ourselves.

And it's already here. We just need to become aware of it. How?

Well, that's what traditionally what meditation methods are for. But here, I'd like to suggest to you to just investigate without actually using any technique as such. Just investigate with your attention.

What it means to be yourself. On the most essential level. What does it feel like to be

yourself?

What is that sense of self? Can you get a taste or a glimpse of that sense of self without thinking about yourself? How is it possible that you can even think about yourself and about your life and all the things that make up your life?

What makes that thinking possible? What is the prerequisite for being able to think? You need to be conscious.

If you're not conscious, you can't think. But usually, this consciousness is completely absorbed by thinking. And that is what keeps you on the surface level of reality and yourself.

So you only know yourself as defined by your mind. You then have an image of who you are. And really, that is what ego means in the way we use it.

You then have a mental image. You have a self-talk. And you think that's who you are.

Me. But there is a more fundamental sense of self underneath all that. And that is your simple sense of presence.

So I'm inviting you now to sense that there is more to you than all your thinking. What does it feel like without the thinking to be yourself? What is left when you're not thinking but you're not falling asleep?

Let's see if we can create a little gap in the stream of thinking. To some extent, me talking to you already does that. So if there's a little gap in the stream of thinking, like now, you go, and there's a moment of no thought.

But something is there. A sense of presence or aliveness, whatever you call it. So can you sense now, at this moment, that inherent, deeper sense of alive presence that has nothing to do with your personal history?

It has nothing to do with the past. It has nothing to do with the future. It has nothing to do with your situation in life or your name or your background.

It's beyond all that. So another way of putting it, can you sense that presence? You can't define it.

It has no content. It's just space. Spacious presence.

And then you know, in that you know, that you are alive without having to tell yourself that you are alive. Because the fact that you are alive is self-evident. Because you are conscious.

And to say you are conscious, even that is not absolutely correct. Because in essence,

it's not that you are conscious, but you are consciousness. That strange thing or no thing, that's the essence of who you are.

And sensing yourself as that consciousness also frees you, liberates you from being completely trapped. In your personal sense of self. Of course, that's still there on the surface.

But now, you can sense that you are actually deeper than that. Now you may notice that as I speak to you, there are little gaps between words or sentences. Now these gaps are not there to hypnotize you.

Because we are here to de-hypnotize you from being totally trapped in your thoughts and deriving your sense of who you are from your thinking. It's to bring you to that presence. Pure presence.

That's so refreshing, so revitalizing to sense yourself as that pure presence. And so, these little gaps in between words or sentences as I speak are very important. Because you may notice that in those gaps, you're not thinking.

In those gaps, for example now, you are just present. And that's wonderfully liberating to sense yourself as that presence. I'd like to mention for those of you who are new to this, to be aware as you sit here and listen and watch, to be aware that I don't talk continuously right now.

There are short gaps in between words or sentences. And as part of our meditation, please just notice that there are gaps when I don't speak. Notice means pay attention.

Just note. One could even say the gaps are more important than the words. You need a certain alertness to notice the gaps.

I could say what you notice is the silence in between words or sentences. And to the mind, the thinking mind, that is something silly and absurd. Because the thinking mind is mental noise, so it doesn't know what to do with silence.

It's not high on your list of thinking minds or list of priorities. And the thinking mind says I've got other things to worry about than silence, but that's the problem. It worries a lot.

The thinking mind is not ever silent. But to find that dimension is very important in your life. I would even say the most important thing.

Now what happens inside you when you notice the silence between words, the gap? You become silent. When you notice that there is a silence, a silent space, like now, in that moment of noticing, whether it's two seconds or five seconds, in that moment of noticing, you're not thinking, but you're conscious.

And that's meditation. To be conscious without thinking. In addition to noticing the silent

gap, gaps, you could also become aware that you are breathing.

The breath flows in and out. Flows in and out. So it may help you to be aware not only of the silent space, spaces, where it's only ever one space because there's only the present moment.

To be aware of the one space, the gap between words, it may be helpful while you're aware of that space, to be aware that you're breathing also, you're breathing. You feel it, sense the air flowing in and out. So there's a knowing in the background that's not thinking.

A conscious presence, but you're not thinking. It's vitally important to be able to access that dimension, not just when you sit and say, okay, now for the next 10 minutes, 15 minutes, half an hour, one hour, I'm going to do my meditation. That's fine.

It can be very helpful. But it's more important to access that dimension in everyday life. That's stillness, another word for it.

And in that stillness, you are there, but not the historical you, the person that thinks about his or her problems and fears and desires and the past and the future. It's all connected with a stream of thinking. Me and my life, think about that.

Who I am, that's defined by thinking, the judgments about myself, things I'm proud of, things I'm ashamed of, things I regret, things I'm anxious about that might happen. All that usually gives you your sense of who you are. But when that comes to a stop, there's a cessation in that stream of thinking that usually provides you with your sense of identity.

Then, now, you become aware that there is another dimension of consciousness in you that's, one could say, deeper than thinking, or one could say, higher than thinking. Awareness, presence, stillness, spaciousness. And you can sense that there is something there that has no form.

When you think about your life, your problems, your anxieties, so on, it's all form, every thought is a thought form. And yet there's another dimension in you that most people don't know about that is formless. One could say you become aware of your being, your beingness, your presence.

When there's a moment of no thought, is there nothing there anymore? Well, there is undoubtedly a conscious presence left, the light of consciousness, and that is you. More essentially than the story of your life.

That is the universe of which you are an intrinsic part, the universe becoming aware of itself. It's conscious. You are conscious.

And suddenly you know that you are conscious. You sense that consciousness, that presence. It underlies everything.

Your entire order of thinking couldn't happen if you were not conscious. You couldn't have any emotions if you were not conscious. You couldn't have any sense perceptions if you were not conscious.

It underlies everything. It's the foundation for everything. It's the one thing that is totally beyond any doubt.

Maybe your entire life is a kind of dream. It could be. So you can doubt the absolute reality of your so-called life.

What you cannot doubt, because the evidence for it is here and now and immediate, what you cannot doubt is that you are conscious. The essence of who you are is that presence, that consciousness. I want to leave aside today for our meditation the question that may have arisen in your mind, whether the brain, the physical brain, produces consciousness, or whether the brain receives consciousness like a radio receives the signals and translates them.

I would suggest the second is the case, but we don't need to explore that here now. Our session here is practical and direct. We don't need to go at the moment into abstract speculation or philosophy, although it's interesting.

The fact remains that that presence that's there is the essence of who you are. Most people are not aware of their own presence. They are only aware of what arises in that presence, in that consciousness.

Sense perceptions, the look, the hear, the touch. Thoughts and emotions. Those are the things that arise in that light of consciousness.

Welcome to another live meditation. As you look at me, or the image on the screen, or look into my eyes, feel, sense your own presence. So you pay attention to that presence without which you would not be able to perceive anything.

The prerequisite for all perception or experience is that presence. Another way of putting it, there is a, you're giving attention to what appears in your consciousness at this moment. You're giving it attention, and that attention is your presence, is awareness.

And that's more important than me looking at this image on the screen. So while I'm looking, it almost seems that I'm looking at you, and in a way I am. It took me a while, just a little comment.

It took me some time to be able to speak into a camera rather than to a live person or a live audience. Until I was able to sense the camera as a kind of wormhole, to use a

science fiction term, through which I reach the consciousness that is you. Essentially, we are an expression of that one consciousness, manifesting as the person that I am right now for a little while, or the person that you are right now for a little while.

A little while could be anything from how much longer are you going to live, a few more weeks, months, 10 years, 50 years, 70 years. It's all a little while. There is an essence that underlies the entire universe, and that is sometimes in spiritual language called the one.

The oneness sounds a little bit more abstract. The one is more direct. And the one is another term for God.

So there isn't my consciousness and your consciousness, only when we use language it appears that there is such a thing, when I say I reach your consciousness. But there is only the one consciousness, appearing as this and that and that. I am that one consciousness.

You are that one consciousness. Knowing yourself as that one consciousness is spiritual awakening, is you know yourself continuously as that one consciousness. In traditional terminology that would be called enlightenment.

It really is your natural state. Potentially it is the natural state for all humans. It is our destiny to know ourselves as the one consciousness.

The one consciousness, in other words, knowing itself through you and me. Becoming aware of itself. Awakening in this dimension.

Coming more and more fully into this dimension from another dimension which is timeless. In this dimension there is time. Paradoxically one can say the timeless one expressing itself gradually, which means time, expressing itself gradually more and more in this universe, in this dimension.

So the universe is becoming spiritualized. And from the perspective of time, it takes a long time. But it is all very simple.

From where you are, it does not take time. And this realization is the realization of the timeless. The timeless dimension in you.

That is the spirit, to use an old term. There is something else to you that is the body. And there is also the mind.

They are not separate from spirit. They are expressions, limited expressions of the formless one spirit, one consciousness. And so we have the three terms, mind, body, spirit.

You know yourself as a body. You can touch the body, you can look at yourself in the

mirror. You can like or dislike what you see when you look in the mirror.

You can derive your identity or a large part of your identity from what you see in the mirror. Positive or negative, good or bad. You may like what you see, you may dislike what you see.

In either case, it is possible that you derive a large part of your identity from the body. If it looks good to you or better than others, then it is a happy identity. And if it doesn't, it is an unhappy identity.

It is a very limited identity, a sense of self. A very limited sense of self, but for some people it is the main thing that they are concerned about. And then comes the mind.

So the body, physical form, that which can be seen. And the next level is that which cannot be seen, but which can be known. You know yourself, or at least the mind.

The larger part of who you are is not visible. The entire psychological self, the conditioned entity, all the thought processes, all the emotions that go with the thoughts. All the emotions that arise, come and go.

It's all the unseen you. Science, as it is at the moment, wants to reduce the unseen to that which can be seen or perceived. In other words, it wants to reduce everything to matter.

It doesn't really recognize there is anything unseen. It says, if you really look deep enough into matter, you will eventually find everything there. You will find the chemicals that produce the emotions.

You will find the molecules that produce certain thoughts. We just haven't found them yet, they say. We still don't know what a thought is, but eventually we will find that matter produces thought.

It's a by-product of what mainstream science believes at the moment. That matter, what we call consciousness, is a by-product of matter. Accidental by-product of matter.

I don't want to argue with that right now, but a time will come when we will realize that is an absurd misperception of who we are. And that the entire universe can be reduced to accidental formations of matter is also a misperception. But we can put that aside for our meditation purposes here and go to what we can verify directly within.

And you can verify that there is a lot of stuff going on inside you, thought processes that give you your sense of self. So the sense of self is derived then partly from the physical body. For some people it's a large part, for other people it's a smaller part of their sense of self.

The next step, you derive your sense of self from your mind and the emotions. Thought

activity, the mental image of who you are, the self-talk in the head that you may be familiar with. The storytelling of the mind that you may know.

Me and my life. Listen to my story. And that's where it stops for most people.

Sense of self derived from the body plus the mind, which includes emotion, mental emotion. And that's what there is for most people. So you have body and mind, but where is the spirit?

Now for most people spirit is just a concept. If you go to church or temple or wherever, you may hear about spirit, you may repeat words that refer to the spirit. But is that anything other for you than a thought in your head, just another thought that's added?

Or even one gigantic thought that controls all other thoughts? God. So far there are people in whom the mental concept of God has taken over their mind and has become the controlling thought.

And through that controlling thought they perceive everything else. They think that's spiritual. Of course what that really is, is what's sometimes called radical fundamentalism.

Actually a form of insanity. One thought has taken over and controls all other thoughts. And that is a gigantic ego.

And then you share that with other people who have the same dysfunction. And you have this gigantic collective ego. It's a form of insanity, not uncommon.

But anybody who is not yet aware of the spirit in their immediate experience partakes to some degree of that dysfunction. It might not be as gigantic and as potentially violent as the dysfunction in the fundamentalist or the terrorist. But it is a dysfunction when you only know yourself as the physical body and whatever your mind is telling you.

With all its conditioned patterns. But it's so easy to take another step deeper into yourself and also know yourself as spirit. And that's so simple as the question I asked you at the beginning of our session today.

As you look at me, can you sense that in you which is looking? And I don't mean the physical eyes. I don't mean what you are looking at.

But the energy behind the looking. The consciousness that makes the looking possible. And that is your simple presence.

I trust you are okay with stillness. To be okay with stillness you have to access the stillness within you. Otherwise it gets uncomfortable.

If you experience joy or moments of joy or beauty, aliveness, a sense of aliveness. A

loving connection with another human being or a loving connection with another life form. Or if you have any creative idea in your life or anything creative comes to you.

All those things that I just mentioned imply that you have some access already to the stillness inside you. Because all those things, the joy, the sense of aliveness, the lovingness towards others. The creative impulse, the creative idea.

All that comes from that dimension in you. Now many humans have some access to that dimension. That's why they feel it's good to be alive.

And for most humans that access gets for long periods of time covered up again by excessive mind activity. And then it resurfaces again. It's not recognized usually directly for what it is.

It is recognized indirectly. So you may be aware that suddenly you feel a sense of joy and aliveness. Or you look at another human being and you feel a deep sense of connection.

So what happens there is that dimension arises. You don't recognize it directly. You recognize it as joy.

You recognize it as a loving connection or loving kindness. Or a creative impulse or a sense of heightened aliveness. Or the recognition of beauty.

You look and, oh, isn't that beautiful? And in the looking and the recognition of the beauty you may not realize that what underlies that, that which makes it possible, is that for a moment there was no thought activity. In your mind a space opened up.

That space, that is the stillness. And that is why you could recognize the beauty. Or that is why you felt the connection with another human.

Or a simple aliveness arose within you. So it comes spontaneously to you. There are some humans, quite a few, who almost never experience that opening into the alive stillness.

And their lives are truly miserable. Miserable. They may not even know that.

They may not even know that their lives are miserable. They think it's normal to be continuously immersed in the thinking. Isn't everybody else?

Now a deepening happens when you recognize that stillness directly. It may happen spontaneously in a situation. You're looking at a tree and for a moment there's no thought.

There's just the perception and the stillness in the background. So you begin to recognize it directly as the foundation for joy, for love, for also compassion, empathy

with another. You can't arrive at empathy through conceptual thinking.

You cannot sense the aliveness of another human being through conceptual thinking. But only thinking needs to subside for a moment and then the sense of separation that's created by continuous thinking disappears in that moment. So I'm inviting you to enter the stillness.

Another way of putting it, I'm inviting you to stop thinking without falling asleep. That's one way, but that's not the way here. And this is the next evolutionary level for humans, rising above thinking.

Not abandoning thinking altogether, transcending thinking. Thinking can still operate much more powerfully, by the way, when it's rooted consciously in the stillness. Now if you're still thinking, this becomes boring or uncomfortable.

If it's not boring or uncomfortable, then you are in that state of freedom from thought. You may sense your presence, so to speak, the presence that you are, the essence of you. Sense it as a whole body realization.

Just a sense of presence throughout the body as you sit here. And that is a sense of heightened aliveness. And if you choose to look around, still sensing this heightened aliveness in your entire energy field, if you then look around, you see that also whatever you are perceiving feels more alive.

Even inanimate objects have a certain beingness. They are. Even a table, chair.

Even there, there is some life. They are called inanimate, which means, I suppose, lifeless. But if you look more deeply into the molecular structure of the chair or the table, you would see intense aliveness and intense movement.

So at this very moment, the universe, we could say, appearing as you experiences itself. Of course that's the truth. You are not separate from the universe.

It's an amazing thing. The universe appearing briefly as what we call a person, a cell within the totality, experiencing itself both on the level of multiplicity of life forms, which has included everything through perceptions, but also on the deeper level, the universe experiencing itself as the unmanifested underlying life. The manifested is the world of form.

The unmanifested is the formless one life. Timeless, that which preceded the Big Bang that the physicists talk about. The timeless one that did not cease to exist when the universe came into existence, but this timeless one that continues to be at the core of every life form.

That which gave birth to the universe did not cease to exist by giving birth to the

universe. Exist is the wrong word because it doesn't exist. Because exist means to stand out.

Ex is out, Latin. To stand exist means to stand out, so that's all life forms exist. But the one unmanifested life does not exist because it doesn't stand out, it is in.

It is, you could say. It's being but not existence. No, everything that exists has being.

Being is at the core of each thing the unmanifested timeless one life. Don't think about this. I'm not using this so that you conceptually arrive at some conclusion, but for you to experience within yourself that this one timeless unmanifested life that precedes the Big Bang is the very cause of who you are.

And it's absolutely still. And it's absolutely alive. And it's absolutely empty and absolutely full.

And it's you. It's I. The one I.

Appearing as many I's and U's. Now you can only really become comfortable with the continuous flux of life forms that come and go and are born and die, are born and die. You can only really become comfortable with that when you are aware of the core of yourself as the timeless stillness.

Otherwise, the continuous birth and death around you is upsetting. The continuous gain and loss and birth and death and the continuous coming and going and change is no foothold. And we have the two dimensions expressed beautifully in very ancient Greek philosophy.

I may have mentioned before, Heraclitus, Heraclitus, Heraclitus, says, you cannot step into the same river twice because of this continuous flux. It's not, it's different water. It's, it's, pantare is the Greek.

Everything flows. Everything is subject to continuous change and metamorphosis. Everything around you.

He said that's the basis of his philosophy. 500 B.C. And then came another philosopher, Parmenides, I believe, who said nothing ever changes. It's all an illusion.

And he's right too. They're both right, of course. Heraclitus talks about the manifested world.

And Parmenides talks about the unmanifested one life. What the Buddha, I don't know whether the Buddha actually used that term, but I think he probably did, or whether it comes later. It's sometimes hard to tell in Buddhism scriptures whether they go as far back as the actual Buddha teaching.

The unborn is a Buddhist term, meaning that which is prior to existence, the timeless one. The unborn within you. So the wonderful thing is the heart of the universe, this vast incomprehensible thing that you see the tiniest fraction of when you look at the stars at night.

It's a tiny, tiny fraction of what's there. And even that's not just tiny because you only see a few thousand stars out of billions and billions and billions, but also tiny because of the limitations of what your senses can perceive. And the heart of it all, the core of it all, although on the outer level you seem pretty insignificant, and me, we look pretty insignificant when we see the vastness of the universe, but there is something within you that transcends the world of form.

And that is why the secret of the universe is in you. And obviously you can't comprehend it conceptually, but there's a realization there. And it's only there that there's deep peace.

That's the only place where you can find true peace. You don't have to be always a heavy person, carrying the baggage of past and a mind full of stuff. There is another way of being in this world, and that's to be the presence.

And this is all meditation. And even as I speak, you can be the presence because there's nothing to think about. What I'm saying is so simple that you cannot figure it out by thinking about it because there's nothing to figure out.

You can't work, what is he saying? He's saying exactly what he's saying. You can't say, oh, I'm trying to understand what he's saying.

There's nothing to understand. Stepping out of thinking does not involve further understanding through thinking. That may be a little insulting, particularly to those of you who are highly educated and identify excessively with the content of your mind.

That thinking is not the highest faculty in a human being. And that is a revolutionary statement that not many people in the mainstream culture would agree with because all they know themselves is as thinking entities. But once you discover that thinking is not the highest because you've touched something, a dimension in yourself that's beyond thinking, that is an evolutionary leap.

If you fall back into thinking, for a moment you've leapt like the first fish trying to leap out of the sea because they say life has developed in the sea and trying to crawl on land. That is you stopping thinking. And then it gets too difficult and the fish gets back into the sea.

There's a common belief that when you meditate your eyes need to be closed. But they don't need to be closed. It's wonderful to realize you can meditate with your eyes open.

Of course, what do I mean by meditate? Quite simply, being in thoughtless awareness, that's meditation. And as I speak and as you listen, you can be in thoughtless awareness.

Just a presence. Why not? You don't have to be always a heavy person carrying the baggage of past and a mind full of stuff.

There is another way of being in this world and that's to be the presence. And this is all meditation. And even as I speak, you can be the presence because there's nothing to think about.

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And then it gets too difficult and the fish gets back into the sea. But that analogy, of course, we need to forget now because it's not going to take us several million years as it took to the fishes before they could start walking on land and if that whole story is true, who knows? It doesn't matter.

So as you might have noticed, what I'm talking about is very simple because I'm simply guiding you into presence, that's all. But more important than the words is what's behind and in between the words. And we could call that spaciousness or we could call that stillness.

Doesn't matter what you call it, but you become more aware of the spaciousness than the words and the spaciousness is within you. It's there at the moment the stream of thinking subsides and there's only the presence left. If your mind still tends to interfere and take you out of presence, allow the body, your body, to participate in the meditation so that you become present with every cell of the body.

Every cell of the body becomes present. Now somebody might say, please explain what you mean by that. No, I won't.

It's too simple for that. Just sense the aliveness in your body. Anywhere where you can feel it first is fine, the hands or the legs or the feet.

And then the entire energy field that pervades the body becomes part of presence. And at first it seems that you, the consciousness, are observing the inner body feeling. But if you go into it more deeply, you realize that there's no longer a subject-object relationship between you, the presence, and the feeling of the inner body.

You, the presence, and the feeling of the inner body merge, and the totality of that becomes the state of presence. So it's no longer an observer and the observed. There's a merging of the observer and the observed.

So it means the entire being becomes aware. And that's a lovely state. Peaceful.

And then it's fairly easy not to drift off into thinking tomorrow's breakfast or next week's problems or last year's disappointments. And many other things that thinking is concerned with. My problematic life.

Somebody, perhaps it was Carl Jung, I'm not sure, said you cannot solve the problems of this world on the same level of consciousness that created the problems. So you can't solve your personal problems, which everybody has, unless you rise to a different state of consciousness, which is why we are here. And when you solve your personal problems, that a sufficient number of humans do that, then that will affect the world problems.

And that's how truly you can change the world, or to put it more accurately, how that change can happen through you. It's not you, the doer, who is going to change the world, but it can happen through you. In the meantime, there's nothing wrong.

In fact, it's wonderful to alleviate suffering where you see it in this world, where you feel called upon to help in your immediate environment or elsewhere. That's a wonderful thing to do. But the causal level of the world's problems lies in the collective consciousness or unconsciousness of the world.

And that is the only place, the consciousness, where deep and permanent change can happen, so that eventually you don't need to help other humans anymore. They don't need your help anymore. You can just commune joyfully with them.

So you deal, of course, with the effects of unconsciousness in this world. There's a lot of suffering, physical and psychological. And your focal point, even as you help others, your focal point needs to be this shift in consciousness.

So the entire body is meditating, so to speak, is present as you sit here. And you can now perhaps easily verify the effectiveness of a meditation question that was one of the favorite meditations of Ramana Maharshi, the Indian sage, and that was the simple question, who am I? He said, just ask yourself that question and go deeply into it and then see what happens.

Who am I? And a little hint, I don't know if he gave that hint, the answer is not in words. The answer is, let's see if it comes to you, who am I?

And you need to be, of course, alert and still after the question has been asked so that you can find out, who am I? I'll give you another hint, you can't think about it. Then you get confused.

And then you will say, either you'll say, of course, I'm so-and-so, of course, then you're certain, but you're well below the answer. Or you say, I don't know, I'm so confused now, you're confusing me. That's because you're trying to find an answer through thinking.

Who am I? What remains is just an alertness, an alert space. That's consciousness, let's call it your consciousness, but it's not yours.

That's your consciousness minus the content, minus forms. Who am I? And if you had, if somebody were forcing you to give an answer in words, the truthful answer would be, I don't know.

Because it is not through any word or concept that you can know who you are. So on the level of words or concepts, you have to say, I don't know. And yet there is undoubtedly a presence there that has no name and has no content and has no past and no future and no problems.

Totally intangible, formless, this was what Jesus referred to as the kingdom of heaven. Heaven, the vastness of sky, heaven and sky in some words are the same word in some languages. He had to find some kind of word to describe the spaciousness of that inner state.

So he called it the kingdom in modern terminology, the dimension or the realm of vastness or spaciousness. But it's not the outer spaciousness, it's the inner. But of course, all words refer to outer things.

The kingdom of heaven is within you. And that's why, as it has no content and no form, God called it emptiness. This is a question about unconscious people in group situations that draw others around them into their negativity.

I've seen this, especially in meetings at work. Yes, that is very common. It happens even at church meetings.

And meditation centers, when you go to a committee meeting, Center for Inner Peace committee meeting. I'm not referring to anything. I don't know if there's a Center for Inner Peace.

If there is, please excuse me. I'm sorry. What do you recommend that would help change this situation?

And while it is happening, is there something I could do or say in the moment with this person to get the meeting to a more constructive place? Yes. I cannot specifically say what you could do or say, but the most important thing is that you don't react to the unconsciousness in the other, because that's the easiest, the most seductive thing is that reactivity arises.

And the moment you react with negativity, even saying, why don't you just shut up? We are fed up with listening to you. And we'll see what happens.

If you can be free of reaction or rather reactivity, then something is possible. If you react, you are being drawn into unconsciousness and the same level as the person you're reacting to. So in other words, you become what you are fighting against.

And this is not uncommon. There are ways in which you fight against unconscious people or people. They might do things that look evil, but of course it arises out of unconsciousness and the fight without you knowing it, gradually you are at the same level as those people.

So that's very, can happen very easily. So let's come back to the meetings. So to be intensely present is so that your state of consciousness is one of intense presence as you look around the room.

So in intense presence, there's no reaction. And you see everything for what it is. You don't personalize the unconscious behavior of another person.

You don't say what a dreadful person that is. No, it's not a dreadful person. It's just human unconsciousness in action.

A manifestation of the current evolutionary stage of the majority of humans. That's all, nothing personal about it. Manifestation of the current evolutionary stage of most humans' consciousness.

Nothing personal about it. Oh, well, that makes it perhaps a little easier, but you don't have to tell yourself even that in order to be present. You're just present and you feel go into the body so that every cell of the body is alive with presence and you feel the aliveness in every cell of the body.

Because otherwise the body and the emotion that lives in the body will react to this

person's emotion. It'll come from there if it doesn't come from the mind. Be in the body.

The body's your anchor for presence. And there you are as a point of presence in this room. And whether or not you say something or what you say or what action you take, I don't know because it can only come out of presence.

Or whether you say anything at all, or whether you just totally ignore this level of discourse that the other person is involved in and just continue presenting the situation, what we need to look at. In some cases, you completely ignore. In other cases, you might address this person and speak to the sanity that's hiding somewhere underneath the insanity.

You might address that, that might work. We don't know, but you will know what the right thing to do is or if there's anything to do in that situation. But it's vital to be absolutely present, especially in the presence of very unconscious people.

Sounds a little contradictory. I'm using presence in another sense. When very unconscious people are around you, then it's extremely important to be highly present so that you don't get drawn in.

And then something can happen. The situation can change. And so you represent a different level of consciousness there.

You can probably even, I'm saying probably because I have little experience with it, you can probably even do it on the internet because the internet is full of things that have come out of very unconscious minds. And so it is sometimes possible to just give your contribution as a conscious contribution that will contrast with all the unconscious, very negative or aggressive contributions of people, what they have said. Someone says something that is, and a few people will respond to that and it might make some difference.

So you're never attacking anybody, of course, in any statement that comes out of consciousness. There's never, you're not attacking anybody. You might rectify a lie.

You might rectify something that's totally false. That's a different matter. In extreme cases, of course, if the entire room becomes wildly unconscious, you may have to remove yourself and you will find the right, when the moment comes, you'll find your body is getting up and you find yourself walking to the door.

And it could even be that you never return to this office. If you live in a very unconscious business environment or office environment, then it may be a place where no matter how present you are, there's not much that you can do. Perhaps we can affect one or two people, but if the entire, the collective energy field, because a company is also a kind of a collective entity consisting of all these humans, and if the majority or all of the humans are deeply unconscious, then you have a company structure that is deeply

unconscious.

And the company has its own, is more than the sum total of the parts that make up the company. So it almost has its own ego identity. A company is an ego too.

Even a nation has an ego identity. So a company has an ego identity too. And it can do bad things that the individual human, although they are unconscious, might not be capable of doing if they were acting on their behalf, on their own behalf.

But if they are drawn into identification with the, I hinted at that yesterday too, last night, I believe. If they are identified with the collective, insane collective ego structure, then humans are capable of atrocities that as individuals, as individual egos, they would not be capable of. And this applies, for example, also to cults and sects where people within the cult and sect, people are very honorable and helpful and loving to each other and give up their personal ego, but they have exchanged their personal ego for the collective ego.

And the collective ego, with reference to the outside world, is insane. So if you are in a totally insane environment, you may not, your presence may not be enough to bring about much change there. So there are certain environments that it is better to remove yourself from.

But there too, it's good to be, just to be present because then you don't have agonizing decision-making involved in should I stay in this company or should I not? For security, I should stay because it offers some kind of security. But of course, I'll be happy for the next 22 years until I retire.

Am I going to stay in here and be happy for the next 22 years for security and for my pension that I'm going to get afterwards? No. No.

I'm not. I'm not staying in an insane environment for the sake of delusional security because it's not even security because in 21 years' time, your whole pension fund will have collapsed anyway. I forgot to say hello to all the people who are watching us in different parts of the world.

And what parts of the world? I don't know. Or maybe you're in an office building right now watching this on your computer when you should be doing something else.

But of course, that's what the company says. But you know that you're doing exactly what you should be doing. Adversity is a wonderful opportunity because adversity forces you to go deeper.

Are you able to dig and find the foundation within yourself that frees you from fear? Certain actions take place. You do things.

You know they're not the optimal things to do, but you can't help it. It's something that acts through you. There seems to be some power there that makes you do things that you know are not right or not good for you, and yet you can't stop it.

That seems to be the case. And that, of course, is often the case with people who are... With you it might be many different areas of your life, but this is also the case with addictions, for example.

People who are addicted to a certain substance or who are addicted to eating too much or drinking. There's something that overpowers them in you that seems to obscure the awareness or the awareness is pushed to the side and this powerful thing does it anyway. And again, my answer is a little bit similar to what I said to the first questioner tonight.

The power of presence needs to grow in you so that it is strong enough not to... It's not willpower because willpower is not the best way of dealing with these things, but it's... What I'm talking about could sometimes be confused with willpower, but willpower includes the application of a force to hold something down.

Let's say if your addiction is to have a... to indulge in intoxicating beverages, then... and you can feel it, it comes on, there it comes, you know the bottles are there, there they are, and you feel you have to go there and you have to reach out and you have to pour yourself a drink.

Now, when you're not aware at all, you don't even know what you're doing, you're so unconscious that you're already holding the drink and you're drinking, then at that point you don't even know that you're drinking. The same with food. I've spoken to people who have had addictions to food.

They often say they wake up, they've already eaten in the middle of the night, they've already unconsciously gone to the fridge, taken out the chocolate cake, and they're already halfway through the chocolate cake and suddenly they're like, they hold an urge down that say, they have to pull, or even the example you gave, you want to turn on the TV and you know it's not right because I'm not here for that and he actually told us not to do it. But I can't help it. I have to go.

Now, willpower, you would say, I'm going to hold this down, I'm not going to do it. And I can feel the urge, but you're holding it down. When you hold things down, often after a while an explosion happens.

It's like a boiling kettle. Can't hold it for that long and then you have some kind of rationalization in your mind. But you do it anyway.

The mind will give you a reason. I spoke to a man who was addicted to food and his body was very unhealthy, he was extremely, dangerously overweight. Unfortunately he's

passed away, but he was a wonderful man and he talked to me and often before he goes to indulge in excessive eating, his mind would say something like, you've had a rough day, you really deserve a treat.

It explains why it's the right thing. I'm not going to do it for much longer, but just today I really need a treat. Life hasn't been treating me but it's the only pleasure I have.

What should I do? It's all I have. There's no other pleasure in my life.

I'm going to the fridge. Listen, I attempted to be able to show him that this thought is a deception and I had a little bit of success, but unfortunately it was too late to save him. Well, he is no longer in the body, but that's okay.

He probably reincarnates now into the opposite perhaps in order to learn a lesson. Again, what I said to the first questioner, to practice presence power when you're not particularly tempted by anything and you're just in your room there's no particular temptation, go into the body, feel the body, feel the inner body, be aware, be present. When you sense perception, I recommended that practice.

Sense perception, feel the presence pervading every cell in your body, the inner body awareness and so that there's enough presence for when this impulse comes, you use it as, don't say go away or something like that because it won't go away, it'll do it anyway. The impulse comes, whatever it may be, and you observe, you realize it's not a good thing that it wants you to do and if there's enough awareness, use it as every time an impulse of that kind comes, this is your special spiritual practice. So instead of wanting to get rid of it, welcome when an impulse comes and see that this is a spiritual practice specially designed for you.

Of course it is. And so how do you transform this into spiritual practice? First you realize this is an opportunity for practicing and the first thing you could do is you practice delaying, obeying the impulse, not obeying it immediately but delaying it and you observe then, let's say when you wanted to go to the TV and turn the thing on or you feel the impulse or say okay, here's my next spiritual practice, I'm now going to delay the turning on of this show on TV for three minutes and during those three minutes you observe this, the impulse in you, you observe, it's an energy form and you observe it, oh there you are, there you are, hmm, do you feel it? It's like a little gremlin or something. And so this time gap can be a very useful first practice that you introduce a time gap before you give in and so you're not saying I'm not going to give in, no you say three minutes, during those three minutes I'm going to observe you and you shine the light of consciousness, the light of awareness on this impulse which is an energy form and it can be an energy form that is in you as a kind of emotion, it can also dangerously invade your mind and make you, the explanation I gave just now to a friend of mine, the thought comes into your head that explains why you should give in to this impulse that can happen easily and there too you need to be present enough, sufficiently aware so

that you do not believe in every thought, especially those kinds of thoughts, you don't believe in every thought that comes into your head, you observe the thought because the thought is part of it and even to the thought you say oh there you are, there's the thought and there's the feeling behind the thought and you set aside three minutes during those three minutes you observe isn't that interesting, wonderful spiritual practice and while you observe you grow in consciousness, you apply consciousness to it, only three minutes, three minutes and after the three minutes see how you feel, it may have dissolved but probably not yet, it's still there and then you can see can I do another two or three minutes, am I strong enough for that, is my awareness strong enough and yes it is, don't believe, stop this nonsense, do it anyway and so you achieve five or six minutes and then what happens after that we don't know, it is possible that the impulse has receded, gone back to a dormant state and you suddenly you don't have to do it, it's also possible that the impulse has receded is still there and you cannot, after five minutes there's not enough awareness left and you have to go and do it but at least the five minute interval the time gap was very important and anything like that happens you always introduce a time gap for your spiritual practice during which you do not hold it down but you observe it so you don't push it down you observe, oh there you are so if it's a gremlin you don't say hold you down there's a gremlin you look at it there it is, oh now the interesting thing when you apply awareness to something the possibility of transformation is also there it arises as you shine the light of consciousness on it this is the famous example from fairy stories and so on the frog you don't kill the frog or do something with it you kiss the frog and the moment you kiss the frog it turns into the prince so the frog stands for this is like mythology there's some wisdom embedded in these fairy stories which by the way many of them were not created by the people who wrote them they were already orally transmitted over long periods of time so they are mythologies that often contain a lot of wisdom and there's certainly a lot of wisdom in kissing the frog which then turns into something beautiful so there's something ugly but you give it you give it an acceptance a love, you look at it and then transformation happens so that is the spiritual practice and after a while you will find that initially perhaps after the time gap you still do it but the time gap gets longer and then you may observe that the energy behind the impulse weakens and it subsides until next time but gradually it weakens and all these self-sabotage mechanisms then begin to gradually disappear if you apply the awareness to it observe them, there it is so think of the frog these are all the frogs there are gremlins, frogs that live in you as energy fields and the energies are trapped there they are not in themselves bad they are trapped like the pain body is an energy that is emotional energy that's trapped when the pain body dissolves it's transformed into presence it's like a fire you put a log into a fire it's consumed and transmuted perhaps is the word it's transmuted into presence and here we have again the famous example in middle ages certain philosophers were very interested in alchemy alchemy was supposed to be the transformation of base metal into gold through a chemical process and the idea behind alchemy was the transformation of human consciousness they have many images and so on they could not speak and write

about this openly because they would have been executed by the church at the time so they had to hide all these symbols as if it were to do the transformation of base metal into gold which were not very desirable into something wonderful and that's the alchemical process of transmutation which really is something in the human psyche there's an entire long treatise written by Carl Jung the psychologist on alchemy with countless illustrations and just fascinating things but it's all undesirable initially into awareness into consciousness so you're lucky to have that tailor designed spiritual practice for you so it's wonderful practice that's your practice it doesn't matter where you practice wherever you are in your life you practice every situation every moment and the end of fear comes with that fear being a normal human condition for most people sometimes buried under something else fear in its many manifestations nervousness tension anxiety anger really comes out of fear stress really is a form of fear all many forms of fear quite normal why? that's all you know that's fear you don't know that once you know that also it's the end of fear because there nothing can be destroyed that's why the Course in Miracles starts which is all you need to know the prologue the first before it all starts it says this course can be summarized in the following words nothing real can be threatened nothing unreal exists herein lies the peace of God nothing real can be threatened and that is here because nothing unreal ultimately exists in the world of form the form is ultimately not real in itself nothing unreal exists herein which means knowing that lies the peace of God God of course is the formless, timeless, eternal, unmanifested that is both within and beyond the world and some of you as I mentioned earlier are able to step out of their mind and you can practice that through a conscious choice be present nothing to think about right now just be present you don't carry your you don't carry your history with you when you are present your life situation I use that word in Power of Now very important your life situation everybody has one past future relationships job, health finances where you live what happens to you and all your life situation you have a life perhaps you are here with you have a life situation of course you do but you also have it's not that you have a life you are life itself and when your life situation is all you know about yourself which is another way of putting that's all you know then you miss life now you are very good at dealing with your life situation but you miss life you do all the right things but it never really gets you anywhere because you miss life life is now and life is not in the doing life is in the being now step out of thinking into alert stillness if you can and also another way is not to completely believe in every thought that comes into your head realize it's a thought it's a position it's a judgment not completely identified with it it's a story that you are telling yourself it's amazing how many stories people tell themselves in their head but many are completely distorted it's not the reality it's the story it's how you see the reality the reality usually is much more simple and more benign than the story one of the early lessons in A Course in Miracles says you are supposed to look at things around you in the room and say nothing that I see in this room means anything this table doesn't mean anything this glass doesn't mean anything this hand doesn't mean anything this floor doesn't mean anything now what does that lesson mean? it doesn't mean anything what it means is it's attempting

to erase the continuous conceptualization of reality like scribbling on a blackboard because whatever you think it means is a concept in your mind and if you deny the continuous and compulsive conceptualization of reality it's like erasing the conditioning of your mind and coming to the place where the Dalai Lama is don't know so this lesson in A Course in Miracles all it's teaching is to come to the place of spacious emptiness alertness not no longer trapped in conceptual thinking doesn't mean anything and of course that's another you're moving into a different dimension by living in this way it's just you inhabit suddenly life opens up and all the narrowness that the mind had imposed on it dissolves and life becomes spacious because you found the space within there's suddenly a spaciousness to life not a threatening place anymore what's life going to do where's my next threat coming from and again the same thing for example there's an entire spiritual teaching based on denying the reality of your story and Byron Katie's teachings is based on the simple fact of denying your story how do I know do I really know that this is true no I can't really know that so you get to get to the same place where the Dalai Lama is don't know so it's a wonderful thing if you can enter that not knowing and then but it's only not knowing from the viewpoint of the conceptual mind you're actually connected with a deeper intelligence unconditioned and if you really need to know something it comes but it comes out of the spaciousness of not knowing well it's a little bit like jumping off a cliff and then seeing if you can fly to the ego it's a little bit like that the ego says don't go there because the ego has worked it all out it explains the whole it has its philosophy of life it might be very defective limiting philosophy but it has some kind of philosophy of life every person has their story through which they interpret reality and usually it's a it's not a pleasant work of fiction but at least you think you know it gives you some illusory foothold and of course the ego thinks if I let go of that I won't know anything anymore which in a way is true but not completely true in a deeper sense you only let go of a distortion of reality created by the conditioned mind which is part of the collective human mind in its present state of evolution and so the collective mind of which your mind is part has created this human made world which is full of problems and they seem to be they pop out one after another when you think one thing is better now suddenly oh god now it's the economy and then it's that and then it's that another war what has happened through the gradual evolution of thinking is that now humans tend to overthink there is a lot of not only unnecessary thinking that generates unnecessary and in many cases non-existent problems such as when you lie awake at night in bed and start worrying it generates a lot of unnecessary unhappiness so people don't realize that a significant part of the unhappiness in their lives is actually generated by unnecessary negative often destructive mind activity and they don't even know it mindfulness is first of all discovering the simple fact that there is a voice in your head that continuously comments on your life or on what's happening around you it's the self-talk everybody knows what the self-talk is in the head you talk to yourself sometimes you talk to yourself in the first person I some people talk to themselves in the second person you so you can get annoyed with yourself and then you say you shouldn't have done that and then you have another thought that says yes but I couldn't help it and you might even

get a third voice coming and whatever it says why can't I why can't I get out of my self-talk that self-talk too but it's an amazing first thing what I call the first awakening spiritual awakening is something very basic and something very simple it's a discovery that there is a voice in your head that always talks talks to you but mostly silently if it talks out aloud then you're continuously and there's nobody around then you're considered insane but and that's only if it's loud but most people have that inside their heads and they are not considered insane it's considered normal but there's not such a big difference between the two and sometimes when you when you listen to there might be a man walking in the street muttering and you say oh he's really insane but it might be that you are doing the same but it's just not out aloud it's in your head why didn't I I should have said that why didn't I say that next time he does it I'm not exactly know what I'm going to reply and it goes on and on or you lie awake at night and start worrying you wake up and what happens oh my god what's going to happen what if that doesn't work and if that goes wrong and what if he does that and on and then you go into you get drawn one thought leads to another thought and another thought oh my god and then the body the body cannot distinguish between an actual reality an event that's happening in the real life and what your mind is saying so when you have fearful thoughts the body reacts to every fearful thought but the and that's an emotion the body reacts with an emotion the emotion you feel in your body the body cannot distinguish between an actual event and a thought so when you think fearful thoughts the emotions you feel are the emotions that are saying I am in danger there is an actual danger here so you feel the emotion of fear anxiety you might you might you feel agitated and it's not it's not only not pleasant if you indulge in that kind of useless dysfunctional destructive thinking year after year after year it has its effect on the body and it decreases the ability of the body to have the energy to fight disease even mainstream medicine is discovering the connection between your state of mind and your state of health and so gradually we are seeing in the past they denied it completely they only looked at your body and not only at the they not they not didn't just look at the totality of the body even within the body they just looked at one particular symptom what's wrong with that particular organ and you have of course in mainstream medicine you have specialists I'm a specialist for the liver a specialist for this and this and that not only not taking into account the totality of the body but more importantly not taking into account the totality of the person which includes the physical body and the mind so it's vitally important to discover first of all that there is a voice in your head that indulges in self-talk most of the time and for many people interestingly enough that self-talk for many people is not always negative but for many people it is more negative than positive a good event that happened yesterday a nice you might have gone to a nice reunion or you went out into nature and you witnessed a beautiful sunset okay you can remember it today and think that was a beautiful sunset or we had a nice talk yesterday but you can't do that much thinking about a nice event but the mind when there's something negative that happens yesterday somebody offended you or didn't give you the attention that you needed that you wanted from him then you can start thinking of

how oh my god what he did he's really next time he just said I'm going to say that or he's really sure why doesn't he you can go on for a long time dwelling on something negative much longer than dwelling on something positive seemingly a negative event is much more food for useless mind activity than a positive event and this is why for many people a significant percentage of their mind activity is negative for some people it is almost 100% negative but it is unlikely that these people would get a job in this company and I mean that because the your predominant state of consciousness your predominant mental emotional state there's a certain correlation between who you associate with where you find yourself and even what kind of things happen to you there is a correlation which is not always immediately recognizable but there is a correlation between one's a person's predominant mental emotional state and who they are with who their friends are what where they work and even what happens to them so if you are in a very negative state a long time you tend to attract also negative events but you can only have to find that out for yourself I'm not saying believe me I know it from my own life because when I first discovered this I was still very young I discovered that there is a correlation between my mind activity and what happens to me I found a I found a book that somebody several books that somebody left with us when I was 17 and there for the first time I read about a person's mind and I suddenly realized my mind was predominantly negative because I was a very unhappy child and so my childhood was not pleasant and so the initial conditioning of my life was that my mind was continuously commenting and saying how bad my life was and whenever something bad happened to me I had a phrase that would occur again in my mind that of course bad things always happen to you don't they they're bound to happen to you it always happens to you so I was talking to myself and saying that bad things would always happen to me and they did so you can discover first that the spiritual awakening is to discover that there is continuous mind activity and for some people it's the discovery that a significant part of their mind activity is negative but the vital thing is to discover that there is this continuous talk in my head which is considered the normal human state and of course you cannot abolish thinking of course there will be thinking but the question is is there an awareness behind the thinking if you can become aware that you are indulging or caught up in that useless mind activity and you suddenly become aware of perhaps certain repetitive thoughts that tend to recur in your mind again and again you might see it in others too more easily especially in others when you go for your Thanksgiving dinner I think is it next week you will meet your family members or relatives and some of you may realize you already know what they are going to say this year because it's the same thing they said last year and five years and ten years ago and if they have negative judgments about you or somebody else then it's the same thing you will hear again next week when you go to them so it's easier to see how others are caught up in repetitive thought forms not as easy to see it in oneself this is why there's a saying that self-knowledge is the most difficult knowledge it's easier to see others but if you can discover even in the midst perhaps in the moment of a certain thought appearing in your mind realizing oh that thought is I've had this thought for years it comes again and again

and again and so there is an observing presence from there and that observing presence isn't a thought it's just the ability to realize that there is a voice in your head and that there are thoughts and you realize that some of those thoughts are negative and many of those thoughts actually are not only unnecessary but make your life very difficult such as worry so most people live with what I call a cluttered mind a cluttered mind means they are completely unaware that there is a continuous stream of mental commentary and wherever they meet somebody and immediately certain judgments form and everything they feel they need to immediately adopt a position towards it immediately say I'm against it I dislike it so immediately adapt a mental position and being identified with one's mental position which is a thought and a few more practical tips so that you don't get distracted too much while you take your attention more deeply while you're here take your attention more deeply into being or into attention itself purely practical don't turn on the TV in your room please I have not installed hidden cameras to check on you second limit your interaction the interaction with your devices if you cannot eliminate interaction with your devices completely and I understand that you may not survive if you do at least put aside just maybe once a day 15 minutes when you check your whatever it is that comes through whatever text email Facebook Snapchat Tinder it's all very important but there's something more important and that's why you're here if you so now let's see I suggest to you that you make an agreement with yourself that not to go there unless any more than is absolutely necessary and I mean if you occasionally you have you get it out and to take a photo is okay but also don't interact with things around you only through imagining what it would look like as a photo on your phone and then say okay I'm going to fully experience this beautiful thing when I get home and look at my photos in the meantime I'm more interested in taking this photo because that's what the as a species that has developed out of homo sapiens a branch species called homo touristicus and they they walk around continuously with either camera or things but then you see them every day they come in buses and then in the evening the homo touristicus goes home mostly and then you are left here and you might notice it becomes quite still outside at this time and the days are very very long here you may find it unusual if you come from a more southern place there's still daylight around even at 1030 there's still light in the sky so and then it becomes very still here so you can walk along the lake or just wherever you are and just become aware of that that surrounding stillness and as you become aware of the surrounding stillness of course you become still yourself and if you are still it means you are not thinking or very little thinking and it means you are aware it means you are present it means you are living through the deep eye so use nature that is around you live through the deep eye and during the daytime if you're walking and there's lots of there's a long weekend here and tomorrow is a holiday in Canada here so there's more tourists homo touristicus than usual and if you get upset by the fact that there's so many tourists walking around then you just practice this beautiful spiritual practice of acceptance of the isness of this moment and immediately you become still too without needing external silence complete acceptance of this moment including the tourists and you're still oh I don't

know how tourists will develop in the future as a species in Thailand in just near Bangkok somebody they interviewed some near Buddhist monastery they interviewed some farmers and farm workers they would give food to the monks that's the tradition in Buddhism in Thailand in the south Theravada tradition of Buddhism the monks come with their begging bowls every morning they just stand there and then the local people come and put food they're dependent it's done on purpose there's a wisdom behind it on the western they would say why don't they work for a living it's the monks stand there with their begging bowls and then the poor people who hardly have enough who hardly have enough themselves they come and put some food a bit of rice whatever in the begging bowls and the monks just stand they don't say thank you because it's a privilege for you to give food to the monks that's part of the tradition so the westerners interviewed the farm workers they said why do you give your food to the monks when you have so little yourself and they began talking to each other well because we want a better incarnation next time so we are accumulating merit so next time we come we are born into a better condition and then the westerner asked so what do you want to come back as in your next lifetime and then they talked amongst each other and finally the agreement was we want to come back as tourists because they observe these people like they are they are out of their step out of their buses they're well dressed and some are obviously so privileged that they are quite big bodies which means they have plenty of money they can eat as much as they like so that's a great thing and then they do all kinds of things they they seem to have sex all the time and so it's a great thing wouldn't it be great in my next lifetime spend my whole lifetime as being a tourist they don't realize it would be a dreadful nightmare oh yes one more practical thing intoxicating beverages there's no prohibition here on anything there's just a recommendation and that is to refrain as much as possible from intoxicating beverages if English is not your native language it means alcohol refrain as much as possible from intoxicating beverages however if you cannot enjoy dinner without a glass of wine then you can have a glass of wine one glass of wine would not unduly interfere with the arising presence in you but two might and three will unless you're really already deeply engaged in presence deeply rooted in presence in which case you wouldn't even want to drink too much and you certainly wouldn't get drunk so as little as possible I recommend none at all alcohol would be great but since everybody here is spiritually advanced if you do have a glass of wine you will not be judged I'm not one of these spiritual teachers who are very unconventional ways of teaching for people I know of two or three that did that they give their students as much alcohol as they want and said drink drink up in order to observe if they can stay conscious even while they are intoxicated a very questionable practice but I won't do that here with you I think one or two are feeling sorry now so we've talked about the distractions on the external level television devices intoxicating beverages or other intoxicating substances I would advise against it at least here and never indulge even when you are not here as you probably know I've already mentioned I tried it a couple of times I have to because people ask me questions about it I cannot answer if I haven't tried it it wasn't that great I prefer my normal state of consciousness

it felt a little bit almost oppressive but I can see a person who is tortured on a daily basis by their mind it can be a relief to have a smoke but here we have something better we are not falling below thinking we are rising above thinking and that is the next step in human evolution and as you rise above thinking you don't need to fall below thinking anymore because you become liberated from your mind in the dimension that is transcendent to thought so and another practice of course here is the daily moment to moment practice of um accepting the isness of the present moment just that's a powerful way of and a quick way of going beyond the surface self the egoic self which means stop complaining either internally or externally of course if there's something that needs to be changed of course you go to the reception or you make a phone call if suddenly there's water coming through the ceiling hopefully I'm not manifesting it by talking about it there's water coming through the ceiling and the mattress and you on it are getting drenched you don't say accept what is stay stay on the bed Eckhart said don't complain so that's that's not the practice but it does mean that when you finally go to the telephone and tell them what happened it's not done in a complaining manner that says how dreadful this place is how can you allow something like this to happen to me this is dreadful that strengthens the ego no you just explain what is and what can we do about it and in the meantime you surrender to the fact that you're wet so I'm not going but that's what is the dark night of the soul is a term from goes back a long time maybe goes back to the spanish mystic saint john of the cross I'm not sure if it does but it goes back a long time it describes something well the questioner seems to imply that he is he or she is going through something like this at the moment the dark night of the soul which yes I have also experienced that's a term then used to describe a what one could call a collapse of a perceived meaning in life an eruption into your life of a deep sense of meaninglessness and the the inner state in some cases is very close to depression maybe some dark night of the soul often to do with what is conventionally called depression but it is basically a sense of emptiness or meaninglessness nothing makes sense anymore there's no purpose to anything and sometimes it's triggered by some external event some disasters perhaps on an external level external rather than within the death of someone close to you could trigger it especially premature death for example if your child dies or you had built up your life and given it meaning and the meaning that you had given your life this is what my life is about your activities your achievements where you're going what is considered important and the so the meaning that you had given your life for some reason collapses so as I said it can happen if something happens that you can't explain away anymore some disaster which seems to invalidate the meaning that your life had before and really what has collapsed then is the whole conceptual framework for your life the meaning that your mind had given it and so that results in a sense of darkness a dark place but people have gone into that you're in that dark place for a while and then you emerge out of that there is the possibility that you emerge out of that you can emerge out of that into a transformed state of consciousness where life has meaning again but it is no longer a conceptual meaning that you could necessarily explain it is often from the dark night of the soul not

necessarily but quite often it's from there that people awaken out of their conceptual sense of reality which has collapsed they awaken into something deeper which is no longer based on concepts in your mind a deeper sense of purpose or connectedness with a greater life that is not dependent on explanations or anything conceptual any longer it's a kind of rebirth and the dark night of the soul is a kind of death that you die what dies in the dark night of the soul is the egoic sense of self and of course yes death is always painful but nothing real has actually died there only an illusory identity now it is probably the case that some people who have gone through this transformation they have been through the dark night of the soul and they discovered that out of that a new self emerged that was a non conceptual self but a deeper being the awakened consciousness and they somehow looking back they realised that they had to go through that not everybody does of course have to go through that but some people do and they've even in some spiritual traditions they try to recreate the experience of the dark night of the soul in order to bring about a spiritual awakening and that was probably part of the so called mystery schools of ancient Greece and Egypt which were designed they even survived into Roman times mystery schools and with rituals and so on not much we don't know much about it because they were kept secret not much was written about it and in one tradition you spend a prolonged period of time in darkness sometimes even in a coffin coffin like place in complete isolation and darkness that is an attempt I would say on the part of someone who has gone through the natural dark night of the soul to recreate the experience of it in a kind of artificial more artificial way of actually experience that utter darkness where things break down and whether to what extent that worked when it's not a natural experience but a created experience for how many people that worked and actually did bring about an awakening and a collapse of the mind made self I don't know how it whether it truly worked for many people but it must have worked to some extent because the tradition went on for a very long time they are other in other forms of in mythological forms also they speak of similar things sometimes described as the the night journey in mythological tradition or also the descent to the underworld they all point to the same experience which is not ultimately negative it just seems negative when you are in it but it is part of a larger purpose it's part of a the awakening not for everyone it doesn't have to be but often it is part of the awakening process the death of the old self the birth of the true self so once you know that if it should come or if you should even be in the middle of it now you can just the more you surrender the more quickly you go through it surrender means don't judge it anymore you accept whatever it is it's your experience at this moment but as I said not everybody has to go through that for many people the awakening process starts and begins without that sometimes even after the awakening process begins it might still happen and then finally you will break through but that's fine allow life to do what it does you don't need to seek that and we don't need to recreate it in some artificial way so don't shut yourself in a dark room for days on end it's unlikely to work it's unnecessary the first lesson in the course in miracles says nothing I see in this room means anything and you're supposed to look around the room and whatever you happen to be looking at you say this doesn't

mean anything that doesn't mean anything this table doesn't mean anything this hand doesn't mean anything what's the purpose of a lesson like that well that's a little bit like recreating what can happen during the dark night of the soul which is the collapse of a mind made meaning conceptual meaning of life believing that you understand what's it all about so with the course in miracles in lesson one it's a voluntary relinquishment of the human mind made meaning that is projected and you go voluntarily into saying I don't know what this means this doesn't mean anything you wipe the board clean in the dark night of the soul it collapses and in some spiritual traditions then you can actually you're encouraged to relinquish your conceptual reality and so you're then meant to arrive at the a place of conceptual one could say meaninglessness or one could say a state of ignorance where you don't things lose their the meaning that you had given them which was all conditioned and cultural and so on and you can then look upon the world without imposing a mind made framework of meaning I'd like to share with you a short passage from the Bible doesn't happen very often that I read from the Bible as part of a teaching this is from the New Testament and it is a parable that Jesus tells that is very profound and absolutely relevant to the present time so here we go everyone who listens to these words of mine and does them will be like a man building a house who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock the rain fell the floods came and the wind blew and beat against the house but it did not collapse it had been set solidly on rock and everyone who listens to these words of mine but does not do them will be like a fool who built his house on sand the rain fell the floods came and the wind blew and beat against the house and it collapsed and was completely ruined so let's understand the deeper meaning of this everyone who listens to these words and does them means obviously anybody who listens to the teaching and practices the teaching and of course Jesus teaching is find the kingdom of heaven that is within you not anywhere else in space or time find the transcendent dimension the kingdom of heaven that is within you which is a deeper dimension or higher dimension of consciousness accessible to everyone and the man that building the house is you the house is you the floods come the rain comes beating against the house of course obviously means some form of adversity you encounter as you inevitably will in your life some form of fairly extreme adversity whether it's a personal level or as we're experiencing now on a collective level now if you haven't gone deep enough because remember you are the house if you haven't gone deep enough you have not found anything beyond the conceptual thinking mind then the floods the rain the wind the adversity whatever it may be in this case we know what it is will devastate you and even if you do not fall ill or contract the virus the fear will consume you as it's consuming millions of humans at the present time and why do you fear or does what is fear fear are certain thought forms you project yourself into some future moment and you're not present because if you were present you would realize that in this moment there's nothing to fear only when you leave this moment fear arises as a thought form which then creates an emotion so what does it mean then to dig deep and to find the foundation on the rock what is that rock the foundation for the house that you are you are that house and I'd like you to take into a little meditation now

in order to illustrate and to enable you to experience it first hand what it means to dig deep for a moment just become aware that you're breathing become aware of yourself not the conceptual self not become aware of your personal history or become aware of some imagined future moment but become aware of yourself as the conscious presence a field of conscious presence and thinking does not help you there thinking is an obstacle so you go deeper than thinking and you can be completely awake and present and yet with very little mind activity and that is the beginning of the realization of your deep identity what I sometimes call your essence identity and your essence identity is inseparable from the present moment it is the timeless eternal present it is a deeper dimension of consciousness than the one that you ordinarily identify with and that is the meaning of digging deep and finding that unshakable foundation that is deep within you within everyone adversity is a wonderful opportunity because adversity forces you to go deeper adversity forces you to awaken to the deeper dimension of who you are why does adversity force you because life becomes almost unbearable when you live only on the surface the surface of sense perceptions and your conceptual mind and then you listen to the newscasts and you read all kinds of things and everybody's in a state of fear that is the house built on the sand that when the floods come the wind comes the storms come the house collapses meaning since you are the house in this parable you are devastated in a state of extreme anxiety extreme suffering although nothing actually has happened yet unless you contract a disease and this is something we'll talk about next time right is the house your house the house that you are are you living on the living on the surface is your house built on sand or are you able to dig and find the foundation within yourself that frees you from fear now when things are going well it's unlikely that most humans can't be bothered with going deeper what for if things are going okay I'm looking forward to my next vacation weekend is coming up and whatever it is a nice meal is waiting for me everything is comfort zone you're in your comfort zone I've never heard of anybody who awakens in their comfort zone there's nothing wrong with comfort zone enjoy them when they're there they last for a while and then some form of adversity arises either on a personal level or on a collective level minor forms of adversity and occasionally huge forms of adversity potential calamities whether it's you could suddenly confronted with the fact of mortality some great loss serious illness on a personal level or on a collective level war civil strife civil war financial collapse invasion of your country all kinds of things can happen and at the present time we are experiencing the so-called pandemic collective adversity not affecting just one person now affecting millions at the same time and this is an invitation to go deeper because if you don't you suffer unnecessarily millions are in a state of fear and anxiety but use this as an opportunity to either awaken out of the mind identified state of consciousness that continuously project itself into the future that you have no control over it is never present this mind identified state of consciousness that's the house built on the sand avoids an opportunity to come to this realization that you are much deeper than you had known before you are forced to go deeper because you can't stand the suffering anymore the unhappiness or whatever you want to call it the anxiety and so the most

vital thing in any situation is the state of consciousness with which you meet the situation and you should pay more attention to that than to the newscasts and whatever it is that you listen to and watch yes you can do that also but what is your state of consciousness that's something you can do something about is not very much that you can do about the external situation you can take precautions you can help other people to the extent to which it is possible all that's good you do all the things that you need to do and perhaps many people are now forced to stay at home and suddenly they have to you have to be on a suddenly on a private retreat at home now that's an opportunity too so use this precious time that is here because it is part of the awakening consciousness of humanity it seems almost paradoxical to say that something that on the surface looks very negative and looks like an obstacle to the well-being of humanity and yes it's an obstacle to the well-being of humanity on a purely physical level perhaps temporarily yes but something that looks like an obstacle from a conventional point of view is actually an opportunity for you to awaken to a deeper or you could say higher level of consciousness humans don't awaken when they're in their comfort zone they awaken when they are taken out of their comfort zone not everybody does it's an opportunity if you do not awaken when you're no longer in your comfort zone you suffer you're unhappy you're anxious you're fearful you haven't found the rock now the difference between this parable and actual life is in this parable the man had already dug deep and he had already built his house on the rock and then the floods came and so on and the house was unshakable in real life often it is the case that the wind the floods the rains beating against the house which means adversity arising in your life the adversity forces you if you haven't already gone deeper it forces you to go deeper and so it's not too late to start digging now in the face of adversity many of you already in the process of awakening probably most of you listening to this and what's happening to us now is a wonderful opportunity for you to go deeper a deepening of that an acceleration of the awakening so as much as possible especially whenever you feel you feel as well drifting off into a fearful state of consciousness and a fearful emotional state whenever you realize that realize that in this present moment there is nothing to fear and you have to verify this for yourself whether this is true or not when you fear something it's of some imagined future moment am I going to catch this disease am I going to die is a loved one going to catch it is a loved one my child are they going to die imagine it it could happen but it's right now it's not happening so whenever you feel yourself drifting off into fear realize okay I have lost the present moment and I and I lost myself in my mind in the thinking mind and then the emotion reflects that mind activity so the moment you notice it okay I've lost the present moment I am lost in the mind come back into the present moment a few little things are helpful be aware of your breathing be aware of the inner energy field in your body the body is alive there is an this energy this life energy that pervades the body you feel that you're breathing you feel the aliveness in the body you're aware of sense perceptions you look around you're present and then you become aware of that presence that is inseparable from who you are that presence that is inseparable from who you are that's an amazing realization there's more to you than the

person that presence is deeper than the person and you had you needed the adversity either to find it or to deepen that which you had already found it but it was not not yet a deep realization so this is a time of great opportunity use it don't waste it there's a saying that goes when the ego weeps for what it has lost the spirit rejoices for what it has found so what looks bad on the surface has a an essential function I will speak to you again soon in the meantime be here be present don't lose yourself in the mind don't lose yourself in fear find and be rooted rooted in this rock that is your essence identity thank you I always have a constant fear to try new things in my life because I'm afraid of failure since my failures in my life have dominated my successes I think you mean there have been more failures than successes therefore every time the idea comes for me to learn or to try new things I freeze and my path to any kind of achievement and the ability to get in touch with my inner guidance is blocked can you please help me to get in touch with the wisdom within me fear of failure yes that's not uncommon of course it's also a manifestation of ego because the most important thing for the ego is to the result of your action it's focused more on what it wants to get out of the doing than the doing itself the most important things in a person's life is their failures because you're more important I would say than the successes your main learnings and your main transformations you experience through making mistakes and failing the successes are nice for the ego but the spiritual breakthroughs they come when you fail at something so failure is not to be feared first of all it's it often opens you up to the spiritual dimension and takes you beyond your ego if you have the courage to do it anyway but also you begin to learn what it is that is right for you to do in many cases only by trying by learning through failing at this and this and this that these things are not do not resonate with what you really want to do there was a time i was spared quite a few things in that respect but once i applied to become a banker in the city of london the city of london means financial district i had an interview at a merchant bank how could i have been so misguided to seek an interview at a merchant bank in the city of london incomprehensible the miracle is that they actually invited me for an interview the only reason being that i was at cambridge university so they said okay we'll talk to him and so i didn't get the job that was very lucky because if i had gotten the job i would have been a dismal failure and probably would not have lasted more than a few months and that would have been a wonderful learning but it got shortened for me i didn't have to go through it i realized shortly after the interview that it would have been a terrible mistake but not really terrible there was a learning there would have been a deep learning in it later i applied for a job at a university as it's called in england a lecturer assistant professor would be here they invited me for an interview and that was after i'd already gone through a shift in consciousness but wasn't it hasn't wasn't fully integrated with my personality my life so i applied for a job got interviewed by five professors around a big table and i said a few things that might have given them an indication that i wasn't really into the academic world one professor asked me at the end of the interview and what do you really want to do that was an important learning so when i walked away from there of course i didn't get the didn't get the job luckily that was a learning i said what do i

really want to do and i knew it's not this i didn't know that i would become a spiritual teacher because i hadn't met this first person on the park bench yet that asked me a question so to know what what it is that you want to do you may have to try out quite a few things and fail at them and then finally find what it is that you really want to do i talked to somebody relative of mine who hasn't displayed any ambition in his life and stayed in the same job simple job for 25 years and he said to me we talked about failure and success and he said i have never failed at anything because i haven't tried anything and it's true so he was able to avoid all failure by not trying anything but it does not lead to a fulfilling life and sometimes failure means this is not for me sometimes failure means try again and you fail and you perhaps try again especially if you enjoy the doing of whatever it is that you are doing but then the result is not what you expected but you enjoyed certainly enjoyed the doing of it try again let's say you want to become a musician now the ego may have an idea it might have an image you've been to a concert halls and you saw these soloists on stage receiving applause and you say oh i want to do that says the ego but you're not really you don't really have the love for music you have the love for being a famous musician so if you then start learning then you won't be the greatest musician because the love isn't there and if you then try again you still won't succeed and you try again you still won't succeed because the entire premise is wrong you have an egoic image of you as the great the final result the final outcome of your endeavor is to be the musician on stage that's famous and is being applauded and you go that's me this is what i want to be but in the meantime you dislike the practice and if you want to be on stage as a musician you have to practice five or six hours a day and you say okay i just have to get through this because i want to succeed at being a musician and whatever it is you practice and then you get stressed and it doesn't feel good but let's say you enjoy the practice because you love the music and then you go to the conservatory to get and then they turn you down they say okay i failed but you love the music continue try again it might lead to something else or either next year they accept you at the conservatory or it leads to some other kind of music does not require the conservatory if there is a love for the doing then failure does not necessarily tell you that you should be doing something else so and whatever it is that you attempt to do the vital factor is that you enjoy the doing and not just have a mental projection of where you want to get to which is often an egoic image of yourself over there that is the so observe choose things to try out that you actually enjoy doing without having an excessive focus on the end result the so called success at the end of all you are doing that is the success is to be aligned with what you are doing so if you are practicing music you are succeeding all the time if you are enjoying the doing of it that is success not some final outcome the world is full of people well not full but there are many people who have succeeded at what they wanted and were not satisfied by their success they are still dissatisfied and unhappy because the ego hasn't found real fulfillment in it was that it? so enjoy the doing seek out things that you enjoy then success being if success is the final outcome if there even is such a thing as final then that is secondary the enjoyment of the doing is primary I met a girl I was at university

and there was a girl who worked there she said I asked her she worked in the restaurant I asked her what do you want to do with your life I said I want to be a brain surgeon okay that's funny why do you want to be a brain surgeon I think is the greatest the most advanced thing that a human could do that's what I really wanted to do are you interested in biology are you interested in the in the body in medical no but she had an image of me as the great brain surgeon for some reason her ego thought this is the highest a human being can achieve to be on the working on somebody's brain so to have to project some kind of outcome and not realize in the meantime the years in between how about and it's always you're always traveling you're on a journey there's never an really an arriving even the famous musician then has to there are other challenges there don't be afraid of failure ultimately there is no failure there's only it's a it's an essential part of your learning process it's only the ego that is afraid of failure because it it has certain image of who it is thank you this mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation but the more grateful you are for what is the more things will come to you would really have chosen for yourself as your life purpose perhaps it's not even that great a job but nevertheless you honor it in this moment you give it attention you do your best and then it will evolve into something else

[Speaker 7] (7:03:53 - 7:03:54)

hello

[Speaker 1] (7:03:55 - 7:03:55)

hello

[Speaker 5] (7:03:56 - 7:04:11)

so unlike you with oprah i am bursting with excitement right now so thank you so much for having me and um i also just want to um give you a giant virtual hug oh thank you as i'm sure so many in the room would like to do as well

[Speaker 1] (7:04:11 - 7:04:12)

thank you

[Speaker 5] (7:04:12 - 7:05:24)

and uh my question is around manifesting uh i get twisted in my head about that because uh all my life i i have felt i have a purpose and the purpose is connected with joining and being of service and support and expansion of consciousness and i know it's out there i know that that's going to be something i'm very involved with at some point and i am familiar with manifesting and the deep knowing of you know what that is and at the same time there are a lot of spiritual teachers that talk about being very specific

when you manifest something and i have no idea what it's going to look like i and i most of the time when there is something related to my deeper purpose if i try to go you know left and make that happen usually i go right though like it's the invisible hand guiding me right and i feel like well i'm not man you know what i mean so i don't really feel like i know i'm the right one to manifest my purpose because i don't know as high as my deepest self

[Speaker 1] (7:05:24 - 7:05:32)

yes so um are you manifesting your purpose in your life

[Speaker 5] (7:05:32 - 7:06:04)

well i know that it's going to be there i i in the sense that i've always had the sense you know once i retire in five or ten years or something that i'll be doing something else right that has to do with that and but i don't know if it's here i don't know if it's there i don't know what it looks like i don't know if it's working for eckhart teachings or whether it's you know working at a wellness center or participating in something i have no idea what it looks like i just know that that is my purpose

[Speaker 1] (7:06:04 - 7:06:10)

yes can you summarize my question is do

[Speaker 5] (7:06:10 - 7:06:21)

i need to be specific because all right that's so much of what the spiritual teachers that i was just listening to one recently right be specific when you manifest your purpose

[Speaker 1] (7:06:21 - 7:14:29)

yes for some people that works but it can also limit it um if uh if i had been specific i would probably have limited it sometimes the universe have bigger plans than you have and so um my first experience of manifestation which is a it's a form of spirituality to to manifest it's important it's not the deepest the deepest is to realize the essence of who you are then you can still manifest if you want to and you'll be quite good at it but it's secondary so for me there was a kind of spiritual awakening when i was 17 years old in the sense that i had always been very very negative and um always one of the mind patterns thoughts that could go through my head was bad things always happen to me of course they always do they always and they did uh and then i accidentally came across some books that at the time i was living in spain with my dad and a german woman had gone back to germany and he left some books with us they were spiritual a teacher who is not well known anymore a german spiritual teacher with a chinese name and um i started reading these books and they were about the there's a relationship between your external life and your inner state and if you change your inner state you

change your external life that was such a revelation to me i'd never heard that before and at the time i was learning to type teaching myself on a type writer they don't exist anymore to type and i remember i copied practicing typing i copied many pages of those books and then i started practicing changing my thoughts and becoming feeling good things were going to happen to me i was not very specific because i didn't know what exactly would happen i attract good things into my life i attract whatever and then a few months later shift happened i was longing to get away from the where i was living with my dad and his second wife that was as dysfunctional as his first wife my mother with the living together i need to get out of here please take me out of here and finally i got a job offer in england without an interview it was a miracle and it was a good job and had virtually no qualifications it was an absolute miracle and the and i knew that i had created i had manifested that just amazing and one of the happiest moments of my early life was saying goodbye goodbye i'm off that was so wonderful and and in england things many things developed miraculous things that could never have expected so if i don't think you need to be too specific unless there's something that you desperately want or need but hopefully since you've gone deep enough into yourself there's nothing that you desperately want or need because whatever happens on the horizontal dimension is an adding on as jesus said whatever you manifest in this external life is lovely but seek first the kingdom of heaven said all the things that you think that you need will be added on to you so what he's saying is the world of external manifestation yes you have to deal with this world and it can be a lovely practice but it's an adding on and there may come a time when you don't need to manifest anything anymore things think i've acquired a certain momentum and it's growing the i've asked some successful people did you practice this manifestation before you achieved your sex and one or two said yes yes i did one specifically said i think he's probably told about it publicly so i probably don't need to keep his name a secret but i'll do it anyway just in case well he said he had wrote himself a check for i think it was i can't remember how much it was 10 million dollars something and put it in his wallet and he always poked at it and three years later he got a check for 10 million dollars for a movie role and he got it then i asked oprah did you ever practice but he said no it just came what she does practice is a gratitude book everyday she writes something to be grateful for or several things to be grateful for it's a very powerful tool to help you be present to be grateful means an appreciation an alignment with what is so that's a powerful thing that is non specific but the more grateful you are for what is the more things will come to you if you honor honor this moment then the future the so called future which never comes except as a present moment will reflect that mindset so there are others sometimes people just start an activity which they enjoy and then enthusiasm comes in and they do more of it and more of it first on a small scale and they continue, perhaps they are musicians like the Beatles I don't think they ever thought we are going to be the greatest in the world, the greatest group that ever lived they just enjoyed the music and then they played and played and played and that's the famous 10,000 hours of practice that somebody wrote about in a book that he observed many people who achieve mastery in one field they have 10,000

hours of practice and then at that point an additional element comes in that energizes and amplifies what they do and enormous inspiration can suddenly flow in so that is a good preparation to enjoy what you do is in itself a tool for manifesting good things and even if whatever you do is not what you would really have chosen for yourself as your life purpose perhaps it's not even that great a job but nevertheless you honor it in this moment you give it attention you do your best and then it will evolve into something else but just so the gratitude journal is another thing that we would recommend to everybody but gratitude do you do that or have you done that?

[Speaker 5] (7:14:29 - 7:14:32)

I've done it but I haven't been doing it lately

[Speaker 1] (7:14:33 - 7:16:39)

but I feel grateful it doesn't have to be a journal but it's helpful however gratitude can also be misunderstood people say okay I'm grateful because my life is I have so much that other people don't have and I should really be look at other people and I have so much more in whatever better looks or more things look at these poor people I really should be grateful for what I have that's not it if you're only grateful when you compare yourself to others who have less one way or another that's not real gratitude it's not really even gratitude for some life situation the more powerful thing is gratitude for whatever is this moment the little things of this moment for this beautiful flower you appreciate it you give it attention that's all gratitude an appreciation of the aliveness of the world around you in the present moment that's so on the whole I would advocate for less not necessarily too specific in most cases it would limit you there may be exceptions to that but non-specific does work very well and often the as you know the camel driver has his plants so the camel might have much bigger plants than you and I have found the same I could not quite have imagined the growth of the teaching I had some vision it would grow but not that much so don't limit yourself and you're doing fine

[Speaker 7] (7:16:39 - 7:16:41)

thank you thank you

[Speaker 11] (7:17:02 - 7:17:05)

it's a phenomenon on YouTube

[Speaker 1] (7:17:05 - 7:22:48)

whereby people often don't say anything but they engage in seemingly pointless activities modern technology which in many cases amplifies human unconsciousness is in itself neutral so it can also be used to help in the shift to a higher level of consciousness so if you feel you a contribution may be happening through you you may

want to consider using a platform and disseminate in whatever form spiritual teaching of consciousness infinite possibilities possibilities if you're too afraid to speak maybe if you feel a little inhabited in front of a camera or your phone you could just do meditations gazing meditations make sure though you're free of thought otherwise it doesn't work there's no predicting how many subscribers you will get on YouTube or if that doesn't appeal to you you could become what is known as an ASMR artist some of you may not know what that is it started a few years ago I've spoken about it a few times it's a phenomenon on YouTube whereby people often don't say anything but they engage in seemingly pointless activities that make certain noises and that require the viewer's presence it happened spontaneously it developed, somebody must have started it ten years ago or whenever and then it caught on now there are hundreds or thousands of people doing it some very successfully the good ones have a spiritual dimension to it and there is a need for it in humans perhaps don't realize it that there is a spiritual dimension and that need is to get out of themselves to transcend temporarily the person or the personality by the act of giving fullest attention to certain sense perceptions which in this case is also visual and the auditory people are encouraged to put headphones on while they watch these videos and then you have people the people who produce them they may just have something here that they have usually very sensitive microphones and they may for example be shuffling papers for 15 minutes that make certain noises or they have a hairbrush they go or they make strange sounds with their mouth it seems very weird if it's done well it puts the viewer into the state of presence although some are actually designed to put people to sleep, so that would be the opposite the whole phenomenon is called ASMR, people claim that it produces a certain tingling sensation in their head and their back that is one phenomenon that happens, but the other that's not clearly recognized is that people become still while they listen and watch and they have a state of attention the mind there's a cessation of thinking while they watch and listen somebody produce these noises so that was just a suggestion for you

[Speaker 8] (7:23:17 - 7:24:28)

when I took the time to kind of go into me and to become silent when I started talking I first realized I'm talking slower, exactly as you said but also what I realized that my face so basically my face had been really before that it has been blocked in a sense the face muscles so when I first talked I must have done this under some kind of pressure or it was not natural it was me talking to someone but I realized the second time I said the same words basically that I could feel that my facial muscles were relaxed relaxed and no I realized that had been before so much tense and they started relaxing when I became aware of the fact that my facial muscles were tense before yes so kind of make me really realize that if one is not conscious we just run this mental thing the way we talk to people just without thinking about it and how artificial that is in a way so it's just like a machine talking

[Speaker 2] (7:24:29 - 7:28:16)

condition self yeah very good very good and that's a really good observation that you notice that your facial muscles were tense before compared to the second time and when we act from the condition mind so when we speak from the condition sense of self from the mind we do contract our whole body actually contracts and it's this almost like this squeezing and this anxiousness instead of just being you just being yourself into that relaxed awareness so Eckhart used the words intensity intensify your awareness another way to also look at it in which I teach in the presence through movement is and his is not wrong it's just a different pointer and mine is just a different pointer I use the words relaxed awareness because when we come from that still place there's something in us that just relaxes unwinds and we then communicate we be with people we be with ourselves in this kind of relaxed awareness something happens something arises the practices just to relax that body and just become that relaxed awareness so then we can make the right action from there and that right action may be no action just as when somebody was doing this when I did this exercise and with another group and they said we never even talked there was no desire to talk there was nothing drawing us out we just wanted to sit silently together so when we live from the conceptual mind habitually and it's a habit to do this just like it's a habit just it's almost like a habit to keep thinking and thinking and thinking our bodies will just go but in the moment of realizing yourself there's this Krishnamurti called it ease of being it's this ease I call it this relaxed awareness just to observe the world observe your mind observe everything that arises in this relaxed awareness it's acceptance when we accept there's no tension when we're grasping there's tension when we're wanting something when we are looking only for solutions through thought instead of going into stillness and allowing the solution to arise there's tension so really good observation thank you for sharing that

[Speaker 1] (7:28:36 - 7:50:02)

there's a sentence in I believe it's in the book the little classic by Saint-Exupery the little prince see that book and I believe it's in that book there's a lovely sentence that says what is essential is invisible to the I the I what is essential is invisible to the I now I stands for all sensory perception it's not just the visual so what that points to is that the essential reality is hiding behind phenomenal reality and you also every one of you and myself are you can't really put a percentage on it but let's just say you are 90 percent invisible who you are actually all what we can see is the outer form of you which is a physical body that senses can see but now we can even one could cut open hopefully not your brain or whatever and look for you there on a physical level on a material level with the most powerful electron microscopes and you would not find you at all that's the strange thing that you are you are not a material physical entity all the things that make up who you are are actually invisible and they remain invisible even if you cut open your brain or other parts of your body and examine what's there including your millions of memories where do they live could you find a memory that you have of your first teacher walking into the classroom when you were 5 or 6 years old there here she is hadn't

thought of her in a long time but suddenly there she is where did she live all this time in your head in what form did she live in the form of certain molecules that are the memory of your teacher would you ever find your room if you had a room or the living room of the house that you lived in when you were 8 years old I could go there I could go there and I can even touch things still and feel that's what that felt like and there was that table and that curtain where do all these countless things live in you and these are just mind forms just memories not to mention the deeper dimensions within you but even those relatively superficial dimensions of just memories are all totally invisible and can never become visible as material entities so you are and every human being is almost entirely invisible all you see is the surface shell of the body and all your thoughts science we don't even know what a thought is and how it survives in you not really so it's all invisible and you cannot find it in the sensory realm and so the same of course applies to your dog what is it that you love let's talk about human too it's surprising that there are quite a few, many people who feel more deeply attached or connected to their dog than to another human being and I'm not saying that that is bad or that should not be the case because I can see how and why that happens because being is less obscured in the dog than it is in the human in the human the being dimension depending on who it is depending on the density of your mental emotional conditioning is obscured by that sometimes you can get beyond it and you can deeply connect with a human and recognize the consciousness that you share with the other and when that happens we call it love but with a dog it's easier to do but it's important to realize that what you love in the dog is the invisible dog although the visible is pleasant it's pleasant to the touch when you look into the eyes of a dog then you can there you can sense the consciousness of the dog so what you really love in the dog is the consciousness of the dog otherwise you could have a stuffed dog or you could have one with a have a little electronically controlled dog maybe one day they will have it and it goes but it's not the real thing so with a dog you look into the eyes and next time with your next dog realize that the essence of the dog is not what you see you can sense it when you look into the eyes of the dog you can sense the invisible essence of the dog but but only if you have some access to this invisible essence the beingness in yourself and as I mentioned yesterday probably the it happens that even people who normally don't have access to that dimension within themselves they feel drawn to the dog or the cat because for very briefly the dog or cat by connecting with the dog or cat very briefly it enables this person to have a glimpse of being within themselves and this is why I don't know if there is a little book that I produced together with a cartoonist and since I have a bad memory the name escapes me at this moment and the title of the book is Guardians of Being and it's mainly about dogs but I believe there are also some cats in it and it's based on a few quotes of things I have said or written I don't remember what and wonderfully inspired drawings that go with the text I call dogs guardians of being for humans because I have a theory that millions of more humans would go insane without their dogs their mind would just they keep they provide a kind of anchor into the realm of being so the realization that the essence of the dog is invisible and also indestructible and then you

still love the dog but the excessive attachment to the form of the dog might not be that strong anymore you would still be sad when the dog passes away but you won't be devastated this applies now obviously also to humans when you connect we are deeply connected with another human being one of the most difficult experiences in your life is to experience the passing away of a loved one especially if it seems to come prematurely, then that's even more difficult and therefore it is advisable that at all times you keep alive within yourself the realization that this human being is essentially a being and the human is only a very small part and this human being is essentially invisible and what you love in him or her is invisible. Love is the recognition that you share the same essence and this essence, we could call it consciousness it doesn't matter what name we give it but that's what you share you recognize yourself the essence of yourself in the other how can I balance altruism and follow my inner needs or longings brackets if they would hurt someone can you say something on how it works ego versus altruism, following your inner true needs altruism meaning selfless action doing something for others and then there are inner needs or longings that might hurt someone if they actively hurt someone they are not true needs they would be egoic needs, egoic needs sometimes actively hurt another for example unconscious behavior such as diminishing somebody else verbally in order to feel one's own ego growing people do it all the time it's unconscious so if somebody has a success or has something that you don't have the ego in its absurd sense of self feels diminished if somebody else has something that you don't have and then the ego sometimes makes a remark that is designed either to hurt the ego of that person or to diminish the value of what that person has achieved or possesses so even children sometimes do it the ego already of course at school when you listen to children talking to each other you can already often detect very clearly the ego there the sense of identity that is based on identification with things other than yourself that you take on board to enhance your sense of self and you not that you can't stop them it just is part the natural progression I would suggest is for human being to develop an ego as they are adolescents in childhood and adolescence then when they reach adulthood begin to go beyond ego so that ego becomes a symptom or manifestation of growing up of immaturity that would be we may be going in that direction but of course the way it is now it's not the case the ego continues to grow and seek to grow sometimes until you reach your death bed and then you remember the gravestone where it says I got here first so I won that's the last triumph of the ego and so listening over hearing children you can say my dad just bought a bought a BMW what car does your dad have oh he has a VW but I know someone he carries on he says but I know someone who has a friend whose uncle has a Bentley it's far superior to a BMW got him the ego says I got him ah but it's owned by VW isn't it that's a long story altruism inner needs that hurts I just gave just one small example of hurting others other egoic manifestations of hurting others would be to actually to sabotage somebody else's success or what they want to achieve to take something away from somebody to spread rumors about some bad things about another human being in order to create suffering or stop them from doing or achieving what they want to achieve so many ways in which the

ego would hurt someone for its own in order to strengthen itself the illusion of itself so those are not your true inner needs they are egoic needs you need to recognize those things in yourself then there is an indirect way of hurting someone that may not be egoic for example you let's say you are a young man or woman 20 years old 19 years old and your parents or your mother or your father want what's best for you they clearly have designs on your future and your dad was a lawyer and he has a flourishing law practice and obviously you are supposed to follow in his footsteps there's no question about it and if you didn't you would make your parents really suffer of course that is indirectly inflicting suffering if you are true to yourself and your longings which are not egoic you may feel inclined towards something else there's nothing wrong with law but it's not for everybody you may feel inclined to follow a totally different path would you and some people do that in order to spare their parents from suffering they do what makes them happy it might not be your parents do what makes somebody else happy and so you are doing something that does not corresponding that does not correspond to your true inclinations desires where you want to go but you want to spare someone else from suffering now that is not the most conscious cause of action because you are condemning yourself to unhappiness and frustration you are denying those deeper things they are not egoic they arise from a deeper level of your being and you are not making these people suffer they make themselves suffer so they have to learn their lesson of letting go of expectations and if their lesson involves suffering that's just how it is another matter would be if your parents are old or there's only one parent left your inclination may be to move somewhere and do something but then there's nobody else to look after your father or mother who needs somebody that is a moral thing that you need to become very present with to see whether there is an alternative solution or whether you will give up one thing in order for the love of another human being and if you do so you would have to be total in your doing so that you are not unhappy looking after your aging parent continuously regretting that you were not able to do what you really wanted to do whatever course of action you choose you need to surrender to and do it totally these are all a lot of presence is required altruism, helping others is wonderful but it needs to come from a deep not from some mental to help somebody because in order to improve the mental image you have of yourself but to help somebody because it feels right and it feels good and you've seen the other as yourself and to give something to another feels better more often than to give something to yourself this mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive, to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation the most important spiritual practice is to bring together the stillness and the doing

[Speaker 3] (7:50:02 - 7:52:17)

I can experience since a few months better the stillness in myself and but I'm not sure if this is the full experience because I don't have that oceanic feeling, I don't feel myself

expand into the universe or I don't feel myself being one with you for example when at the end of your last lecture you can feel that something unites us it pretty much seems to end at about my body so I don't know if that is awakening light or if I'm simply at the beginning of the process and my second question is when I sense that stillness I usually look in I cannot combine it with looking out or perceiving what happens on the outside or speaking to someone then I lose the stillness again and you also say attention cannot be divided we do we feel the inner body or we watch our breathing in order to remove the attention from our thoughts so that the thoughts don't bug us as much and so how is it possible to clearly feel stillness yet have full awareness of the outside that's the second part sorry I have a third part that you don't have to answer but that is when I feel that stillness I don't perceive any transmission to my body is there any contact point or any point where consciousness moves the body or affects the body but that is that's probably maybe nobody knows okay thank you very much

[Speaker 1] (7:52:17 - 8:11:35)

well thank you there are a few questions there but all connected with stillness so that's the common thread stillness it's already a wonderful thing that you are able to sense the stillness which is of course the temporary cessation of thinking that's really what stillness is so a momentary gap whether it's a few seconds or a few minutes in the stream of thinking but no loss of consciousness but rather one could almost say an intensification of consciousness you're very alert but still is that what you experience yes that is what yes now the rest is the mind comes in again and is asking questions about it and it might say as it does in your case which is not uncommon the mind says is that all there is there must be more I can't quite feel what some other people talk about that's unnecessary to go there and try to figure out mentally or from somebody else to tell that there is more you should let go of that really is connected to the desire of the mind to understand the stillness that's often part of that and you cannot understand it I don't understand it understanding understanding can arise out of the stillness that is true deeper understanding of certain things arise out of the stillness but the stillness itself you cannot understand and that's the very reason why Jesus described this inner peace as I think it was Jesus or was it Saint Paul I don't remember the peace that passes all understanding this peace which is the inner peace which is stillness you cannot understand it passes all understanding you cannot understand it understanding involves concepts and concepts is thought so the stillness you cannot understand in fact it is the stillness comes when you relinquish the desire to understand understand yourself understand the world when you relinquish the desire to understand then the stillness is immediately there and then don't fall into the mistake of going back into thought and say yes but I need to understand whether one can go deeper or whether that's all there is it is sufficient if you are able to relinquish your need to understand and that looks like almost a sacrifice but it isn't the most important renunciation which is a term that is used frequently in many spiritual traditions, renunciation you can renounce possessions,

you can renounce position and worldly position, you can renounce money, you can renounce personal relationship you renounce your name sometimes when you enter a monastery or something in various traditions you renounce many many things and but if you haven't renounced the fundamental thing then none of these renunciations actually are very helpful and the true renunciation is the renunciation of thought you can still use thought when you need it for practical purposes but for awakening to a deeper dimension of consciousness, thought does not help you but is a hindrance then once you are connected with the deeper dimension of consciousness then it can sometimes the inspiration from that level can sometimes flow into your mind and use your mind in order to speak or to do something, to create something that is possible but before that became possible there needs to have been the renunciation so that you are not trying to understand this anymore that by Socrates said Socrates the Greek philosopher I am why do people call you the wisest of all men they asked him and he said well that is because I am the only one who knows that he knows nothing he in other words he was comfortable with not knowing not knowing is an interesting state to be in not knowing is really to become comfortable with the state of not thinking because all thinking is a kind of knowing or wanting to know so you become comfortable with not thinking which is not that you fall below thinking which is can happen when you drink alcohol or take certain drugs or all kinds of things can take you below thinking there is a longing in every human being to become free of the thinking mind because the thinking mind is so troublesome and so heavy and most humans seek some kind of liberation through falling below thinking a few drinks whatever else they do sensory experience or some there are many ways of falling below thinking that is not the way to go because then you go into unconsciousness rising above thinking is the conscious renunciation of thought when it is not needed then when thought in other words you are no longer looking for yourself in thought you are no longer looking for your identity in some increase of mental knowledge or whatever you are not looking for yourself there anymore and then the thoughts that arise are no longer imbued with a sense of self so you can think without egoic contamination of your thinking and that's great when thinking does happen but you are able to become still and become comfortable with not knowing and in that not knowing but this is not knowing conceptually when you no longer know anything through thought then suddenly a deeper knowing arises that is non-conceptual you may not be able to talk about it but there is a deep knowing there some people can verbalize it in some way because their mind can kind of express it to some extent and others cannot at all and so it always gets distorted the moment you talk about it so first of all then be content that you are able to access the dimension of stillness but the next step is how not to lose it completely when you start thinking again how not to lose it completely when you start acting when you start taking action in this world as you have to do because that's part of your question so in a protected setting perhaps you can be still you sit in your room close your eyes or look around and become alert and still, it's wonderful and then somebody comes into the room why didn't you do this?

I asked you to do that says your wife that sometimes happens immediately it's completely gone it takes just one little challenge I'm not talking necessarily in your case, just in general terms so how do you having a conversation with somebody discussing something let's say you're discussing there's somebody who says we are totally overreacting to the virus it's what it's doing to us this is terrible and you say no, well, we had to do that, it would be irresponsible not to do all the lockdown and all this and then you start discussing do you lose yourself in the movement of thought or are you able to when you speak in particular when you listen to somebody are you able to have still have this alertness that is inseparable from stillness so that you can introduce these alert spaces into a conversation that's a kind of spiritual practice one could say are you able to introduce these alert spaces when you're talking to somebody and let's say every time he or she says something are you preparing the next thing that you are going to say or are you already dismissing what this person is saying mentally or are you able to listen in a state of alert presence let's say the person is talking and you are if you are able to listen in a state of alert presence then you haven't lost the stillness, the stillness is still there and the amazing thing is when you start speaking again you are uttering something that is unprepared so there is suddenly you may find your intuition, intuitive realizations and there's a certain power behind what you speak because it comes from a deeper level, you're not just repeating something that you read somewhere or whatever bring in alert spaces of alertness into a conversation then that is a practice of so that you don't lose the stillness, another thing is when you take action when you take action usually you want it to be over already the action, you're going from here to there you're doing this or that it's easy to lose the present moment when you want to achieve something even just you have to go to the supermarket it's all your are you able to to be, when you take action to be, not to devalue the present moment not to always make it into a means to an end but are you able to just honor the present moment, every step you're taking now while you are walking to the supermarket or whatever if it's or well these days people don't go anywhere but you get from one room to another you have to go to the bathroom even that can be a practice, you take one step at a time so that the moment of arriving at the destination where you want to get to is not more important than this moment, this moment is actually more important than the arriving this applies on a small scale as well as on a large scale this moment is of primary importance because it's all there ever is so it's more important than arriving at the yet you're achieving your goal or arriving at your destination that is a spiritual practice also when you're present in what you do instead of losing yourself in the doing, then the stillness is still there in the background when you're listening to someone while you're having a conversation if you can be so alert that you can just listen when the other person is speaking then you're not losing yourself in your mind and the stillness is still there in the background so both when you take action and when you speak and when you think let's say you're alone and you're thinking are you losing yourself in your mind, anxiety thoughts, all kinds of thinking arises and the moment you realize very often the realization will be I'm unhappy I'm anxious why am I unhappy and anxious my mind is

making me unhappy and anxious right now because in this moment I'm not being threatened my mind is creating unhappiness when you have that realization meaning you've lost yourself in your mind the opportunity is there for you now to direct your attention away from the mind and into your breathing or into the body for example you realize the futility of making yourself unhappy and then you decide otherwise for that freedom to come in you need to have already achieved a certain level of awareness because if you had not achieved a certain level of awareness you would be so identified with your thinking you wouldn't even know it identified means you are your thinking so even to say you can you can become aware of your thinking if there's not enough awareness then you can't but for you of course there is enough awareness you can become aware that you're thinking for example is making you unhappy or is creating anxiety or fear and then you have a choice now you can carry on or you can remove your attention from the thinking movement directed into the body so it merges with the body and then stillness is back suddenly and you may notice the mind wanted to come back in and pull it wants you to reincarnate again into another thought come this way you can feel the pull because it's been there for thousands of years the pull comes again and then maybe you lose yourself again or maybe you're able to say no thanks stay present this is for you and many others the most important spiritual practice is to bring together the stillness and the doing which really means the being and the doing and which really means coming back to what I talked about earlier it really means bringing the vertical and the horizontal dimension so that you have you exist in both dimensions instead of having them separately so that you're so this is the practice and the more challenging a situation is the more alert you need to be so when you are a spiritual in the process of spiritual awakening everything that is particularly intense challenge is also a particularly wonderful opportunity for you to become present through it and intensify your presence through it and this is whatever whether the challenge is what everybody is now experiencing or personal challenge collective challenge doesn't matter challenge can come as a difficult person all kinds of things can be challenging and that's particularly important to every challenge is an invitation to intensify its presence and then whatever happens is great because it can only intensify your presence so that's the practice I wish you well I hope it makes sense

[Speaker 3] (8:11:36 - 8:11:39)

completely thank you so very much

[Speaker 11] (8:11:39 - 8:11:40)

thank you

[Speaker 1] (8:12:05 - 8:21:48)

questions people have sent in and voted on everybody wants to know the answer to me including if if let's say we love all if let's say we love we all love each other

unconditionally how can I decide who is to be my partner is this based on physical attraction isn't this a contradiction with this higher state of consciousness okay so if you love everybody unconditionally how can you possibly decide who is going to be your partner that's the question because it seems there's no preference anymore or if it's physical attraction isn't there a contradiction if you're in a higher state of consciousness then shouldn't or not be physically attracted to anybody is that the implication the question well the love we're talking about the unconditional love towards human beings and life forms is a let's see what is it that you love in the other when you love unconditionally you don't love their physical form you don't love their psychological form their personality the unconditional love goes deeper it's a transcendent love that what you love is not the form but the formless essence of the other and you can only love that when you can sense within yourself that dimension the formless when you can be still and present enough and then look at another human being then you can recognize something what you recognize is for lack of a better word the consciousness which is the essence of the other human as it is the essence of who you are consciousness prior to the consciousness being born into some kind of form personality which is there and the physical form which is there but in every being there is still the dimension of consciousness that is prior to form although the human being has become form consciousness has assumed form has incarnated so to speak but that doesn't mean that the formless and timeless consciousness is lost it's still there as the essence and when you can sense it in yourself you can sense because you are still and present enough from that dimension in yourself you can sense it in the other and that is love it's basically a recognition that in essence the other is the same as you but then of course there's always that is the transcendent dimension to every human being in addition to that transcendent dimension there is a form identity of every human being every human being has a physical form and emotional form and a mental form that's the inner, that's the personality so the physical appearance and the personality consisting of mental, emotional, conditioning and so on so there are the two levels the unconditional love towards all humans is the transcendent love you love the formless, you recognize the formless as yourself in the other but then you are still here as a form too and the form may respond to another form the physical, there can be physical attraction, it is not incompatible with the transcendent realization although some ancient or not so ancient traditions may tell you that it is not incompatible you can have physical attraction on the level of form you can also have an attraction towards the mental, emotional form of that other human being because it resonates with something in your own form so that means you may be drawn to another human being physically or mentally, emotionally because you resonate with that and then perhaps you enter into a relationship so different levels operate the transcendent remains it can become obscured through excessive attachment of course to the mental or emotional dimension in the other so in a relationship the realization of essence identity as I sometimes call it can become obscured when form identity takes over completely which could happen through the pain body which could happen through emotional getting identified with arising emotions and

losing touch with the transcendent, yes that can happen but it's not incompatible everybody's challenge is to balance the two in their lives in their relationships to relate to the other on the transcendent level and at the same time if it's there on an emotional, mental physical level without the transcendent dimension in a relationship it's not ultimately satisfying and it cannot really truly work for long if the transcendent is missing completely in a relationship it's physical attraction and attraction between personalities is not enough to keep it going, it can be going for a while but then it becomes frustrating and you see more and more of the limitations of the other person and the other person sees more and more of your limitations which are always there and when you live together it becomes very obvious that the other person has his or her limitations now as long as the realization of the transcendent dimension is there that's fine, those limitations can exist within the space of the transcendent they're not destructive of the relationship now you may find with it's sometimes easier to have this unconditional love towards people that you don't know so well than people, easier than towards people that with whom you share a lot of past because they're the past the form identity of that person can be very powerfully there in your mind, in your interaction so that's the challenge of being present with family members parents parents grown up children and so on and of course as you know, Rumdust recommends if you think you're enlightened as a test, he recommends that you spend two weeks with your parents and that will tell you whether you're really enlightened or not go and spend two weeks, stay with your parents for two weeks in most cases that is a good test unless your parents are enlightened in which case there's not much point in using it it doesn't tell you anything

[Speaker 6] (8:22:16 - 8:24:47)

so last year I asked you a question about my two year old son Teddy and I look back on it now and I feel like I've awakened more because the the question the question was asked in more fear than presence and today I stand here and I have so much enthusiasm because my son who's three years old now, he has this childlike trust and faith that has not diminished from he had severe acid reflux when he was a baby and he went through intense physical suffering because of that since he was born and it was hard for me as a mom to be present with that because for a long time I didn't know how to help him but now he's three years old and now he can look in my eyes and say mommy, don't think be happy or oh your pain body mommy mommy I feel like it's a big irony because this whole time I've been thinking oh what can I do to protect his innocence and his childlike nature and his consciousness whereas the whole time he's my spiritual teacher and I feel like children and also elderly people who've gone through life have this innate knowing, they have a knowing and for me to have that realization and to dive deep within in that stillness that they have and to know how precious it is is the biggest joy of my life and so also my father has cancer and in the midst of my son having reflux and my father just getting diagnosed with stage 3 cancer I was looking on the surface, there was much suffering on my part and trying to be present with it but now, three years later looking

back and seeing how my father has transcended his physical body and is in much greater peace than I could ever exude and as well as my son as well it's just a huge blessing.

[Speaker 1] (8:24:47 - 8:31:30)

Yes, oh thank you for sharing that and I'd just like to comment on some of those things very young people you mentioned and older people and you mentioned your father who is suffering from that illness it often happens if there's suffering at an early age like the physical suffering of your child at an early age can sometimes accelerate the awakening of a human being now this could be physical suffering or it could be other forms of suffering at an early age for example when there's a young child and one or both of the parents suddenly die in an accident or whatever and so the child is deprived of something that would be regarded as absolutely essential but the child is in deprivation early in life and again this is a huge challenge for a human being to have this great loss or physical suffering early in life but sometimes it happens that this challenge then generates the transcendence already at an early age it can also of course have negative consequences so then the child becomes an adult and then has to live with the burden of past pain for a long time until perhaps finally at that point more awareness comes in and dissolves it but it does happen sometimes that early suffering brings about already a very early transcendence in a human being and that probably happened to your son and that's just wonderful and then the child can become your teacher so to speak and you mentioned old people again there's a huge potential in old age that is still unrecognized by mainstream society and that's the potential of letting go of ego when you see the end of your life span approaching why hang on to this entity in your head me and it still needs to be right and still complains and still has its old patterns to step into no thought become nobody I would highly recommend not to wait until old age but old age is a wonderful opportunity for opening up and our society doesn't need to know what to do with old age I think it's just a waiting room you wait to die but of course it there was more wisdom in some traditional societies where they recognized the value of old age and the most highly respected people in those older societies were old people the elders because they recognized that there was something was just prior to the dissolution of the physical form somehow the psychological form was already dissolving before the physical form dissolved and the me entity and so humans recognized that old people would often become luminous in the last years of their life and wisdom would speak through them so traditionally you go to they go to the elders if they have important questions to ask because they realize there is an intelligence that comes through them that is not there in the young people who are still identified with their form psychological and physical form so old age is wonderful if you but don't wait for it, I would say this is, there is no need to get close to physical death to become present wait for that or what was it that Saint Augustine was it who said God he said something like God save me but not yet because he still wanted to enjoy the things of this life I want salvation but not yet

so we have young people and there are more young people being born now who have a high degree of readiness for awakening so now and then we come to an illness that comes into your life like cancer and again it has that can also bring about the flowering of consciousness because it can also erode, we talked about it yesterday, it can also erode in you the egoic entity and so you time very little time left, you cannot project yourself anymore into the future you are forced into the present moment if you leave the present moment you suffer you become very unhappy so it applies to people in prison for a long time or people with a serious illness and in your case of your father this shift has already happened in him and that's wonderful and of course in you also without having to wait for old age and an illness so thank you

[Speaker 11] (8:31:30 - 8:31:31)

thank you

[Speaker 1] (8:31:49 - 9:00:01)

I've been working for 13 years in an office and I feel that my job is boring and useless I learned to surrender but I'd like to change my job but don't know where to apply how can I find out what will give me joy and happiness and a feeling of meaningfulness well start with where you are rather than trying to get away from where you are you start with always the present moment and you say you have surrendered but have you surrendered enough, have you truly surrendered so I suggest when you travel to work every morning enter the state of presence rather than drifting off into thinking so that your present every moment whether you're driving or taking public transportation or walk to work be there absolute presence and when you're at work do one thing at a time and bring in spacious moments as much as possible, they can only be a few seconds one spacious breath after you made a phone call two spacious breaths and then when you go to have lunch, wherever it is either you eat the lunch that you brought with you or you go to the restaurant or the canteen again present with every moment, so you use what otherwise would be a boring situation and just use it as the background for presence so you're not ultimately you're not looking for some satisfaction in the work but you bring a different state of consciousness to it so in a way your work situation becomes like a canvas it's just an excuse for practicing presence and so that is, and you're lucky that you have a relatively boring job gives you great opportunity for practice, if you had a very stressful job that kept you in a state of excitement all day long, would be more difficult so be thankful that life has given you something relatively boring and then you make it interesting not in the conventional sense of interesting, but you bring that the alertness to it so you're not working at the stock exchange shouting like a mad person sell, sell, buy be on the computers now if there's any stock broker wanting to ask me a question please do, that'll be a different answer I don't know what I'll say there's a way there to what it is, I don't know until you ask the question but yes use the situation and so that as you do that discontent disappears and that is true surrender, you say you

practice surrender, the questioner says but if there's discontent, of course there's still not complete surrender I'd rather be somewhere else or the mind telling you it's been 13 years how many more years to retirement and then you start counting the years to retirement so you're losing yourself in past and future and you're carrying the burden in your mind of past and future missing the opportunity of the present moment because it's not interesting enough, says the mind so that's good practice and you may find if you come into such an alignment with the present moment you feel more alive even within the routine activities there is then an added dimension of aliveness that comes in and you perform even the routine activities with a greater sense of aliveness and it is often then that change comes into your life when you align with the present moment instead of trying to get away from it, internally align yourself with it so that any kind of no to the present moment dissolves in a no and so you're so aligned that actually power begins to flow through, that's why I call that the power of now, it's the power of life itself, begins to flow through you at first it flows into your routine activities and the way in which you relate to your colleagues at work becomes more present, different somewhat different some people may notice it, others may not and so gradually the universe or life notices that you are in a different state of consciousness and often it is then that change comes into your life either through a chance event or a chance encounter or a sudden idea or realization that comes into your head one morning in whatever form it comes or some drastic thing like suddenly your company goes bust, the company that you worked for for so long, suddenly they close down, everybody loses their job, wow you're free but you were free already because internally you already became free, so in what way change comes into your life we don't know it is much more likely to come in, but you no longer depend on external change for your inner state that's the main thing that you don't depend on it anymore and even if nothing else came into your life, you would continue practice until your last breath and your last breath would be your conscious breath and you would have fulfilled your purpose on this planet, in this form which is to be a vehicle for consciousness, to come into this world so you don't need to depend you don't depend on anything, change is more likely to come, yes, but the presence practice is not a means to an end you're not practicing, you say ok, I'll practice, but if nothing happens within six weeks, I'll stop practicing laughter laughter or the lady do you know the lady who a church going lady who saw she lived in a house and outside her window there was a hill that blocked the view of the ocean so just a little hill and of course if that hill hadn't been there, her house would have been worth much more, so because of that hill her house wasn't worth that much but in church she heard if you only have faith of go big as a mustard seed, you can sail to this mountain, move from here to there and it will move for you she heard that in church Jesus said and then she said, oh, ok I only have a hill there so I can let see and said, ok I'm going to believe that this hill is going to move and then tomorrow morning I'll open the curtains and see what happens so she in the morning she got up and opened the curtains and the hill was still there and she said oh, I knew it wasn't going to work laughter laughter laughter laughter laughter laughter that's the face laughter so to all of you who are bored at work laughter there may be

quite a few make it into a spiritual practice a consciousness practice bored at work also means you're not particularly challenged at work and in the absence of life challenges there's always the danger that you fall below thought and you come into a routine where you what you think is acceptance but you're really falling below thought and you you go you go to work and there's a decrease in your sense of alertness and aliveness and you become dull and you go and sometimes you see people who've been working in the same place for a long time they're gone that's not surrender or presence, they've just gone below thought, not risen above laughter laughter if you want to learn about not having a mental self image watch your dog or your cat they don't they don't have an opinion about who they are they just are who they are how can I love myself what is this I don't remember ever saying that you should love yourself so is it bad to love yourself no, of course not is it better than to hate yourself yes, of course let's start with many people are uncomfortable with themselves they dislike who they are perhaps they dislike their body how they look perhaps they dislike who they are as a person don't feel they are good enough or are self critical a lot many people live with a negative self image which of course all consists of certain types of mind activity and that's not pleasant and it may be for some of those people once they realize that they live with a mind pattern that continually criticizes them and says negative things about them they begin to realize that it's a mind pattern this self hatred is a mind pattern and that it's harmful it's not pleasant and they can go beyond it and begin to replace it with more negative thoughts more positive thoughts about themselves and having positive thoughts about yourself that kind of thing which perhaps usually be called beginning to love yourself to feel good about yourself but it's not it's not easy that shift from feeling bad about yourself to feeling good about yourself sometimes it requires a lot of convincing I would regard loving yourself as perhaps an intermediate stage in one's awakening but the essence of the awakened consciousness is that you go beyond having a particular idea in your mind that represents yourself a mental self image that you relate to because basically it's ego a mental self image you think this is what I am, this is who I am if you want to learn about not having a mental self image watch your dog or your cat they don't have an opinion about who they are they just are who they are so that removes an enormous amount of problems from their lives of course they don't have the mind activity that creates a self image in their head they are pre mind and therefore their life is far less problematic than human life you can see how wonderful it is not to have a self image you can even look at an ugly dog or an ugly cat they don't have a problem with that even an overweight dog or cat they are ok no self image or a dog that has lost it's sexual powers it doesn't become part of the dog's self image, the dog says oh my god I can't father puppies anymore I've lost my male power, how dreadful the dog doesn't have a self image if there is no sexual desire there is no sexual desire there is no thinking around that nothing to do with me there is no problem or the cat can't jump up this fence anymore it's getting too old the cat doesn't say oh I've become useless now what's the point in caring it just is it doesn't detract from the self image of the cat because it doesn't have a self image so it's wonderful to live without an image of who

you are because you are the presence you are not you are not the form that's a temporary expression of you but you are the underlying presence and when you feel yourself as the underlying presence you don't need to live through some mental image of who you are and that's where you go beyond hating yourself but you also go beyond loving yourself it's just being yourself similar to the dog but it's not a regressive step it's a step forward for humans you go beyond the mind made sense of self you don't fall back to the pre mind made sense of self you don't need to live through a self image of who you are the more presence that comes into your life the more you feel yourself to be the presence not some mental construct of course somewhere on the periphery of your mind there may still be some there is a little bit of a mental construct but it does not provide the basis for your sense of identity anymore of course yes you know your body is too thin or too fat but that's just how it is or this or that lacking there is some vague self image still there but it is not the foundation for your sense of who you are the foundation for your sense of who you are is you are awareness, you are presence and that's a liberation from the self image and that's wonderful so it's not go beyond hating yourself and then also go beyond loving yourself if you need to go through the stage of loving yourself because you cannot go directly from hating yourself to presence then do go through the stage of loving and then step beyond that and it's not as stressful running anymore and if you miss the plane what does it matter it's just you're standing somewhere else and you're sitting somewhere else but not on the plane and you're breathing somewhere I need to be on that plane maybe not is it really possible somehow to be present and work fast and nevertheless be conscious at the same time interesting yes it seems at first that when you are in presence it almost seems to people they are forced to do things slowly and sometimes I'm described as slow by some people close to me and it's true but sometimes I can be fast too there are occasions there are occasions when I'm quite when it is demanded I can be fast it's presence does not have to be slow remember the famous Zen saying hurry slowly hurry slowly translated into Spanish date prisa lentamente I think that's a good translation so what does that mean how can you go fast and yet be present at the same time it has a lot to do with the focus of your attention so you're working here if a large part of your attention is where you want to get to the result you want to achieve then you're working here if you said one can't really put it in numbers or percentages but I'll do it anyway so if 80% of your attention is where you need to be I need to get this finished and in the meantime it creates a tension in you there's a mental projection where you need to go and in the meantime you're doing this in order to get there if you can be more present and have 80% of your attention reverse it have 80% of your attention in the doing itself and 20% where you want to get to because you have to get somewhere then you can work fast and working fast with presence implies enjoyment of the activity and not being present usually implies lack of enjoyment of the activity and the rising of stress or to be working with distaste or some kind of resistance and that's not good for anybody it's not good for you for your physical body the people around you so you can practice with practical things or even pretend that you're in a hurry if you want to have just a trial practice pretend that you're in a

hurry and you need to get these things or maybe you don't even need to pretend because it happens often enough in real life that you're in a hurry, you need to get ready in order to leave the house or go out is it possible to do what you have to do within that space of a few minutes or whatever time you need to get ready and do it actually being fully conscious of every movement and enjoy the energy behind it which is really getting in touch with your conscious attention enjoy the energy that's behind the doing rather than mentally projecting to the future do it hurry slowly is the meaning is what that means running the same if you have to run to catch a plane or a train or a bus or whatever you can run and be totally centered and yet run fast so it's a different kind of running it's a smooth more smooth less stressful running you actually enjoy every step of it because you're not excessively focused on the next moment and of course realizing as the Zen master says Zen is doing one thing at a time that's another way of pointing to this way of acting and working Zen is doing one thing at a time which means giving your fullest attention to whatever you're doing at this moment then you know peripherally of course why you're doing it where you want to go to but in the meantime and then you're running and it's not a stressful running anymore and if you miss the plane what does it matter it's just you're standing somewhere else and you're sitting somewhere else but not on the plane and you're breathing somewhere I need to be on that plane maybe not so it's a practice of hurrying slowly there's also a tendency in our civilization to create more deadlines than are actually necessary for good functioning of things I find there are often people create for themselves organizations and so on create unnecessarily tight deadlines that often do not allow things to mature and so this has to be done by tomorrow night why? and often they don't even publishers do that sometimes they bring out books some books have a slow time they gradually acquire their readers by word of mouth and so on and some publishers, many publishers say if not enough books are sold in the first six months it's never printed again there's not even given a chance there are some TV series that may actually be quite good and they have one run and say not quite enough viewers but it was so good just allow things to mature a little bit why the constant deadlines but you may be trapped in an organization that does that more likely than not because that's how this world functions so it's ultimately you may have to create your own organization or if the organization is flexible enough you may be able to create a different environment I'm famous for not meeting deadlines and the world hasn't collapsed for some reason but if I were an employee I would have lost my job many times or probably would have walked out unless I could have introduced a different way of doing things, if there's room for that that's good

[Speaker 7] (9:00:29 - 9:00:29)

Namaste

[Speaker 4] (9:00:29 - 9:02:45)

Namaste First of all I'd like to thank you for before I ask you my question I'd like to thank

you for your teaching it has helped me tremendously I'd like to thank Eckhart the form for withstanding that suffering that brought out this teaching to help all of us my questions has to do with issues of abandonment and feeling of unworthiness for about four decades I walked around with a story in my head and the story was that I was abandoned life abandoned me my life situation had it so that my mother did give me away shortly after birth and so I grew up with someone else but I felt abandoned by my mother and then later on with more challenges of life I felt that life abandoned me even though I reconnected with my mother later on but I always had this issue so I heard of your teaching I read your book and then I realized I could have never been abandoned by life I am life all one how could I have been abandoned so I thank you for that thank you from the bottom of my heart I brought tissues but having said that as you know my conditioned self always came back to remind me of that so I have issues when I'm around people powerful people you're powerful but I don't feel like that around you

[Speaker 1] (9:02:46 - 9:02:48)

I hope not

[Speaker 4] (9:02:51 - 9:03:49)

when I'm around wealthy people especially like if I met the president you talk about the story of the CEO versus the janitor in your book and yeah at work I can talk to the janitor I feel like he's the janitor so I have a chip on my shoulder but when the CEO is coming I'm like oh I'll get the door for you so how can I stay present I feel like my ego has moved into that direction because I can be around here I feel okay but when I'm with those people I mentioned I lose it I feel small I feel insignificant if I could become an aunt in the room I would yes okay thank you thank you

[Speaker 1] (9:03:53 - 9:21:36)

you may remember I gave the example that is very much related to this in in a new earth about the the zen the abbot of a zen monastery who was waiting to receive the governor of the province who was going to arrive for some ceremony and while he was waiting to receive the governor of the province where the monastery was the abbot of the monastery noticed that his the palms of his hands were sweaty and so he had a lot of of course already a lot of self awareness and he noticed that okay the next day he went in front of his all his monks and said I'm I resign from my position of abbot I have more work to do and he went to another monastery to study under another master for a few more years and then he came back to the monastery and that was gone so what he noticed of course was that he was not sufficiently deeply connected with being he was becoming nervous in the presence of somebody who in the eyes of the world was important and that showed to him that he wasn't deeply enough connected with being the same what you described in my twenties I had similar experiences and when I met occasionally people in Europe for example I met I was introduced to a young man and

they said he is the he is the great grandson of the former German emperor and I felt oh I didn't remember the mess that his great grandfather had left behind but but I had this image of him living in a growing up in a palace and I knew I had grown up in a one bedroom apartment with my parents so I felt smaller than him I was identified with form with position with the history of me I had a mental image of who that person was or is I had a mental image of who I am and I was still living through a mental image and when I compared the two mental images the one I had of him the one I had of myself the one I had of myself felt much smaller and insignificant than his and then the mind kicked in and said oh he would be if his great grandfather hadn't made such a mess of things this guy would not be the emperor or become emperor and a few more times similar things happened so there is still not the connectedness with being needs to deepen so that you can sense who or shall we could even say you can sense what who or what you are at the deeper level that transcends the form and this is of course what this our work if we want to call it work is all about is to take our attention into ourselves so that our attention and our sense of identity of self is no longer derived from mental images including mental images we have of our body or mental images that we have that are connected with our history and whatever it is our upbringing our social position they are all thoughts or mental images now most this is very normal for people to derive their sense of self from those things but it's extremely limiting and it makes you uneasy very often in the presence of others on the other extreme of that kind of limited behaviour would be that you probably don't do it, you could look down on people who you think are inferior and treat them less well and so you feel bigger than them and then you when there is somebody else you have a mental image that he is more than you, you feel smaller or you want to ingratiate yourself or whatever or want to disappear not be seen so this is why I mentioned in A New Earth to observe yourself to see and again self observation not easy it needs a certain degree of awareness you already know it but I'm just briefly saying for others to observe yourself to see whether the way in which you behave with different people differs according to social position and or whatever you want from those people, I mentioned the example in A New Earth is the way in which you speak to the janitor the same as the way in which you speak to the CEO of the company or is it different?

You need self observation to know that and that will tell you to what extent you identified with the conditioned me in the head so if you become still and discover your essential reality as the being not the human to use this terminology to feel the consciousness that you are, the life the consciousness that you are as you know you were never abandoned by life because you are life without life there is no you you are an expression of the one life so you were never abandoned you were always one with not more than supported by life one with life because if you say I'm supported by life you are still creating a duality of me and there is life somewhere supporting me you are life the life that you can feel within the consciousness is the consciousness of is life so if you can feel yourself as the unconditioned consciousness the awareness the presence, another

way we used the other day here was to ask yourself what does it feel like to be you not the mind made you but the essential presence of you if you can feel that essential presence and then meet with the janitor or the CEO you will meet exactly the same person there is no longer any difference and you will never again feel either superior or inferior to anybody and that's a wonderful way of relating to people because as long as you are trapped in ego whenever you meet somebody it's very rare that you, well occasionally you might meet equal ego saying oh he is my equal but a lot of the time especially when you meet new people the ego immediately goes into comparison mode how do I rate relative to this person, physical appearance social position wealth, possessions education knowledge power how do I relate and then you kind of see and if you if you think you are less then immediately your behavior changes according, you think you are more you feel superior so you talk down to that person but it's this is a conditioned not deep way of relating to other human beings so if you the more you connect with being the easier it will be when you meet somebody not to relate from the level of position or anything else to do with form but to feel the being that you are which is precious which is like a like some jewel it's a most precious thing being is the most precious it's not a thing, we are just using language it's the most precious thing there is there is intense aliveness there there is intense joy, it is life itself then you can feel that and you will no longer be better or not as good as the other you can relate to the other as a human being a very important thing in decision making process is not to come up with a decision but to ask the right question now it's very easy to mistake an impulse that comes to you for some deeper answer that comes out of the stillness and so in any decision making process you have basically two factors well, most people only have you have the information that's available to you and so make sure that you have the information or the facts that you need sometimes before making a decision you may have a few, a number of facts and sometimes these facts may not be sufficient, so then you go within and see what questions you can ask in order to elicit more facts or information from whoever is capable of giving to you that information I'm talking very general terms whether you're in business or wherever you are or some personal decision that you need to arrive at, on one level facts need to be looked at what is the situation and sometimes the facts are not clear enough or you have not enough facts and you become still and see what questions you can ask somebody may be able to supply more detailed facts but in order to ask the right question you already need a moment of stillness so you may not immediately get an answer through stillness the first step as you become alert and still is another question a very important thing in decision making process is not to come up with a decision but to ask the right question that can elicit what you need in order to arrive at a decision and in order to ask the right question there needs to be that alert stillness for a moment and in that alert stillness you kind of listen within and then a question comes, this is often when somebody call me and say we've had this or that offer, somebody wants you to do this, somebody wants you to do that interview, somebody wants to do that, very often I don't immediately say yes or no, I usually come up with a few questions in addition to the information that they gave me

well what about that and that and that and they say oh ok, I'll get back to you I'll find out then they call again, then I know a bit more and sometimes on the basis of the factual information you already know whether you want to do it or not you more easily know that you don't want to do it just by looking at the facts but it may well be that you have all the facts and you're still not clear what the right course of action is so you've exhausted the avenue of asking more questions probably, unless something else comes to you and then it's usually a question of becoming still and that's the added dimension to the decision making process it works together with looking at the knowledge that you have in the mind conceptual knowledge factual knowledge works in conjunction with a deeper intuitive knowing and you bring the two together it's not just the intuitive and in the end you completely disregard the facts so even with your bringing your ex-girlfriend it's a relatively simple thing perhaps there was an impulse that or some believe that you should obey your impulses now and just do it but you didn't and you also have some knowledge in your mind about what kind of a person she is what your relationship was like, how it ended how she might react these are factors that you also consider is it a wise thing to do just on the level of thinking, you think about it and then you go within become still an impulse to do something does not necessarily come from the deepest level it could be an emotional impulse it could be an impulse created by the ego to see itself as very spiritual that you reconnect with her many different levels it could come from also it's good to deal sometimes it's good in this case where immediate action is not required if you delay it a little bit, wait a day and see if the next day you still feel the same or the day after because in this case for example, immediate action is not required so it's often helpful to know whether something is real comes from the deepest level give it some time, if it's still there tomorrow or next week it's more likely to be true and come from the deepest level an impulse can dissolve very quickly an impulse came to me many years ago as I've told before on various occasions when I lived in England in the country one morning not an impulse but a strong knowing was there that for some reason I had to move to the west coast of North America but I didn't know why but I didn't immediately pick up the phone and make a reservation and sell everything I have I waited and days passed and every day that was still there several weeks passed and it was still there and then I couldn't I knew this I had to do it was not a temporary impulse or an idea that came into my mind it came from a deeper level if I had not obeyed it probably I would have fallen ill or something would have gone very wrong because I would not have gone with that deeper flow where the universe wanted to move me so if there is time give it time and if something is still there after a few days or even a few weeks then it probably comes from the deeper level so in many cases it's a question of balancing factual knowledge and going beyond factual knowledge and again to repeat sometimes factual knowledge is all you need and it's immediately very clear from just looking at the facts that this for example is not feasible at other times the mind could create prematurely the idea that this cannot be done because nobody has done it before and might be wrong so don't be too certain that when the mind says no you really have to be very clear and if you are not totally clear go within so what's your add on?

[Speaker 3] (9:21:38 - 9:22:13)

With regards to choosing spiritual practice, for about 25 years I've had different regular practices and I step back and go gosh have I really made any progress and is my lack of progress from not sticking with just one, be it Goenka Vipassana or Tibetan, whatever and I know sometimes in a practice we go through darkness and that it's good to push on through to the other side and sometimes there's no other side, you're just going into more and more darkness, it's the wrong direction could you recommend on

[Speaker 1] (9:22:13 - 9:28:11)

how to decide what is the right practice? The right practice underlying any practice is presence, no matter the externals of the practice may be different but what every practice points to and eventually if it succeeds and you end up with is presence remember our definition I quoted Ramana Maharshi when he was asked how do we know, because that's your question, whether we are making any progress on the spiritual path and of course you may remember his answer the degree of absence of thinking is your criterion for judging progress on the spiritual path, that's all, so to what extent is there space in you a cessation of thinking when it's not needed, rising moments of spaciousness as you evolve spiritually the spaciousness deepens and there's more of it so that eventually half of you is spaciousness don't take it too literally half of you is spaciousness and half of you is form mind, knowledge and so on if half of you is spaciousness and half of you is form you would lead a very balanced life and it could be that as in the case of Ramana Maharshi when he was a young boy and he just had the death experience he became 90% spaciousness and he couldn't talk anymore and he still had a body that's the 10% and he sat somewhere but then he came back to well very few humans are actually it's hard to quantify anyway I'm just, it's more or less speaking metaphorically very few humans are totally balanced between moving in the world of form using their mind and their knowledge and interacting and being busy and active in the world of form and at the same time not losing the deeper dimension of presence so not having two separate compartments in your life some spiritual practitioners meditators develop two compartments my spiritual practice which they do when they meditate or go on boot camp retreats and then my daily life of course the two need to come together so that your spiritual dimension shines through all the things that you do.

In other words everything you do there's spaciousness there's a sense of peace that comes even while you're engaged in activities you don't get frantic and upset about every little thing there's a spaciousness in your human interactions a sense of presence that pervades even your business dealings that is what Ramana Maharshi means when he talks of to be free of thinking that spaciousness are moments when you're just alert and present even while conducting a business there's an alertness and a presence and then you become more creative. The person who created the iPhone the main Steve Jobs

I haven't read his entire biography and he had certain personal idiosyncrasies which were very much egoic conditioning but apart from his egoic conditioning he had areas he was a practitioner of I believe of Zen and meditation he had these areas of stillness out of those came the creativity so he did not represent a complete balanced coming together of very few people have that a complete balanced coming together of spaciousness and form and you don't have to achieve that I don't have it I don't have 50% effectiveness in form and 50% spaciousness I have I'm just taking a figure 80-85% spaciousness and 20-15% form in other words I'm not that great at dealing with stuff when I do I'm spacious with it my preference is not to so I'm not that balanced Oprah is much more balanced than I am she is very effective in doing has seemingly inexhaustible energy I can't keep up with her and yet she does always return to stillness so she doesn't lose herself in the doing and there are some people but not many Oprah is a bit more in the doing than the being but there's still enough being to keep her rooted and to make her work fruitful and contribute a lot to the consciousness of the planet

[Speaker 11] (9:28:38 - 9:29:21)

I don't really have a formulated question but I'd like to hear you talk for a second it's kind of been hinted at here and there but talk more specifically about the the situation of the planet, the ecological situation, you know, without panicking, without getting self-righteous and all these other things clearly a change of consciousness is necessary but things also have to be done in real time because these are processes happening in time and so just if you had anything at all to say about that and how these two processes of consciousness and also changing things, doing whatever would be necessary for the planet how this works together

[Speaker 1] (9:29:21 - 9:37:11)

yes, thank you are you engaged in that kind of work?

to some extent and hoping to be more well one thing, as you know, I don't need to say it again, the foundation for any action you take is to be let it arise from presence rather than from a feeling of fear or anger because those two are not very productive what comes out of fear or anger is not productive presence is much more powerful there's an enormous power in presence and true intelligence intelligent, really intelligent action comes out of presence so that's vital to know there are many things that need changing in our relationship with the planet things seem to be going the wrong way right now all I can say is do as much as you can to help change the way in which we live on this planet, do what you can, with peace in your heart that's the main thing, with peace in your heart, because otherwise without peace, the opposite of peace is war and conflict so if we don't destroy the planet, we destroy ourselves through war and conflict the planet there's more to the planet this is my intuitive realization by the way there's more to the planet than we realize the planet is a being it's not a rock floating in space with things

growing on top the planet is a living being that many humans or scientists cannot accept what I mean is it is pervaded by an intelligent energy field in the same way that your body is pervaded and held together and run by an underlying intelligence that keeps everything the thousands of functions in your body because the planet is another kind of body the thousands of functions that need to be constantly coordinated and controlled that keep this body alive, keep the atoms and molecules together, keep the organs from cooperating no human or the greatest computer could possibly do that even now we only understand a fraction of how our physical body operates there's a vast intelligence built into it when that intelligence says goodbye then very quickly the atoms and molecules say goodbye to each other too and then they depart and then the form dissolves the planet is also an intelligence a being that is intelligent and it has produced us in a way, not alone there have been other factors the sun is also more than a fireball we think the sun is a ball of just energy there's more to it than that we think the sun is extremely hot well hot is one way but really what that means is the energy of the highest intensity which our physical body register as extreme heat the sun is also a celestial being you don't need to believe me by the way maybe I'll just tell you what my intuitive realization is and the planet has an intelligence also that we need to one reason why we need to be active in protecting the planet so that we don't use these absurd ways of the resources of the planet, the absurd ways of getting energy that needs to, we need to go beyond that there are other ways, the universe is infinitely abundant the energy on the external level the energy obviously inexhaustible energy comes continuously from the sun, and all the other energy forms that we discover on the planet are really transformed sun energy it was once sun energy so, and to use those is a very primitive way of using energy and we need to as soon as possible and this is the task of scientists and so on who also need to be present to go beyond those primitive ways of using the energy that's left over by sun energy on the planet the planet if we do not take action, I do not believe that the planet will become destroyed but we will destroy ourselves or the planet which has an intelligence but is just slow, because to a planet 100 years is nothing 200 years is nothing one second in your lifetime or less the planet, if the planet feels threatened by by humans I firmly believe that it will eliminate humans it can do that very easily we are because we are connected our physical form is connected to the energy field of the planet it's come out of the planet so the planet could easily even without violence, the planet could end all humans within 100 years without any act of violence by simply making males and females infertile that would be an action taken by planetary intelligence, say these humans we can't have them anymore that's too much or let's just get rid of 95% of them and then they can have a new beginning and can try again but it doesn't have to come to that so before the planet takes action if the planet is slow we need to take action but with peace because otherwise we are unconscious beings, we'll just contribute even if in our unconscious action we could save the planet, we still wouldn't save ourselves, because we would create warfare if we are unconscious there are many ways we can destroy ourselves not just through destroying nature there are other ways we can destroy ourselves and we will if the shift in consciousness does not

reach a sufficient number of people but the essence of what I'm saying is peace in your heart do not fear there's more to the planet than you realize if the planet needs to get rid of you it will

[Speaker 7] (9:37:16 - 9:38:29)

as a trauma surgeon

[Speaker 10] (9:38:29 - 9:39:24)

South Africa, working in Somalia I encounter and help victims of the suicide bombings and you tell us when we are dealing with pain body when the pain body is too big we need to retreat how can we as a collective deal with such severe pain body and it's really a collective question because we face it September 11 Boko Haram, ISIS so your comment just comments on something like enlightened military defense, I know it might be an oxymoron but sometimes as a collective we need to defend ourselves when the unconsciousness is so bad that you prepare to strap bombs to yourself and going

[Speaker 1] (9:39:25 - 9:39:29)

yes, well certainly thank you

[Speaker 10] (9:39:29 - 9:39:30)

thank you

[Speaker 1] (9:39:35 - 9:46:53)

certainly there are extreme manifestations of unconsciousness and it is sometimes necessary to defend yourself against that in the right way so we all know that in the past when for example 9-11 happened the reaction to 9-11 was not to put it mildly the most wise thing that could have happened in fact it made everything infinitely worse because that was not a defense, it was an overreaction of the ego in the absence of complete absence of even the slightest trace of wisdom and insight and repercussions not to mention other cultures and so on so we the unconsciousness that we see being perpetrated in those parts of the world is connected to the unconsciousness of the reaction to 9-11 of course everything is connected it's not there is not one entity to blame but the unconscious affects not only one area of human culture or one religion it manifests in different ways even in seemingly more conscious places like here politicians were extremely unconscious at the time and that opened the gates of hell and amplified the latent unconsciousness that was there in millions of other human beings or hundreds of thousands of other human beings so the everything is connected defense may be necessary sometimes if it's done wisely and if it's not reactive but a response to the situation wisdom is an absolute requirement for taking right decisions but unfortunately wisdom is hard to come by in political circles it seems that as people go into politics they

might even have gone in with wisdom but then it grinds you down and it seems very hard to stay conscious once you are in the political system but there are people here and there who realize the importance there is a congressman I met from Washington who is deeply interested in mindfulness and meditation and spirituality and here and there there are people who realize the importance of wisdom so any decision one takes of how to defend oneself wisdom is required so that whatever you do does not make things worse so yes in the face of extreme unconsciousness you may need to defend yourself certainly another more general remark about these events this is only one example of humans creating something that looks actually quite insane it looks what they are doing like the suicide bombing it looks quite insane but that is how is it possible for humans to behave in such a way and is this not evil, go back to Europe in the first part of the 20th century the whole first part of Europe in the 20th century the first half of the 20th century was a nightmare and what what humans did to other humans at that time, first world war second world war infinitely worse than what is happening now with the terrorists infinitely worse just unimaginable horrors and the so that at every time period the human collective, the unconsciousness that is embedded in the collective will manifest through certain groups of people and if you close one door, another one opens and it manifests over there in the same way that the need for an enemy that is also there and manifests the cold war came to an end and said oh how wonderful there is no enemy anymore and not many years passed and quickly another big enemy arose somewhere else and now we need to fight that one I saw a funny movie about, it's a comedy about a fictitious American president who is, probably won't get re-elected in the next election and he says we need the cold wars and this was done before the whole terrorist thing happened but the cold war had come to an end the president says ok, the advisor, you're not going to get re-elected, your opinion poltergeist, we need an enemy and so they who can be our enemy because if a country has an enemy, everybody will unite behind the leader and they think ok, we got it, Canada Canada and then the rest of the movie is the humorous how the media manipulates public opinion to convince people that Canada is the great enemy the most unlikely enemy perhaps of the United States except perhaps Switzerland or Denmark but Canada is right next door so why not Canada oh yes, it's called Canadian Bacon that's the title of the movie now coming back to the atrocities that are perpetrated in different ways in different time periods

[Speaker 7] (9:46:55 - 9:46:56)

now

[Speaker 1] (9:46:56 - 9:49:55)

it's certainly the case that this is we need to recognize that this is insane it is a form of collective insanity, psychosis that is a benign way of looking at it you could call it evil, but I wouldn't I would say it's just insanity, because it seems to have no real purpose they achieve nothing through that so it's insanity now if we go then to a higher level a

higher perspective then you see that the entire consciousness of humanity is involved in an evolutionary process and that evolutionary process if you look at humanity with one single whole, the consciousness of humanity as a single thing being just one aspect of universal consciousness so this consciousness of humanity at every human being is part of that one consciousness of humanity which in itself is part of the universal consciousness and consciousness, this consciousness of humanity is involved in an awakening process and you might know from your own life and I know from my life that the awakening process for quite a while involves intense suffering so you know that from your personal life I know it from my personal life the awakening process the intense suffering is part of the awakening process so humanity as a whole is going through also through intense suffering because we are all going through the awakening process when it comes to conscious manifestation my interest at this point is not in manifesting anything for myself personally but in wanting to help manifest a world that is more peaceful and just for everyone can how you teach conscious manifestation help with that?

[Speaker 11] (9:49:58 - 9:50:00)

good question

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[Speaker 1] (0:02 - 21:29)

Relevant, manifesting a world that is more just, I think that was the word, more peaceful and just for everyone. Well, that would be a good aim. Now, ultimately, of course, what you experience as the world is intrinsically one with your consciousness.

The only place where you experience the world is in your consciousness. Philosophers have even questioned whether there actually is a world out there independent of conscious perception. We don't need to go there, but there's no doubt that the entire world happens inside you, one could say.

You don't know what you see, what the eyes transmit, the senses transmit comes nerve impulses that are sent to the brain. That's just on the physical level. And then these nerve impulses are decoded.

And then some kind of words appears within you. But to what extent that corresponds to a world out there, we don't even know. So to change the world, so as you look at the world, in some way you could almost say, go as far as to say what you're actually looking at is a reflection in the external, in the world of form of your state of consciousness.

One could say, it's an interesting way to look at it. And the state of consciousness is partly your, there is your personal world and there is a collective world. So the two, they are connected, but they're not the same.

Because first of all, there is what you experience as a world in your personal life. All the people you habitually interact with, where you live, your surroundings. It starts with simple things like even the objects that surround you habitually where you live.

So your world is your personal, your relationships with humans that you live with, your relationships with other humans that you meet every day casually. The way you work, the people you work with. So all these things, your personal life, so-called life is one sphere that you move in.

And the important thing is not to neglect that in search of a better collective world. The two are related, but to disregard, this is a mistake that is often made, to disregard your personal sphere, the world that is immediately accessible to you as you and your life, the people in your life, where you live, all that, your work. To neglect that, it's very seductive to think there's so much wrong with the world out there, the collective, that's really what I should be concerned with because there's so much wrong out there, you can see it, you just have to turn on the, you turn on some kind of device, whether it's television or that brings you the news and the commentaries, continuous stream, and then, of course, that is already, that is the collective world that then enters your living room or wherever you

are.

And then they get mixed up, they can obliterate, the collective can obliterate your personal life. And you think of your personal life is quite irrelevant now because what really matters, the world needs to change. It's so dreadful.

Well, yes, the world needs to change and the world is changing because humanity is a work in progress. Humanity is slowly evolving, fits and starts, and regressive periods, it takes a few steps forward and then a few steps, four steps forward, three steps back, then a few more forward. There's a gradual evolution of humanity and to focus only on what is going wrong within that process, that evolutionary process is also very misleading because that's what you see when you watch the media and so on.

It focuses not on what's going right or what has gone right, it focuses on what's going wrong. Then you give that more and more attention. By giving attention to something, you amplify it.

So whatever you give, now I'm not saying to completely ignore the world, no, but to give it an excessive amount of attention and only continuously think about what's wrong with the world, then you forget what's right with the world and that then diminishes. So we have the external world coming into your living room, for example, through the media. And it can be, as I said, you can sometimes believe that your personal world, your immediate sphere of influence is irrelevant, but that's not the case.

So the starting point with changing the world is to become aware of how you operate in this world. The starting point is how do you relate to the humans in your life? How do you, what is it, your mind, what is your mind doing?

What is your predominant state of consciousness? What are your predominant emotions? What are the predominant thoughts that go through your mind?

It's vitally important to become aware of that. If you're not aware of what the predominant emotions are, that the predominant thoughts are, plus accompanying emotions that go through your mind, you are unaware. And the emotions, the thoughts and emotions that arise continuously within you are a form of conditioning, and so they take possession of you.

So it's vitally important as the starting point for changing the world is to become aware of your world. But you can see how people cherish talking about what somebody did or failed to do. And then he did, they talk about it again and again and feel more and more aggrieved.

And again, it comes back to the state of connectedness with being. It's only from that state of connectedness with a deeper dimension of who you are. From there, it becomes easier to forgive because forgive means there was something that was done on the level

of form, by one life form to you, perhaps another life form.

Pain was inflicted or whatever it may be, treat whatever the transgression is. And it's only from there that you can see the relative nature of what was done because you are in touch with a space within you that was never hurt by that. That dimension in you is beyond what can be injured.

It's only the form can be injured. The psychological form, somebody might have insulted you deeply. The psychological form of who you are can feel pain or the physical form of who you are can feel pain.

And somebody inflicted that out of unconsciousness. Then recognizing the first step in forgiving is to recognize that this was an act of unconsciousness and you do not equate what this person did with who that person is. And it's only from the place of connectedness with being that you can say, no longer hold a grievance about that because you are in touch with that inside you that is beyond what can be injured.

If you're not in touch with that space, then you're still, it's hard to forgive. Forgiving means not to harbor grievance or resentment or any negative feeling about it. And really that's only possible when you are connected with the formless in yourself.

As Cause and Miracle says, nothing real can be threatened. Nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of God.

Nothing real can be threatened. This means what is ultimately real cannot be threatened. But what is ultimately real is not the form.

It's that which is deeper than the form that cannot be threatened. Nothing real can be threatened. Nothing unreal ultimately exists.

It just seems to. Herein lies the peace of God means in the knowing of that lies the peace of God, but it needs to be not conceptual knowing, but a knowing on the level of the depths of your being. And then from there, you can look at anything anybody did to you and say, it's almost as if it didn't happen.

For a while, for example, I harbored grievances against my father for many years because he was, he suffered from enormous amount of bottled up anger and living with him as a child was like living with a powder keg or an unexploded bomb somewhere in the house. And everybody, one knew that at any moment, the slightest thing somebody said, and usually it was my mother, the slightest thing somebody said and this bomb would explode and the entire house would be filled with destructive energy. And for a sensitive child and any child is sensitive young child, it's a terrible thing to live in constant anguish at an explosion could be happening at any moment whenever he's in the house.

So I had the ambivalent feelings of fearing his return home after work and wanting him to come home, divided. And that was expressed once in a dream that I had as a child. And in the dream, I had cut my father up into little pieces and put in a plastic or some kind of sack and hidden under the bed.

And after I had done that in the dream, my father arrived home and I greeted him and loved him. And of course, all this resulted, even after when I was an adult already, resulted in quite a bit of grievance towards him because my childhood was fearful and unpleasant as a result. And it was only when a transformation happened inside me and there was suddenly that deep inner peace that I realized he did what he did according to the way in which life had conditioned him.

He had, when he was a child, he had enormous amount of resentment against his family because of, and of course the story can go on many generations. He was the seventh child. His father died when he was 15 and they took him out of the school.

They had to pay for school, boarding school. They took him out of boarding school because they said, we can't afford it anymore. But his sisters were still kept in boarding school.

So, and then he had to do menial jobs. And every day he was, his anger was growing and growing and growing. He carried it the rest of his life.

There was not enough consciousness in him to disidentify from the anger. He was, the anger was using him. It lived in him as an energy field and he could come up anytime.

He was as much a victim as I was. And I saw that after I had gone through the transformation and found inner peace, I could see that he did, he was a victim of his own circumstances. There was not enough consciousness in him to see what he was doing.

And immediately forgiveness happened. I didn't even have to say, I have to try to forgive. He never did.

It was as if he had never done anything to me because basically he hadn't, he wasn't even there. There was only the unconsciousness in him acting up. And then as he grew older, some of that anger dissipated.

Remnants of it remained. He also came into touch with some spiritual teachings, especially the power of now. And that helped to some extent.

And so his ego grew less, not didn't quite disappear, but it grew less, which when I was a child, his ego was gigantic and it was continuously fueled by anger. And an angry ego is something, it's the incredible hulk that, and that, so forgiveness happened naturally. And very often you see that when an injury happens, very often it's, there's a mental judgment of a situation and actually beyond that mental judgment, not that much

happened.

Let's take a simple example. You arranged to meet somebody or somebody, he says, I'm going to help you with your moving. I'm going to help you move house.

I'll be there at five o'clock to help you move with my car. And he doesn't turn up and that just is as it is. Now the mind then comes in and says, he let me down.

He, or he betrayed me or he was, whatever the judgment of the mind is. And it is very often, it is the judgment of the situation that creates the emotion that feels injured. If you can just be with, or he, you said he would come, but he didn't turn up.

That's the fact. Whatever your mind wants to add to it gives you the sense of injury and strengthens the ego. So if you can just be with the pure facts, this is why all that stuff, when people about talking about other people, what they failed to do or what they did, what he did to me, he betrayed me.

Well, what did he do? Well, he went off with another woman or man. He betrayed me.

Betrayed me is an interpretation. And the more you have that thought that he betrayed me, the more you feel the emotion that goes with that thought. And you feel, who is it that feels that emotion?

The egoic self feels betrayed because who you deeply are, who you are in your essence doesn't feel betrayed. The fact is he went off with another woman. That's what he did.

Is that all? Yeah, that's what he did. If you refrain from adding a story to it, then you don't experience the, this may not be, this comes easy when you are connected with who you truly are.

Then it is easy to let go of the unnecessary imposition of stories upon events. The event is neutral. The story interpretation of it is what creates the anguish.

And so if you can just be with what is, but you can see how people cherish talking about what somebody did or failed to do. And then he did, they talk about it again and again and feel more and more aggrieved in who they are. Nothing really happened.

He didn't turn up. He didn't return the money that I lent him. I lent him the money, but he hasn't paid it back yet.

That's the fact of it. He is dishonest. Well, you don't need that.

He did something to me. He defrauded me. Mr. Madoff did it. This, a deeply unconscious person I wonder what he's doing now. He's sitting in his prison cell and many, many people have not forgiven him. Interesting position to be in, to have aggrieved so many people and created so much anguish and suffering in humans.

But for every single one of them, beyond their financial loss, they have their own lesson to learn. He has his lesson to learn. And life has given you, if you lost money with Mr. Madoff or whoever else, yes, you lost that money, but there is a deeper lesson you can learn in any loss. Any loss is, of course, one lesson is, of course, don't invest with him again. That's understood. Or anybody else like that.

That's understood. That's easy to know. But beyond that, there's a deeper lesson to learn and that is any lesson that comes with any kind of loss.

Any kind of loss is a potential opening into the formless because what you lose is something on the level of form. Whether it's money or reputation or some possession or even an ability to do something and suddenly you can't do it anymore. Any kind of loss is a loss on the level of form.

[Speaker 7] (21:56 - 22:50)

Thank you, Eckhart, for sharing the presence once again. My question is somewhat related to that last one, but from a different perspective. As the consciousness rises around us, there are many more resources and many new technologies to ease the suffering of humankind around the world.

But the white elephant in the room that no one seems to want to acknowledge in that process is the fact that the population is increasing faster and faster, it seems. I guess you can phrase that question so the answer is included, but I'd like to hear your perspective on what we might do to facilitate that process or how that process will take care of itself.

[Speaker 1] (22:51 - 22:57)

Can you be clear what is the process you refer to?

[Speaker 7] (22:58 - 23:11)

How the strain on the planet's resources is a result of the population increasing ever faster. How will we be able to resolve that conflict?

[Speaker 1] (23:12 - 57:38)

Well, it's obvious that the population cannot go on increasing because that would lead to disastrous consequences. Ultimately, that's fine too, because the one consciousness will manifest through any form it chooses again and again and is evolving. But it is quite possible that the larger intelligence that is, that underlies the planet, the planet, there is an intelligence that pervades the planet itself.

The planet is an intelligent being, which mainstream science would, of course, not agree with. But I very strongly feel that and anybody who becomes sensitive enough and no

longer totally absorbed in conceptual thinking can sense that the entire planet is an intelligent being. It has a regulating intelligence and I feel that if humans don't take action to reduce this proliferation of bodies, they continuously produce, if humans don't take positive action, then the regulating intelligence of the planet, planetary intelligence is just one another expression of the one universal intelligence.

We'll take action and we'll do something to reduce the number of human beings on the planet. This is my feeling. I cannot prove to you that this is a correct prediction or gnostication, but the intelligence will take action and whether the action it takes is a violent form of action or whether the action it takes is nonviolent, I don't know.

For planetary intelligence, it would be very easy to reduce humans within one generation by reducing the fertility in the sperm of men so that very far fewer babies are produced and within one or two generations, the population could be reduced by 50% if many men are not able to father children anymore simply because something is missing there. That would be problemless. So if I, I'm not in charge of planetary intelligence, but if I were, that's what I would do.

It's totally painless. Don't have to kill anybody. So, but we shouldn't wait for that.

We need to look and see if we, first of course, we need to discover the wisdom inside. If we only approach it from the analytical mind, we'll just create, we tackle one problem here and we'll create a series of more problems on top of that. So we need to become, go within, find the wisdom that is in the stillness, go within.

And then the question is whether those people who are able to do that are those people that take decisions, probably not because the politicians are not there yet, most of them. But we are making a start here. So first, so that you can take intelligent action go within, never act from fear or kind of panic.

We need to save the planet. Oh my God. This is you generate fear.

If you generate fear, nothing good can come out of that. Even if your intentions are good, any action that is taken on the basis of fear is going to have negative consequences and secondary effects. So first we become still and peaceful and realize the truth of the beginning of the cause in miracles, which says, nothing real can be threatened.

Nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of God. And, oh, okay.

Now, what action can we take? If you are not in a powerful position, at least perhaps you can come up with ideas that come from out of the stillness. I don't have a series of actions that mankind should take because this teaching doesn't work in that way.

This teaching is designed to take the individual human being deep enough within so that

they can connect with a source of who they are and everything else other people will have to do. So I can't give, tell you what course of action to take because the focus of this teaching isn't in outer action. But it goes to the source of all intelligence and all wisdom, but I have a feeling that you have some ideas already.

Is that right? A small contribution, perhaps. Yes.

So, and that's a good start and see where that takes you because you are able to access the stillness and fruitful, creative ideas come out of that. So all I can say to you to carry on with what you're doing and see what else comes to you and in what other ways you can be helpful and useful so that planetary intelligence does not have to intervene. Hmm.

Compassion towards others implies that you have empathy and you can only have empathy to the degree to which you are in touch with the deeper levels of who you are. If you live exclusively through a mental sense of self, then you cannot have empathy because you are completely out of touch with who you are in the essence of your being. The capacity for compassion is something that is part of the evolution of the human being.

Humans, even nowadays, in this present time, there are still millions of humans who are so trapped in their egoic sense of self that they are incapable of sensing, feeling the reality of another human being. The word that we need to use here is empathy, which is closely related with compassion. Hmm.

There are still many, many humans on the planet who are so trapped in their egoic sense of self that they're incapable of empathy. And then there are many others in whom empathy is present to a greater or lesser degree. And without empathy, of course, there can be no compassion.

Now, this is particularly important when we talk about compassion with reference to other human beings or other life forms. For a moment, let's talk, though, about compassion towards yourself and what that means. Particularly as awareness begins to awaken in you, you become aware of your own patterns.

You begin to become aware of your own behavior, not necessarily in the moment that it happens, but in many cases, those people who are beginning to awaken, the awareness is beginning to arise. Those humans become aware, for example, after they have engaged in unconscious, speech, unconscious behavior, reactive behavior, and suddenly they become aware, oh, that's what I did. I got completely taken over by anger.

I got completely taken over by my overreaction. I said things to that person that I didn't really mean, that they just came out of my mouth, or I even, could even go to physical violence. I did that.

How could I have done that? And many humans who are awakening are experiencing these times when they begin to judge themselves as not good enough. So that is something to be aware of when you, as you begin to awaken, you become an observer of yourself to a greater or lesser degree, rather than just being totally identified with whatever comes into your head and whatever words come out of your mouth and whatever action you're engaged in, you're so identified that there's not the slightest space of awareness.

Now, there's no point in talking about compassion towards yourself to people who are so unconscious. So when we talk about compassion, it already implies that there's some awareness in you, you're aware of yourself, you're aware of your behavior, and you experience different levels of awareness at different times in your life from day to day. And then you become aware that there are times when you are unconscious.

And usually then you wake up, so to speak, out of it and say, oh, you're taken over by my pain body again. And for many people, that can become a source of suffering because they judge themselves as not good enough. And they even have a hostile, begin to have a hostile relationship towards the more unconscious aspects of who they are, their imperfections.

So compassion towards yourself is to still realize there are areas in your life where you're still unconscious, and that's how it is. And you forgive yourself. Again, forgiveness is related also with all these things that are closely related, empathy, compassion, forgiveness.

You forgive yourself for your moments of unconsciousness, or if you've done bad things in the past, and this is often people have asked me that question. You have, in the past, when you were not as aware or completely unaware, you did certain things that you now regret, you recognize them as very unconscious. And what do you do with that?

The compassionate way is to see that at that time, you could not have acted differently because your actions reflected your degree of unconsciousness, consciousness, unconsciousness. And that recognition is compassion. You forgive yourself.

Instead of making an identity out of your own past unconsciousness for yourself and say, I am this kind of a person, which is again a mental construct, instead of making an identity for yourself out of past unconsciousness, you recognized your behavior at that time as unconscious. So you manifested the collective, ultimately the collective unconsciousness that is in the human psyche, the collective psyche of humanity. And so when you don't make it into an identity, then you realize that it is not who you essentially are.

And so you become compassionate towards yourself. But it also applies to the present, at the present time, not making impossible demands of perfection, and then you fall

short. There are certain things, certain areas in your life that will never be perfect on the level of form.

You cannot be a perfect human being on the level of form. There are always certain things that you are good at, other things you are not good at. That's fine, no matter how conscious you are.

So you don't demand perfection of yourself, not on this level of form. The realization is there is a deep, at the deepest level of who you are, there is perfection already. You are already perfect, complete, whole, at the deepest level, yes.

On the outer level, there will always be certain imperfections. And so you have compassion with yourself as far as your imperfections are concerned, which does not mean that you actually indulge in behavior that is harmful to yourself or others and say, oh, that's okay, I am compassionate towards myself, so I continue to get drunk three times a week and beat up my wife, and I'm just compassionate towards myself. This is not what I'm talking about.

You cannot become compassionate with inflicting suffering on others as you recognize it now. If it happened in the past, that is different. So there are some forms of behavior that need to be rectified through awareness, through presence, and other things you need to accept.

So there's wisdom required, but it's not that difficult to tell whether your behavior is truly dysfunctional and causes suffering, or whether there's just certain things that are not perfect, but there isn't much you can do about it. You might be too slow in certain, for example, myself. There's a huge area of imperfection in my life that there are many things that I don't deal with or don't deal with on time.

So sometimes things get emailed, emails are not answered. If you've ever sent me an email, we might not have received a reply. So I don't feel really bad about that because I'm compassionate towards myself.

But if that causes you suffering, not receiving an email, I don't suggest, I did not cause you that suffering. You caused it yourself through having certain expectations. So compassionate towards yourself is important.

Compassion towards others means, implies that you have empathy towards other human beings. And you can only have empathy to the degree to which you are in touch with the deeper levels of who you are. If you live exclusively through a mental sense of self, then you cannot have empathy because you're completely out of touch with who you are in the essence of your being.

The empathy that you have for others arises out of the realization of who you are in the essence of your being. And then, because then by recognizing your own essence, you

recognize the essence of the other. But I wrote in, I believe in the power of now, that there are two aspects to compassion.

One is you observe and you recognize perhaps the suffering of another human being or another life form. You can almost feel it yourself. And you may want to do something about it.

That is often part of it. Compassion is the sensing, and it may lead to action, if action is possible or wise, or if you're able to do it. But that's one aspect.

The other aspect of compassion is not normally talked about. And that is to sense the essence of the other person underneath their suffering. Can only do that because you can sense your own essence.

By doing that, by sensing the essence of the other through your own and recognize that there's something in the other that is you, that is ultimately that's consciousness. So you recognize the consciousness, not the conditioned consciousness, but the unconditioned consciousness in the other, then you connect with the other at a very deep level. And by doing that, that is a level of perfection beyond form.

Then you recognize there is some, there is a dimension, a transcendent dimension in this human being that may be in suffering. There is a transcendent dimension in that human being that is beyond the suffering, but that human being may not know that. But you recognize it in the other.

Then you still feel the suffering also of the other, but you don't lose yourself in the suffering of the other. You recognize the suffering for what it is, but it does not draw you into suffering also. It's just on the, there is a, something resonates in you resonates with it, but you are not drawn into suffering by the other person because you're connected with the transcendent dimension in yourself and the other.

But now you can truly, because if you are suffering too, you can't be really of real help. You can truly help the other if help is possible. That if you are connected to the transcendent level at the same time, there are people who are very empathetic towards others and some of those people are called upon to become professional helpers.

You might become a therapist, you might become a social worker. So it's often people who have a lot of empathy for others. They choose helping others as their profession.

And many of those people at first, they are happy with what they're doing, but many of them actually after a few years experience burnout, experience depression. The suicide rate of among psychotherapists and psychiatrists is quite high. So they lose themselves in the suffering of others and make it their own.

That is not something that you want to do and is not something that is necessary. And

this is particularly important, perhaps now what I'm saying now for to hear for those people who are professional helpers, the essence of who you are needs to be always in the background of whatever you do, whatever action you perform, whatever words you speak. You need to stay connected with that deeper essence so that there is a peace and a fullness, the fullness of life as Jesus called it, that you can sense that core of yourself as consciousness, you are consciousness.

And the other also ultimately is consciousness going through the dream of suffering ultimately, the nightmare of suffering, and you do what you can. So stay connected to the stillness within yourself when you help others, feel the stillness, the alert stillness, and then do what you have to do. I'll say a little bit more about compassion.

Compassion needs also to be, to exist within the larger contexts of awareness. Compassion is a wonderful thing. It is a sign that you as a human being have already evolved beyond complete identification with form, so that's, it's a wonderful thing.

Nevertheless, the application of compassion when it becomes action requires awareness. An example, one could give many examples. You may see a homeless person in the street.

Now, you can, you can, you can, you sense perhaps the suffering of that person, and you want to, out of that compassion that you feel, you may feel called upon to help in one way or another. You can buy a sandwich for that person and give it to the person. You can give money.

It's also possible that you might look and say, oh, I actually have a spare guest room in my house, and so you invite the homeless person into your home because there's a strong desire in you to help. But the question is, is there wisdom with it also? Let's say you invite this person to your house and wanting to help, which is a wonderful thing, and perhaps it works beautifully.

Perhaps it gives this person a new start in life. Or it could be that this person that you have invited into your house rapes your daughter, steals from you, inflicts violence on other members of the family, and then leaves. So you have exercised compassionate action without wisdom.

So what it is that you do as compassion arises, it requires wisdom. In what way can I help this person? And sometimes the help is not physical help.

It is help, for example, some people are in deep psychological suffering. The help that you can give that person is attention. You can listen to them, and perhaps out of this attention that you give, which is presence, this is what they need, perhaps help arises through something that you say to them.

How I started as a spiritual teacher, people came to me, they spontaneously, they asked

questions. Then I said things. I could see their suffering, but I was not suffering with them.

I could sense their suffering, I could sense a small amount of suffering in me, but I was deeply connected already then with the essence of who I am, and I realized there was no suffering. So when I listened to these people, often there was a slight smile on my face, and that smile on my face was there, they were talking about their suffering to me, and as I was listening very attentively, there was a slight smile on my face, and some of them suddenly stopped talking and said, why are you smiling? Aren't you, do you think that is funny?

And I realized, oh, I mustn't smile, because I smiled because I could sense something beyond their suffering that they themselves could not sense. That was in me, but also in them. There was a dimension where there was no suffering, and occasionally they, by me sensing that, they also could sense it in themselves, and that is called healing, spiritual healing at the deepest level when that happens.

So I was helping many people, you can say out of compassion, but then I realized there are also other people who continuously come to you, not because they want to get better, they want to suck up your energy, which is you give them attention continuously, and they love that, and they come every day with new problems. They don't want the solution, they get addicted to your attention, and if you continue to give it, you will become depleted, you will become, ultimately you would experience burnout, and it has no purpose. Again, this is a similar case where compassion, the exercise of compassion in the practical realm requires wisdom.

So there were some people that I had to say, I'm not going to see you anymore, and they go, oh, how can you do that to me? But that ultimately was the best thing that I could do for. They were not ready for, but perhaps of what I said to them when I did see them, perhaps some of that remained in their mind, and at some point it actually did change their lives.

I don't know. But here again, helping people is great, being used by others who are unconscious beings instead of looking for their own being, looking for the source of all aliveness and energy within themselves, they look to others to give them that aliveness. So again, wisdom is required here so that you don't exercise compassion stupidly.

That's an extremely important part of awakening. In fact, you need that to provide fuel for the arising of presence.

[Speaker 7] (57:44 - 57:54)

Our listener writes, how can we stay present and in touch with consciousness on days when we feel depressed and lack motivation?

[Speaker 1] (57:57 - 1:10:59)

Right. When sometimes that is in quite a few people associated with periods of low physical energy because energy fluctuates. And so from occasionally you may experience low levels of physical energy and this can affect the mind too.

The important thing is first of all, when you talk about being depressed and so on, to see whether there is, what kind of thoughts are being created in your mind during that time. Ask yourself whether or examine whether the certain types of thinking create that feeling of depression. Thoughts like, oh, it's all pointless anyway.

Oh, what's the point of it all? I hate this world. There's no point in even struggling anymore.

I'm fed up, completely fed up with life. I can't take any more, that type of thinking. Are you aware, what is the relationship between the emotion that you feel and your thought processes?

Are perhaps your thoughts creating that emotion or could it be that the emotion is creating the thoughts? So when you are depressed, there will be certain thoughts going through your mind. And probably there will not be pleasant thoughts.

So be aware of the relationship between what you're feeling, this depressed feeling of sadness, depression, you feel dejected and your thought processes. And if in the moment of thinking, those types of thoughts that accompany the feeling of depression or pointlessness, if you can be there and observe those thoughts, then again, as in the first question, answer to the first question, when you recognize those thoughts, you no longer completely believe in them. You recognize them as a conditioned movement in your mind.

And then you may be able to come to an acceptance of whatever it is you're feeling at this moment without adding the baggage of thought to it. So what remains then is this feeling of perhaps low energy or it could be an activation of your pain body to some extent, you feel emotion in you that doesn't feel good, but you're then no longer fueling it with your thinking. So if there's enough awareness in you while you're going through a period of depression, allow yourself to feel what it is you're feeling, but be careful that you don't fuel it with your thinking.

And if you feel what you feel, that's all you have to do is surrender to your experience of this moment. You accept your experience of this moment, which at this moment may be not pleasant, but that's what is inside you. So probably the greatest spiritual practice is to accept whatever it is that you're experiencing at this moment.

So if you're experiencing depression, then that's the isness of the present moment. And as much as possible, you step out of your mind and just be the awareness. Observe, it

may be the case that there is an addiction in you that periodically arises, and that's the addiction to unhappiness, the addiction to negativity.

And that is usually connected with a pain body that needs to renew itself periodically. If most of you will know what I'm talking about, you've read about the pain body, old emotion that still lives in you. Sometimes it's dormant, sometimes it needs to feed to take in more so that it can stay alive.

It's a semi-autonomous energy field in you. And so in the absence of, its favorite way to feed is on other people's reactions. So it will create drama, it will create, push your partners or other family members, people's buttons, so to speak, so that you get a negative emotional reaction.

And so it loves the drama of the emotional drama and will provoke drama. And that's how the pain body loves to feed. But if that's, for some reason, is not possible for whatever reason, the pain body is quite happy also to feed on your thoughts.

So it will periodically rise up into your mind and then you will think thoughts that feed the pain body, but the thoughts themselves already created by the pain body. And then it's a vicious circle. The negative thoughts that you don't want at that moment, you do not want to let go of that type of thinking because there's not enough awareness in you at that moment.

At that moment, when I say you don't want to let go, or when I say you are addicted to your unhappiness, when I say you, it's not really you, it's a mind pattern with which you are that moment completely identified. And that's why I call it you. So in that moment, it is you.

So there are many, many people who are addicted to their unhappy states, the unhappiness in them. And if some people have it almost continuously, but most people have periods when this happens and then it subsides, and that's the typical way in which the pain body arises from its dormant state, feeds on several hours or even days of deep negative thinking, and then subsides and then for a while you're free again. So addiction to unhappiness, this is one way of speaking about it.

Be careful to see whether you can detect in yourself when in the moment of it happening, you're almost, you're indulging in this feeling of could be self-pity or condemnation of life or others or whatever it is, you love it. You love that, you love those feelings and those thoughts. And you don't want to get out.

If somebody at that moment said to you to come out of it, you say, oh, shut up, I don't want to hear. Now, some people have them so strongly that the addiction to unhappiness has become part of their conditioned personality. So they are, part of their identity is a very unhappy sense of self.

And if that is a terrible place to be in, but again, the only way that you can transcend that and escape from that prison is to be aware when it happens. So a good question therefore is, am I enjoying my unhappiness in some weird way? Do I love my unhappiness?

And if I love my unhappiness, who is that I that loves unhappiness? It must be a weird and crazy I that loves unhappiness. So maybe that's not really me.

Maybe it's just an unhappy self in me that loves. I know that I had that very strongly for many years in my 20s. So you have to be really alert and see whether you enjoy your unhappiness.

And once you notice it, you say, oh, wow, I'm really enjoying this. In the moment of noticing it, you've made it conscious. And then it's very likely that you cannot go on very much longer enjoying it because this can only continue when you're unconscious.

It needs your unconsciousness, this false self. It's an aspect of the false self that is the ego. It needs your unconsciousness to continue to survive.

But when you make it conscious, then there comes a moment of surprise and says, oh, wow, I'm actually enjoying this. I don't want to let, I love this negative thoughts, love in a perverse way almost. This is the egoic kind of love.

And then you might even ask, is that who I am? Who am I? Why do I love this?

This awareness is coming. Awareness is arising. And then suddenly you step out of identification with that mind pattern, mental emotion.

And that is part of the awakening. So those things for many people are a very important part of their spiritual awakening. The very important part of spiritual awakening is to become aware of the unconsciousness in you, the various ways in which the unconsciousness manifests in you.

That's an extremely important part of awakening. In fact, you need that to provide fuel for the arising of presence. The dysfunctional states, the dysfunctional mental emotional states in the negative mental emotional states, the mental emotional states that create so much suffering, ultimately they provide not only motivation for awakening, they also provide the fuel for awakening.

So be grateful when you detect those things in yourself. That's a, it's not a bad thing. It's a wonderful thing to detect the unconsciousness in you, to become aware of the unconsciousness in you and realize that it is not you ultimately.

It, for years, it had been, it pretended to be you and you were so identified with it, yet you thought it was you. And suddenly or gradually another deep eye, it's the deep eye

that is now awakens. And the deep eye, which is presence, recognizes that the surface eye is a conditioned entity and it's ultimately, it's not who I am.

It is there and that's a disidentification and that's all part of the awakening process.

[Speaker 5] (1:11:24 - 1:12:08)

I know you work with psychotherapists and therapists in helping others. And my question is, how can we follow up on the analogy of the caterpillar? How can we support others?

How can we know if they are there, if they are not there? Is it possible to help? I don't know what the question is, but it's, can we support someone in this process?

You obviously are and Kim is obviously supporting us. So is there different stages that we can support different people in different processes?

[Speaker 1] (1:12:09 - 1:20:11)

The moment the spiritual awakening, if we want to call it that, happens in you, which is the disidentification from the thinking mind and certain degree of arising of presence. Well, not the moment it happens, but a little bit after that, as this process continues, many people find that more and more people come, you meet people sometimes seemingly accidentally, or it might be people who you know already, who need you, who also are at a stage of readiness, but don't know it yet. And you may find and will find that these people are drawn to you.

You may not immediately recognize them. In fact, you may think, listen, this person is not going to awaken in this lifetime, but you can get surprise, big surprises. Sometimes the most unlikely people can come to you and you know that it's happening.

There's a moment usually when you notice there is a transmission either of presence as an energy field, or they ask you a question, you give an answer, and the answer has a certain power or aliveness to it. It comes through you spontaneously because the question was a genuine question and there was an opening in the other person. If it's not a genuine question, if it's a question asked out of curiosity, what's that spiritual stuff all about that you do or whatever, or tell me about that spirit stuff, but there's no real opening, then your answer will not be good, or there may be no answer.

But if it's a real question and there's some degree of presence in you, then there will be a real answer. And the helping then comes in two ways. One is through the energy that you emanate as you are present.

The second is through what you say to them. And that is the beginning of you becoming a spiritual teacher. And many of you, some of you are already spiritual teachers, whether formally or not formally, some of you will become formal spiritual teachers because the

world is in great need of you.

Humans want you. They might not know it yet, but everybody, even if you do not become a formal spiritual teacher, you will do some teaching informally through everybody you meet because you spread, your state of consciousness spreads to others. That applies both to unconscious people who spread their negativity or the viral infection of their minds and to present people who spread presence.

And it's not that you are doing it. So an important obstacle could be if you think that you need to do something to help them. This is very seductive because it's a wonderful thing to help others.

But the obstacle is you think that it is up to you to help them. It's not. In fact, you wouldn't know how to.

I wouldn't know how to. So you have to allow it to happen by holding the presence, especially when somebody comes to you, ask the question or you say something, hold the presence and then see what happens. So it's not you who is doing it.

Sometimes I've met some people who said they've been asked to, first they saw some individuals, helped them, they're growing and growing in presence. And then somebody approached them, can you give a talk to our little group? And then they came to me and said, I don't think I'm ready to give a talk to a group.

Somebody asked me to give a talk to a group. I think I'm not ready. And I said, if you think you're ready, then that's not a good sign.

And because there's probably a little ego in there that thinks I'm ready to be a spiritual teacher. Just come to me and I will heal you. But if you feel that the most powerful place, whether you are with one person or with a group of people, the most powerful place is to not know.

But you have to be comfortable with not knowing. If you're uncomfortable with not knowing what to say, what to do, then you go, oh dear, what should I say? The mind says, quick, say something useful to this person.

And then you think of things you've read in a book. Well, Eckhart says that it doesn't mean you should never quote, but it's always more powerful if it comes from you. So it only comes if you are comfortable with, enter that space of not knowing, which is basically you surrender thought and you just look at the person and you listen and then see what answer comes, then see what you say, if anything.

In some cases, you might not say anything. So the help allow it to move through you. And that's a big relief.

It means you don't have to do it. You only become a vehicle for it, an opening for it. You become an opening for consciousness.

So you don't have to heal people, help people. I mean, you can help physically. That's a different matter.

You can give somebody food or money to help, but at a deeper level, you can't do anything. So getting out of the way, and then it will happen through you. In the Course in Miracles, it says, the moment you become a student of the Course in Miracles, which by the way, is a lovely teaching, but not for everybody.

So don't believe that because I mentioned it now, you have to go and get it. It's great for some people. It's a beautiful spiritual work, but for others, it's not the right one.

Nothing is right for everybody. Course in Miracles, however, says, the moment you start studying the Course in Miracles, which really implies the moment you begin to disidentify from the conditioned mind, you become a teacher of God. Now the ego, of course, would probably love that term.

That's just why I personally would not use it, but there is some truth in it. It's not a terminology that I would use, but the moment the presence arises, you begin to teach presence, but really, presence does it through you. Thank you.

Thank you.

[Speaker 6] (1:20:34 - 1:21:38)

How can we use the essence identity to help us determine in next steps or decisions or choices or responses to challenging situations?

[Speaker 1] (1:21:42 - 1:25:26)

You don't use it. You don't learn to use the essence identity. The essence identity uses you.

So you don't have to learn and figure out how to use essence identity. The more you become rooted in your essence identity, the more you will find that right action, what you need to do, what you need to say at any given moment comes from that dimension of consciousness in you. And then gradually we begin to realize that it's not you who is using it.

It uses your mind to manifest itself through you. It uses your body to emanate through. So that's the important thing.

The question then is not right. You cannot use it because who are you? You would be, it would be the form identity using the essence identity.

One, you could look at it like that, but it's not really how it works. Gradually, as your essence identity emerges more, it uses your body and mind to manifest in this world and to bring about change too. First it just emanates presence, and then it flows, it begins to use your mind, your speech becomes more, less repetitive, more interesting, more creative, probably you speak less than one used to, that applies to almost everybody, but what you say has significance and power to it.

And it changes the way you think. It's because it shines into your mind and begins to shine away all destructive, dysfunctional, and repetitive, and compulsive, unconscious thought movements and thought patterns. So it rises into your mind.

It uses you, and even that is a limited way of talking about it because it is you. It is the emergence of who you essentially are. But who you essentially are is not a separate autonomous entity.

Who you essentially are is deeply connected with the nature and the identity of the universe itself. The heart of the essence of you is also the essence of the universe. And when you go beyond this narrow identification with form, you are more deeply connected with the whole, with the totality.

And the totality of consciousness acts, speaks, emanates through you. So that is the shift, you become a different, and it's an evolutionary shift. You become a different being.

So it may sometimes look to you as if you were using it, but really it's using you. And that's how it should be.

[Speaker 16] (1:25:29 - 1:25:34)

Yeah. Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 4] (1:26:02 - 1:26:05)

It doesn't mean you cannot seek a cure.

[Speaker 1] (1:26:05 - 1:48:53)

You can take steps. But while it's there, to see it as a purification because it has the potential of completely burning up your ego. So what to do, especially if you've already tried a lot of approaches, it's always easy to speak for somebody who is not experiencing physical pain.

At the moment, I'm not experiencing physical pain. I have known pain, but not prolonged period of time, not physical pain or a prolonged period of time. But I know suffering, there is such a thing as conscious suffering.

Obviously you should continue to seek ways of alleviating the pain or finding a cure. But in the meantime, while it's there, I suggest that you explore the possibility of conscious suffering that was practiced, for example, in Christianity. And it may still be practiced by certain people who are strongly identified with the Christian religion, but it was a very common thing in middle ages to when you had pain, to equate your pain with the suffering of Christ.

Christ was the archetype of suffering. It's a, whether you see Christ as a real person that lived, I believe he did, or whether Christ is a mythical concept, it can work in the same way. Christ is the archetype of suffering and of transcending suffering.

In the same way that Buddha's teaching, he himself described, Buddha said, I teach suffering and the end of suffering. The literal words of the Buddha, I teach suffering means I show you how suffering arises. The end of suffering is the transcendence of suffering.

Jesus didn't say that, but it's all contained in his life and the image of the crucifixion and the cross, because the cross is the instrument of suffering. It's a torture instrument. And then you see the God nailed to the cross or the man nailed to the cross.

It is the archetype of human suffering. In that sense, one could say, he represents every man and woman because every man and woman has goes through suffering, whether it might not be extreme physical pain, but it is human suffering, some more extreme than others. And then he died and then the resurrection happened.

And then the cross, the torture instrument, the very thing that gave him the pain symbolizes the divine. So it becomes a portal into the transcendent dimension by completely surrendering, which is the image on the cross is the image of total surrender. And that is in some traditions called conscious suffering, which is you don't need to necessarily, if you're not a believing Christian, it would be hard for you to say that you are suffering with Christ, but there's a deep truth in here.

And that is, and I have seen it in people that I have known, people who have had pain for years. It can, if used consciously, it can erode your ego completely. If you regard it as a fire, that's burning up, burning you up, the false you in burning up.

And so conscious is to actually not to resist it psychologically. It doesn't mean you cannot seek a cure. You can take steps, but while it's there, to see it as a purification, because it has the potential of completely burning up your ego.

If used consciously. And that is for those people who, you might as well practice that because that's all that's possible for you at the moment. If you then see there's a healing method or a healer somewhere, why not go there?

But in the meantime, you practice conscious suffering. So that is not only with physical

pain, you can also do it with other situations that you may be in. Suffering arises and you come to a complete acceptance.

If you completely accept, in a way we really, to be strict, we should differentiate between suffering and pain. Normally the way I use the words are, suffering is the psychological pain that is generated through resistance. So if you have a physical pain, it can be terrible, but you can have physical pain without suffering, meaning without any resistance, psychological resistance on top of it, that's the suffering.

And that applies to not just physical pain, but any situation in life, anything that goes wrong, there's the, the suffering is the psychological layer that is created through non-acceptance. So that's, that does not need to be there. That is a practice.

So we all, most of you, most humans on the planet don't have a spiritual teacher. They don't even, wouldn't even want, they don't, haven't even heard of a spirit, anything such a spiritual teacher, what's that? But they all have their suffering.

So I say that everybody has their spiritual teacher and for most humans, it's their suffering because eventually the suffering has an evolutionary function that is both the suffering that seems to come to you out of nowhere and the suffering that is self-generated in your mind and through unconscious action in the world, which then draws to you further unconsciousness from others. Nations, for example, go to war, that's unconscious action, then drawing further suffering to themselves. So there are two kinds of suffering.

One seems to come out of nowhere and other suffering is obviously generated through unconscious mind activity. And it is that kind of suffering that creates all the atrocities on a collective level and the personal drama that people are engaged in on a daily basis that is ultimately completely unnecessary, but it is generated by unconscious mind activity and the egoic self, which is mind made. So those are, that's the suffering that, now, if you look at the amount of suffering that humans encounter, you will see that the larger part of suffering that humans encounter is self-generated.

Yes, there is suffering that happens through earthquakes, natural disasters, and illness. Illness is already on the borderline between self-generated and something that just comes to you. Many illnesses are self-generated through dysfunctional thinking and emotion.

But if you look at the amount of suffering that's self-generated, it's far greater than the amount that seems to come to you from the outside. If you look at the history of the 20th century, especially the first half of the 20th century, how many people died through natural disasters or died prematurely through an illness compared to the people that were murdered by their fellow human beings? Far more were murdered by their fellow human beings in the 20th, especially the first half of the 20th century than people who

suffered through natural disasters or natural causes, just amazing.

It was hell for millions, millions of people, 150 million, who knows the exact figure who were murdered in the first half of the 20th century alone. Many of them, not even many, yes, between nations, but millions and millions of others murdered by their own governments in Russia, in Germany, in China, by insane governments, murdering or, as in China, bringing about through absurd policies, the starvation of millions. So if you want to, if you have any doubt about the dysfunction of the egoic mind, you just look at that, look at that history and see how much suffering humans generate for themselves.

So that is something that we no longer do and that's why we are here. We don't do that and there's still a certain amount of suffering that will come to us. Now, there is a belief, especially new age people, they will tell you whenever something happens to you, or you fall ill, or you have an accident, or whatever happens, they may ask you, why did you manifest that?

And that makes lots of people angry, understandably, because they say, I didn't manifest this accident, it just happened. There was a crazy driver and he comes coming towards me. Nothing I could do, I didn't manifest it.

Or I didn't manifest this terrible illness, I never wanted it, what are you saying? Therefore, I never say, did you manifest it or you manifested it, or you should look into why you manifested it. Why not leave it alone?

All I say is, whatever happens to you, once it's happening, accept it as if you had chosen it. That's the important thing. I'm not saying you chose it, you won't want to hear that.

And it's not even literally true, there's some truth hiding there, but we don't need to go there. It's more important to choose whatever is happening, whatever is happening in this moment or as if you had chosen it. And then the resistance goes.

No need to think right now. There's nothing to add to this moment by thinking about it. So all that thinking would do is obscure your awareness.

Your awareness of the present moment, which means obscure your awareness. If you have problems waiting for you, you can think about them when we finish. And even then, I would suggest and recommend that you set aside brief periods when you think about your so-called problems, if they are real.

In other words, a real problem is a situation that you need to deal with. Either right now, in the moment when it arises, in which case it's not a problem, it's a challenge. Or something that tomorrow you may have to do or next week or next month.

And you may have to think about what you're going to do to the extent to which it's possible to plan and set aside a period of time when you do that. And then when that's

done, come back into present moment awareness. So the worst fate is for your mind to be occupied continuously with past and future.

And as you know, past and future exist in the mind. Remove the mind, thought. There's no past or future.

Past or future exists for you as thought. And it's indispensable for dealing with the practical aspects of life. But it's a huge obstacle for going deeper within yourself, deeper into reality.

A huge obstacle to finding that state of connectedness with a deeper reality. A huge obstacle to knowing who you are. So right now, all you need to do, and there's no doing, but just use the word, all you need to do is look at the image on the screen, listen to the words, which are all pointers, signposts, and as you look at the image on the screen and listen to the words, be aware also of yourself as the still space, the still presence, without which you would not be able to look at the image on the screen or listen to the words. It's only because there is that light of presence that receives the sense perception of seeing and hearing that there can be seeing and hearing.

The moment you start thinking about past and future, the moment you start thinking, some of your consciousness incarnates into form. The incarnation, I believe carnation comes from flesh, carnal, the word incarnation is to become form, to become physical form, but it's not necessarily physical. You become a psychological form.

Every thought is that. So some of the consciousness incarnates into mental formations. And that's okay, there's nothing wrong with that.

It's a good thing that you're able to think. It's not a good thing to lose yourself in the thinking. Why is it not a good thing?

Because it makes your life miserable. And if you make your life miserable, you make other people's lives miserable without even knowing what you're doing. That's the essence of unconsciousness.

The really unconscious people, which is still millions, billions on the planet, they don't know that they are making their lives miserable and other people's lives miserable. Or as somebody once put it, they know not what they do. And here you can learn to become comfortable with the beautiful, let's call it state, it's not a state, the beautiful state of not thinking.

Become familiar with that, experience how lovely it is, not having to think.

[Speaker 7] (1:49:29 - 1:50:02)

Here's what our questioner wrote in. I have an incredibly strong poverty mindset, which

drags me down and keeps me continually worrying about small things. Don't ever waste food, this mindset says inside me.

I better keep this because I might need it someday. I'll never be able to afford that. Those thoughts are unending.

How can the power of presence help me shed this crushing burden?

[Speaker 1] (1:50:06 - 2:24:01)

Good, well, that's the good, the good news is that the questioner is already aware or let's say, I'm going to address the questioner as you because I assume the questioner is listening and watching. So the good thing is that you are already aware of those thoughts and this is not a natural thing. There are still millions of people who have these or other types of conditioned thinking and are completely unaware that they have whatever type of conditioned thinking it is that they have.

They are unaware because they are 100% identified with that conditioned thinking. So they don't recognize it as conditioned thinking. That is how they perceive reality.

That is what determines their reactions. And these are self-perpetuating thoughts that continuously create the same emotions. And this then becomes a person's reality.

They inhabit that reality and it is totally not just colored but distorted by the conditioning of their mind. So they think these thoughts, but they cannot differentiate between reality and those thoughts. So you already know that you have these types of thoughts.

So that's already an indication that there has been an awakening of consciousness, which is the arising of awareness. Awareness is a dimension that is deeper and vaster than thought. So when you become aware of what your mind is doing, then that is a sign that the awakening process in you has already begun.

So that's a wonderful thing. So now it does not necessarily mean that immediately you become free of the effect of those thoughts. So the thoughts still have a certain power and their power is to create certain emotions and their power is to create certain reactions and certain actions out in the world.

But while this still happens, there is in you an observing presence in the background. And that's also where the possibility of freedom comes in, the possibility of choice, the possibility of not acting out those thoughts, provided that in the moment of these thoughts or one of these thoughts occurring, you can still be there as the observing presence, as the awareness. And if you are, then now you may not fully realize this, but when you're able to watch a thought like that, then the possibility arises that you can, you no longer need to be controlled by the thought.

Let's give an example in your case. Let's say you have certain objects that you say, oh, I need to hang onto this because I might need it one day. I must keep this and I must keep that.

Perhaps you have already accumulated many things that you actually don't use. And whenever this happens, instead of letting go of something, your mind says, no, you must hang on because you might need it one day. So you can bring in, you recognize the thought and you realize you do not have to act out the thought.

So you can ask yourself what happens if I don't act out this thought and I do almost the opposite of what this thought is telling me. For example, in the case of needing to hang on to material objects that you probably won't need, you can make it a practice periodically to give things away. Despite the fact that your thoughts are telling you, oh, I must hang on, but you are there as the awareness and the awareness can override the thought.

You don't have to fight the thought. The awareness simply overrides the thought. And then from the, so then instead of acting according to the thought, your action then arises no longer from the thought, it arises from the awareness.

And then you can make it a practice to give things away. And you may still find your mind telling you, oh, no, don't do that. But this can actually strengthen in you the dimension of presence or awareness by simply observing a thought, recognizing it, and then realizing that that thought is not actually intelligent.

It's conditioned, part of the conditioned mind. And then what arises then is the true intelligence. So we could call it also the presence arising is also the awakening of true intelligence.

And then you make it a practice to give things away, either to somebody you know, or you bring it to a thrift store where somebody else will, you realize actually somebody else will perhaps be able to use whatever it is that you're giving away. And then you bring in gradually then the thought will have less power because you're no longer continuously reinforcing it by your actions. So that's one thing you can do.

And then this sense of lack, of course, is part of most people's egoic consciousness. In your case, it manifests as, again, let's take another thought that you have mentioned. Oh, I can't afford that.

I can't, I must keep my money for, I might need it for, but I can't afford to buy this now. So again, you can observe a thought like that. And occasionally, you may want to acquire an object that has inherent beauty or quality.

If you can afford it, you don't have to do something reckless with your money. But instead of always saying, oh no, don't, I need to keep my money, buy something as a

statement of abundance, something that has quality, that has beauty or quality, or you respond, it doesn't even have to be expensive, or it may be something expensive. It could be that you buy a pair of shoes that cost three times as much as what you would normally buy.

And not just because it happens to have a label that's famous, but it could be that they're actually much better quality and they will last three times or more longer than other shoes. So as a statement of abundance, occasionally you may want to buy something that has beauty or inherent quality to it. Another wonderful practice to counteract this type of mental conditioning is to, I mentioned, it's another aspect of what I mentioned at the beginning, and that is to give away, not just objects, but occasionally to give.

To give is a powerful statement of abundance. So if you give to someone, what doesn't matter where it is, let's say it's somebody in the street. There's somebody, there's a beggar in the street and you give this person, not as a compulsive thing in your mind that from now on you have to give to everybody you see at a street corner, but you can make it a practice habitually, regularly to give as a spiritual practice because it's an affirmation of, it's the opposite of lack when you give.

It's an affirmation of abundance and it's a very pleasant thing to do. And then you might also want to give small amounts of money away, even if you don't have a lot, the act of giving is what really matters. So whether it is to a person that you happen to know who needs something or somebody you come across seemingly accidentally, or you give to a charity whose cause you believe in and feel good about.

And so again, and then you will probably encounter your mind telling you that you cannot afford to do this, you must hang on. And then you, again, you're aware enough to recognize those thoughts and realize that these are conditioned thoughts. And then you do the opposite.

And then gradually when you no longer reinforce the thoughts through your action, the thoughts will lose their power and gradually they will not appear again. So giving is a very powerful affirmation of abundance. And you may be surprised that when you give a certain percentage of what you have as a habitual thing, then the tendency is for more things to come to you.

If you give, even a poor, relatively poor person, unless you're absolutely and totally poor, there's always a possibility of giving even if it's small amounts. That's one. And another thing to affirm abundance is the appreciation of the aliveness and beauty that surround you in the present moment.

So there's a, when you appreciate what you perceive in the present moment, one aspect of this, what we call appreciation is to realize that these are all manifestations of the

fullness of life, the abundance of life, the trees. Every tree has thousands of vibrantly alive leaves. The sunshine, the sun is a symbol of abundance.

It gives continuously of itself. It just gives and gives for millions and millions of years. It's just an outpouring of energy continuously.

It's a miracle. So even when you're aware of the sunshine and you appreciate that, that is already also any act of appreciation, one aspect of the act of appreciation is the act of the appreciation of abundant life, because everything that you appreciate is a manifestation of what actually, when I say the fullness of life, that's what it's an expression that Jesus used when he said, I want you to have life in its fullness. In some other translations, it's called, I want you to have abundant life.

What he was pointing to was, he always talks about state of consciousness. So when he says abundant life, he does not mean that he wants you to have a huge number of possessions. That's not necessarily, that possessions are a small aspect of abundance, but they're not the most important aspect of abundance.

It's a state of consciousness. Actually, the state of presence, one aspect of that state of presence is a feeling of the fullness of life, the aliveness of life. But ultimately, when I say life, you have, on the one hand, the manifested life that is in the external world, physical manifestations of life, but then there is the unseen life, the essence of life that inhabits every form of life.

So when Jesus uses the word life, he's referring to the essence of life, which is ultimately consciousness. And I want you to have the fullness of life, is to want you to have this realization of what the source of all life is. That is ultimately the fullness of life is the source of all life.

That's where the true fullness is. That is the fullness. So the appreciation of things that you don't need to, you don't need to own them.

You can just appreciate the beauty. You don't have to say, oh, when you see a flower, you don't need to want, oh, I want, I need to pick this flower and take it home. That's, no, you can appreciate, and then you walk on.

And you can even look into a shop window and see something beautiful. I sometimes do that, not that much these days anymore, but years ago, when I lived in London, I would often go for long walks in the city, just experiencing the aliveness of the city. And I would sometimes enjoy looking into shop windows and, oh, something beautiful there, but I didn't have the desire nor the money to buy it.

And even if I had the desire to, the money to buy it, I probably wouldn't have bought it and just, but there was an appreciation. And even now, I probably would be able to buy many things that I see in shop windows. I just don't have the desire to buy very much,

but appreciate it and then walk on.

So that's a lovely, could even be a practice that you do until it becomes second nature to you. That you appreciate the manifestations of life because you're in touch with the source of aliveness, which is presence. And then you get the feeling of abundance, which does not really depend on how much you possess, how much you have, because you can have relatively little and have this feeling of abundance and somebody else might have huge amounts of possessions and continuously live in a sense of not enough, a sense of lack.

So that, to just add a practical afterthought to this, if possible at all, do not resent encountering difficulties or problems in your life because that's how it works. And it doesn't stop even if you awaken, even if you're awakened, there's still things that you get challenged further. Everybody gets challenged by life in one way or another.

You can't, even the trust fund baby gets challenged by life eventually. So when you encounter difficulties, small or big, see if you don't say this should not be happening. This is the underlying attitude.

If that's your underlying attitude, you're in a state of resistance. For example, many difficulties come in the form of other humans. Humans are difficult.

You might have noticed, many. So they come in the form of other humans. And then the underlying mindset for many people is, this shouldn't be happening.

These people shouldn't behave like that. What we're really saying is they should be enlightened. Why aren't they?

Well, what about you? So difficulties come in the form of other humans. And then you see, this is meant to be.

You're meant to be challenged by other humans. And you cannot not be challenged. No matter how conscious you are, you will encounter other humans who are not, or not yet.

And they will try to create problems for you. And sometimes they achieve that. And it is true also that you attract fewer unconscious humans into your life as you awaken more, the awakening.

It is true that you're not going to move in circles where you're surrounded completely by completely unconscious humans. But you cannot totally avoid contact with unconscious humans. In fact, they need to come into your field of consciousness because they can be helped in many cases by being in your field of consciousness.

But they can only be helped if you do not react when you encounter them. You see, you do what you have to do, but you don't, the underlying mindset is not, this shouldn't be,

they shouldn't do that. They should know better.

Well, they don't. So then other difficulties come in other ways because you can encounter. So we just really talked about relationship.

Other humans means relationships. They can be the intimate relations of people living together. They can be relationships of people working together, other kinds of relationships.

Then, now this already makes up for a lot of problems that people face, it's relationship problems. And then you have others. If you don't have relationship problems, then life says, okay, I'll give him or her something else.

Then you have a work problem at work, usually connected with a relationship too, but maybe some additional factors. Or you have a health problem. You have a problem where you live.

You have a financial problem. That's a big one for many, not enough, or maybe is enough, but your mind says it's not enough. Who knows?

Shortage, the problem of losing your job, the problem of insecurity, which isn't a problem unless you think you should have security, that life is insecure. You don't know what's going to happen next to you. That can be a huge challenge.

But once you accept that, actually insecurity can contribute if you no longer fight it, if you don't demand that your life should be secure, it can contribute to the arising of presence because it forces you more into the present moment. Insecurity means you go into the future and see you can't control it anymore. You don't know what's going to happen next.

Oh dear, I wish I knew, I wish I had a secure job, a secure income, a secure family environment. I wish I had a secure pension plan. I wish I had a secure life insurance.

I wish I had secure this, insecure that. Then I would be okay. Of course you wouldn't.

These things are, if you remove the element of risk or insecurity from a person's life, this is similar to the trust fund baby, then you remove one of the most important areas where you can grow by being challenged. So sometimes the emphasis in our societies in the West is too much on security these days. I mentioned somewhere before, I read last year and I was going by a school, secondary school, and it was the beginning of the summer vacation and they had a big sign outside where there's always notices, they post notices.

And then on that big sign at the school, it said, have a great vacation, be safe. That sounds reasonable advice because you don't want to be unsafe, but is that the main

thing of your vacation? I was, you come back after the summer, the teacher asks you and say, I was really safe.

What did you do? I didn't leave my room because I wanted to be really safe. So there is, life again needs to be a balance between security and risk-taking and accepting the insecurity, the basic insecurity of all life.

When I wrote The Power of Now, I was already in my late forties. And I didn't have a home anymore. That wasn't the time, the original time when I didn't have a home because after the original time, I did have a home, but then I let go of it.

And then I had a limited amount of money, as I briefly mentioned in the book, to finish the book. What would happen after that in my late forties? No life insurance, no job prospects, no income, no savings, except those that were running out, no home, no relationship even, nothing.

And that insecurity contributed to the intensity of presence through which the book came. It could have led to fear and it could have blocked me if I had demanded that my life should be more secure than it is. But I did not demand that security.

I accepted the insecurity and it became enormous presence because all security has to do with future orientation. So the more you have future orientation, the more insecure you feel because you cannot control the outcome. So the fact that my money was running out, that I had no home of my own anymore, I was just going from place to place, contributed to the energy behind the writing and the book.

So that's a wonderful thing. Some people cannot take that step, they feel, if I, that step into the unknown. The impulse that came to me was so strong at the time when I knew I had to leave England for the reason I didn't know.

And I had to move to the West Coast of North America, didn't know why, but the impulse was so strong, I had to obey it. Well, I didn't have to, but I did. But I'm sure if I had not obeyed that impulse, which didn't just come once, it was there every day, I would have probably fallen ill and maybe would be dead already by now.

So the life demanded that I step out into the unknown. If that is the case with you, then you know what to do. Without being rash about it, you still need to look at the practicalities.

So insecurity is one of the great challenges, wonderful. And all these things, of course, life insurance, these are just illusions. How can you insure your life?

First of all, life insurance isn't life insurance, it's death insurance, because that's what it is about. They just don't call it death insurance because nobody would want to buy it. So the universe, the one consciousness, whatever you want to call it, is awakening in every

human.

And every human's essential identity is that one consciousness. So it's not a personal thing, because if you think yourself only as a person, then you have the delusion that you're an autonomous entity cut off from everything and everybody else. But you're not an autonomous entity, you are just a cell in this vastness.

And for a few years, the cell gives itself a name or is given a name, so-and-so, that's me. Me, me. It really changes your life when you, the way you feel, you sense your own life to be, you are the awakening consciousness in this body.

It's wonderful. This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

First thing then, as I just mentioned, you may detect that very often you may be engaged in doing something, and yet there's something in the background that would rather not be doing it. Or there could be a complaining voice in your head in the background that says something about this situation that you are involved in, that you'd rather, because it might involve other people when they are not doing their best, and what am I doing here? All kinds of self-talk can come into resistance, can manifest in many ways.

It also manifests, we'll come to that in a minute, it also can manifest in the body. So you may find in any given situation, as your ability grows, your ability of inner observation, witnessing your inner state, you may find that you detect subtle forms of resistance. That's often to do with what you're doing, but you're not totally in what you're doing.

And another way of not being totally in what you're doing, of having continuous resistance running in the background is already wanting to be at the end of this particular activity, already wanting to be at the end of whatever it is that you're doing, let's say a simple thing, you're shopping, you're going to the supermarket, but you have so many other things to do today, so that the shopping in the supermarket is just an unpleasant obstacle because you're trying to get to the end of it as quickly as possible.

There's only one example, but there are all kinds of activities that can become unconsciously regarded as unpleasant obstacles towards where you really want to be or what you really want to be doing, which is in some future moment. So you want to arrive more at the end of this particular activity than be engaged in this particular activity. Now, many people live their whole life.

Almost every activity they do is of that kind in their daily life. Maybe when they're on vacation, if they're lucky, they have lived short amounts of time, perhaps they are free of that, but perhaps not even then. So this dysfunctional state greatly diminishes what we

could call the quality of your life, the quality of the present moment because your life is the present moment.

So instead of fully acknowledging the doing of this moment, you would rather be at the end of the doing of this. Now, what happens then as a result, very often the result is what we call stress. That's what our stress arises.

[Speaker 4] (2:24:03 - 2:24:10)

You are here, but you want to be there, either in space or time.

[Speaker 1] (2:24:12 - 2:25:39)

You're here now, but you want to be in the later. When this now is over, that's where you want to be. Or you're here physically, but you'd rather want to be somewhere else physically.

You're doing your shopping, but you'd rather be at home. But when you're at home, something else arises where you would rather be or what you would rather be doing because then you're preparing your dinner, but you would rather be already done with it and finally able to relax. And when you're finally able to relax, some thoughts arise about what's going to happen tomorrow.

Problematic things never, never really aligned with the present moment. These are normal ways of living and they're not usually recognized as dysfunctional because almost everybody lives like that. When you watch movies, that's how they all live, with some exceptions.

And exception being, of course, humans who are beginning to awaken or are awakening or awake, whatever, you begin to live in a way that is more harmonious more and more aligned with the is-ness of the present moment.

[Speaker 4] (2:25:40 - 2:25:53)

And that is not to resist the is-ness of the present moment, what arises in the present moment.

[Speaker 1] (2:25:53 - 2:26:26)

So ultimately, since the present moment is all there ever is, since your entire life unfolds in and as the present moment, so therefore, when you resist the present moment, you are living in an antagonistic relationship with life.

[Speaker 4] (2:26:28 - 2:27:02)

And that is, no matter then what you achieve, if that is your conditioned mind pattern,

you will never arrive at a place of real joy or happiness or inner peace, except when you are moving towards unconsciousness.

[Speaker 1] (2:27:02 - 2:28:50)

After a few drinks, you might become more into the present moment, but you're moving towards sleep. You're moving, falling below thinking. People are trying to get away from themselves because who they are is experienced as unpleasant because of that dysfunction.

So people are trying to get away from themselves in all kinds of ways, drugs and so on. And sometimes dangerous activities could help you to get away from yourself temporarily when you're climbing a rock wall or even when you're surfing, perhaps. You can't be thinking about your problems and you won't be then, and you can't be in a state of resistance.

You have to be fully there. Otherwise you will not succeed in whatever activity it is. You have to be fully there.

They have to be free of yourself, the resistant self, the egoic self. So that can temporarily free you too. But then once the activity is over, you go back into your normal resistant state.

And then you have to do it again. And then people then say, well, these people are addicted to the adrenaline rush they get when they're engaged in these activities, which is a physical thing that happens in the body. But there's more to it than that.

[Speaker 4] (2:28:51 - 2:29:01)

They are free of themselves for that. There's only the presence. There's no longer the person.

The person cannot be there.

[Speaker 1] (2:29:01 - 2:29:17)

The person ultimately survives the personal sense of self in the absence of awareness when there's only the personal sense of self. That's the ego.

[Speaker 4] (2:29:18 - 2:29:24)

And that cannot survive without resistance. It needs that.

[Speaker 14] (2:29:54 - 2:30:00)

Is the ego the source of our thoughts or are our thoughts generated elsewhere and pass through the ego?

[Speaker 1] (2:30:01 - 2:37:36)

Oh, thank you. There's no ego apart from the thoughts. The thoughts, identification with thoughts is ego.

But the thoughts that go through your mind, of course, are linked to the collective mind of the culture you live in, humanity as a whole. So they are not your thoughts as such, but you pick them up from the collective, most of them. And so you identify with thinking and the identification with thinking becomes ego, which means simply that you believe in every thought that arises and you derive your sense of who you are from what your mind is telling you who you are.

Opinions, viewpoints of that's me, that's some people talk to themselves and you are, oh, you are so good. Why doesn't the world recognize you? Or the mind says, you're no good.

Same thing. You're no good at all. You never, you fail at everything, don't you?

Again, and then you believe in it. And then you suddenly have a low view of yourself. Why do you have a low view?

Because you believed in your thoughts. And why are you thinking those thoughts? Probably you picked them up somewhere, maybe in childhood.

Maybe your mom was so stressed out that you said you're no good. And so you pick up certain thoughts and they get stuck in your head. Thoughts that you hear in childhood, they're little energy forms like entities and they get stuck in your head and don't refuse to go.

And the more you believe in it, the more deeply lodged they become in your mind. And so some people are stuck with very hostile entities. I'm saying entity, not in some spooky way, but every thought is an energy form and as such, we could call it an entity.

And there are many people in this world who are stuck with hostile, life-denying, continuously critical and attacking entities that they carry in their head and they believe that is who they are. And they are continuously attacking themselves. And if they are not attacking themselves, they attack others around them.

Let me tell you who you are. Of course, what they're really saying is, let me tell you who I am. So they project the famous, you know the famous saying, we don't see things as they are, we see them as we are.

Which means you look at reality through the screen of your thinking and your judgment, which is conditioned by the past. A dreadful prison to live in. It's like blinkers, worse than blinkers.

It's like looking at reality through heavy veils. Ooh, it looks so dark here. Is that a human being or?

So, and so the identification with thinking, believing in your thoughts, having no space outside of the movement of thought. Again, here we come to the vital thing, lack of space inside. That is the unconscious condition, spiritually, completely unconscious.

And then you are burdened with a heavy ego. You are the ego, which is not an entity apart from thought. It is thoughts that you have identified with.

And the first moment of freedom comes when you realize that certain thoughts have been going through your head for years, perhaps. And that they are only thoughts. And that you are not the thought, you're the awareness.

In my case, I became aware that I had a thought, for example, that started in childhood. One of many negative thoughts I had. Bad things always happen to me.

Bad things always happen to me. And that was, when I saw people around me, okay, they have got all these nice things. And always there would be bad things happening.

And of course, your perception then becomes selective. When you have a thought like that, you notice much more, because in everybody's life, things in daily life, things go wrong. You miss a bus, you get stuck in a traffic jam, or you lose some money.

But yes, this is normal. But if you have a thought, bad things always happen to me, you're extremely aware of those things. And they confirm to you that the thought is correct.

And this is the selective perception of reality through the screen of thinking. So the reality will confirm to you, not only that, that thought or any thought of that kind actually attracts bad things, negative things. Or if you believe people are basically bad, and that's a deep-seated belief, and you don't realize it's only a thought in your head or a belief, not only do you, would you single out where you observe unethical or bad behavior in others, you would, ah, there it is.

Not only that, you actually are much more likely to encounter people who manifest that kind of behavior, because you attract it. And so that's just incredible how people create their world. Through that, so freedom comes from stepping out, encountering, first of all, a little bit of space inside you, presence.

And then from there, you realize certain thoughts as repetitive and just a thought. Bad things always happen to me. Oh, there it goes again, I just thought that before.

So that's the, to become free of ego means becoming free of thought, identification with thought. That's the end of the ego. It may reassert itself from time to time, but at least

that's the awakening.

What about your thoughts, habitual thoughts? Do you?

[Speaker 14] (2:37:38 - 2:37:45)

Probably that I have to get everything right. Those are the intents, you know, figure it out and get it right. It rules me.

[Speaker 1] (2:37:46 - 2:37:47)

And if it's not right?

[Speaker 14] (2:37:50 - 2:37:57)

I escape, I just won't do it. I pretty much predict ahead of time. So I won't try a lot of times.

[Speaker 1] (2:37:58 - 2:39:38)

Ah, yes. Yes. Some people are afraid of not succeeding in whatever they do, because they have a self, their self image, which is derived from thinking, would suffer.

If I fail at something, then I will, my self image will be injured. And therefore, I'm not even going to try. And again, that's to do with deriving your identity from thinking.

And even the thought I have failed is a lie. I am a failure is an even greater lie. You have not failed.

You can simply reinterpret it. I've learned something here. This is not for me, for example.

So, but why believe the lies that your mind produces? So, as you know, people, many people live with a very hostile mind. But those people, the motivation, their motivation would probably be very great.

I would hope to get out of their minds. But first, they need to realize that their problems are self-generated, mind-generated, not world-generated. Thank you.

[Speaker 14] (2:40:04 - 2:40:50)

Hi. Well, I wanted to ask you, I guess it's kind of a simple question in a way, but it's like, I feel like this whole present moment thing really works. And it's like, and so I feel like I'm so happy when I'm in the moment.

But then, you know, how do I balance that with actually being able to, you know, plan for the future? I mean, that, it's like, I don't know how, I mean, I can just be in the moment.

And sometimes I feel like I can just be like this battery pack for the universe and just be so happy.

But I feel like I, then I'll wake up in the middle of the night and I'll have this anxiety about not taking care of the future or not doing the things that I need to do to take care of the future. So it's about balancing that. How do you do that?

Or do you have to balance it? Okay.

[Speaker 1] (2:40:50 - 2:45:43)

Okay. Well, the anxiety about not taking care of the future is of course losing the present moment. That's the real loss of the present moment.

But taking care of the future by doing some planning, constructive planning, even constructive thinking, not useless thinking and worrying and toxic thinking in the middle of the night, things what I should be doing or haven't done, or if I do it, it might go wrong. Not that kind of totally useless thinking, which is losing the present moment. Then there is the applied thinking, which is, oh, I need to work out what I'm going to do, whatever, schedule for the next thing I'm going to do, a plan for next year when I will have to do this or that, whatever.

And you may find that if you do focused thinking and apply it to whatever it is that you need to work out, is not losing the present moment. It's only useless thinking about the present moment that mentally projects you away from the now and doesn't get you anywhere. It detracts from the quality of life and detracts from your sense of aliveness.

So planning you can do in the present moment. Let's say I plan, where am I going to go? I'm going on a tour somewhere.

I was on a Europe tour late last year, and that had to be planned almost a year in advance. So already at the beginning of last year and before then, we were already talking about the Europe tour. And so what then, you look at the calendar, cities, geography of places where they connect, all the other factors that you need to look at.

You're not really losing the present moment because you're not projecting yourself mentally over there and imagining how it's going to go or imagining that when you finally give that talk in London, then you're really going to feel really fulfilled or projecting yourself to that talk in London when no one is going to like what you're going to say. And half the audience are going to leave. Am I going to be inspired when I reach London to give a talk?

You're just losing the present. This kind of thinking happens. It pretends to be useful and constructive, but it's not at all.

And it's not taking responsibility for anything. But applied thinking, and for applied thinking, it's good to give yourself a time limit, a space. You sit down for an hour or you talk to people and say, what do we need to do here in order to do this, that, that, that you're not losing the present moment.

Some people often, it's just not uncommon for people to have this question, thinking that I must never think about the future. But when you apply that, you're not really thinking about the future. The planning is now.

There's just, you're not projecting yourself away from the present moment. So it's applied and constructive thinking. The same with the past.

Sometimes you need to think about something that happened in the past. You need your memory for certain things. And then you need to kind of Google back there in your mind.

And then you talk about, well, but there's a reason why you bring it into the present, because you need that kind of memory or the knowledge. Perhaps you learned something there at the past Europe tour. Those things went very wrong.

The people had to line up for an hour and I was an hour late starting. It was disorganized. What did we do wrong?

That's fine. You have to go there. But if you, in the middle of the day, you think how dreadful that was, or you're blaming yourself or others about what went wrong, then you lose yourself in the past.

So you can use past and future without losing yourself in them. And then really you remain present even while you refer back to the past or while you make plans for the future. So that's really how it works.

[Speaker 14] (2:45:44 - 2:45:51)

Is there a way that you can, if you're happy, you can trust the universe that you're on the right path? Oh, yes.

[Speaker 1] (2:45:51 - 2:51:59)

That is an underlying thing, is of course the sense of connectedness with the deeper level, the deeper levels of your being, the awareness, the presence, the stillness, whatever you want to call it. And that gives you a certain rootedness. You're rooted in being.

And then what happens on the outcome of things that you do is no longer the factor that determines your state of consciousness. So when things go wrong, sometimes they do, you're not devastated. You don't, oh, you don't feel you're going to die because it went wrong and you didn't get there.

You tried so hard in the end, it didn't work out. And it's so awful. You beat yourself up mentally.

No, that's very dysfunctional and creates a lot of suffering. So you are less dependent on the, you welcome a good outcome, of course, but you're not dependent on a good outcome for feeling peaceful. And really complete in yourself.

And that sense of completeness in yourself, because there are two levels, as you know, that one could say the two dimensions. You are the person, but you are also the vast consciousness. So there's the ripple, there's the ocean.

The person lives in time and there's a development. The person learns things, gets better at certain things. And so on.

At the deepest level, there is already that sense of completion. You don't need to become anything. When you are connected with the depths of who you are, in that depth, you don't need to become, you are already complete.

On the level of the person, you're never really complete. And there are always things that could be called imperfections. Not, when you're connected, not huge things that create a lot of dysfunction in your life and make your life and other people's lives unhappy.

Not that kind of thing. But there are things that are certain personal things that are limitations on, you can't be, I have, my place at the moment is untidy. I'm not perfect there.

So there was a time when my place was tidy. So I'm not an untidy person continuously. But it started when I was writing the New Earth.

And then I couldn't focus on anything else while I was writing. And then things started to accumulate. And now I still get all these manuscripts and books sent.

And some of them are taking up more and more space at my place. So let's not go there. But that's an imperfection on my part.

If somebody had an idea of somebody who's fully awake, he must live in certain way. And then he comes and says, how can you, this is not tidy. How do you live?

Occasionally I have a cup of coffee, one a day. And occasionally people see me having a cup of coffee somewhere and say, why do you need coffee? You've written all these spiritual books and now you still need coffee?

I don't know if I need it. I just enjoy a cup of coffee. And I drink a glass of wine or two occasionally with dinner.

You drink alcohol? Well, if my state of conscience is so fragile that a glass of wine would upset it, then it can't be worth very much. So the addictiveness does not come in because the addictiveness would be something else.

If I were addicted to coffee and couldn't live without six cups of coffee a day, or if I were addicted to alcohol and wouldn't know when to stop drinking, that would be something else. But you can enjoy things, but people might interpret it as an imperfection and perhaps it is, but allow yourself to have your imperfections as long as they don't create suffering for others or yourself, become comfortable with things where you are not perfect. Some people are habitually, it's not a nice thing, it's not my problem, but they are habitually late.

Some people just have that. It's almost in their genes. I had a Filipino friend that I recently met her again after many years in London at university in Cambridge.

And it must be in the Filipino genes to be late all the time. And apparently when I talked to her, she said, yes, everybody's late. Nobody expects people to be on time.

And so, and that may be, she may not be able to get rid of that because it's in her genes. It says be late or you don't need to be on time or that. And that's fine.

That's how they live. It's not a problem in the Philippines. It might become a problem in the West, but not to them, to other people who might say there's something wrong with you.

If some things can change and that's good. And as consciousness awakens in you more, the awareness arises. It does tend to dissolve those patterns, as I said, that really F up your life.

[Speaker 16] (2:52:02 - 2:52:03)

Okay, thank you.

[Speaker 1] (2:52:59 - 3:06:57)

But when I get really afraid of losing all my money in the stock market, of getting sick or losing a loved one, how do I handle that? Fear again, the question is about fear. How do I handle the fear of catching a disease, of losing everything?

Many things, many people are experiencing not only the fear now of the virus, they're also experiencing the fear of the repercussions of what's happening. Businesses are closing down or everything is closing down. It's a very strange thing that this is happening.

It's like an enforced closing down of the busyness, not just the business, but the busyness of the world, an enforced sudden ending of all that. Many planes are not flying

anymore. There's some cities are empty of people or suddenly as if because until this happened, the world was absurdly busy, noisy, busy, everything was in movement.

Everything was lost in the world, lost in their minds. And suddenly, as if somebody said, okay, let's turn it off for a while. Oh, enforced stillness almost.

Exactly what millions of humans actually need to experience. It doesn't mean that they will automatically also experience the inner stillness, but there is a possibility of an awakening for many if they can go beyond the fear, the fearful thoughts. But how do you go beyond the fearful thoughts?

Well, it requires a little bit of awareness. But if you are here with us, you probably have that awareness. What I mean by that is the awareness of what's going on in your mind.

To recognize rather than total identification with what's going on in your mind, you have in the background an awareness of what's going on in your mind. Very different. Because it's a different dimension of consciousness, the awareness.

It's not the same as a thought. The awareness can recognize what thoughts are going on in your mind and you realize, I'm thinking all these useless thoughts, but that realization, I'm verbalizing it now, but because we are communicating through language, but that realization that all these useless and destructive thoughts are going through my head, that is a realization that is not verbal. It's pre- or post-verbal because it comes through the awareness.

And there's a simple recognition that what's going on in your mind is not helpful. It's making you fearful and unhappy. So it is to be tackled there.

All these, the problem that he mentions, he mentions, or he or she mentions three, fear of losing all my money or my savings, my investments, what I've been saving, of getting sick or something bad could happen to a loved one. So you have fear for yourself. You have fear for others.

And of course, all these things are not happening now, the things that you fear, but they could happen, says the mind. So I better think about it now because in case it does, of course, if they did happen, you would face the situation. You have, with the power of your conscious awareness, you would face the sickness, you would face the loss of money, and you would even face the loss of a loved one or the suffering of a loved one with the power of your presence, you can face that.

But what you cannot do, you cannot overcome these problems or face them because they only exist in your imagination. They haven't even happened yet. There's therefore, there's absolutely nothing you can do about them.

In fact, they will simply be amplified. The more you think about them, the more they

become amplified. It's a totally illusory realm that is making you suffer.

And so if there's a minimum of awareness, you can suddenly become aware of what it is that you are doing to yourself. Well, it's not that you're voluntarily doing it to yourself, but one could say it is happening to you. So you become aware of what is happening to you because the thoughts in your mind, virtually all the thoughts in the absence of awareness happen to you.

They are not voluntary. So people say, I think this, I think, you don't think, the thinking happens to you when you're not aware. You're at the mercy of thought.

You are at the mercy of the energy field that is what we call thought. It lives in you. You are possessed.

You don't know it. The moment you realize it, that this is not the fearful thinking, isn't something that you do, because if it's something that you do, you say, yeah, I'm doing it, but I can't stop it. No, you are not doing it.

It happens to you. So some people say, well, perceive it as, well, why am I doing this to myself? Well, that's already, it's a good first step.

Why am I making myself suffer by thinking all that? And then the next step is you realize, well, it's not really me doing it. It's the self-serving thought forms that are swirling around in my mind continuously that are making me unhappy, that have no useful purpose.

I'm not helping myself or anybody by thinking these things, by projecting bad things that could or will, that could happen. And so with the awareness of what's going on in your mind comes the first time a moment of freedom, because before you had no free will. Without awareness, you have no free will.

You're at the mercy of a conditioned mind. So what do you do? So you have recognized that what's been happening to you fulfills no useful purpose.

That's an important realization because before there is an assumption in the unconscious mind that unless you worry a lot, then you're not controlling your life. There is the delusion that the more you think about the useless, but when you don't know it's useless, the more you think about the problems of your life, then you need to continue thinking in order to hold it all together. You need to really worry all the problems of the world.

If you don't worry, then your life will fall to pieces. It's the underlying assumption. Of course, it's a delusion.

So the worrying, the fearful thinking does not want to end. You need to know that, that it

has a momentum and you cannot fight it. If you fight it, you make it stronger.

You give it added energy. So it's not by willpower that you can stop it. Or as I just said, you can stop it briefly, but not for long through exercising willpower.

So you stop it simply by first recognizing the not only the futility, but also the destructive nature of that type of thinking. And then you begin to see that a lot of the unhappiness is produced by the narratives in your mind. And at that moment, you have a choice.

You can continue being dragged along in the stream of fearful thinking, or you can say, my choice is now to take my attention away from fearful thinking. I'm verbalizing it. But where does it go?

If the fearful thinking wants all your attention, it wants all your consciousness continuously. It says, no, I'm letting go. I want it.

And then you say, no, I don't want to go that way anymore. It's very simple. You bring your attention somewhere else.

You need something at first. My recommendation is, feel your inner body. Direct your attention.

Let's say you wake up in the night or in the morning. Direct your attention. Instead of thinking, direct your attention into the inner energy field of your hands.

And then you hold it there. It doesn't require willpower. It's just a simple decision.

And you hold it. You feel the inner aliveness in your hands. It becomes an anchor for stepping out of mind, being present.

Can you feel the energy in your hands? I can. And it's always wonderful.

I've been feeling the energy in my hands for many years. It's always fresh and new. And I don't tire speaking of it because it's always fresh and new.

And of course, it's not just the hands. If you can't feel the energy in your hands, close your eyes and ask yourself if you're, let's say your right hand, or if you're left-handed, your left hand. Ask yourself if your left or right hand is still there or not.

Is it still there? How do I know it's there? How can I know it's there right now?

Now, you can't know it because you remember it was there when you saw it a few seconds ago. That's not knowing that it's there because it might have disappeared. You close your eyes, you're not moving your hand.

How can you know it's there? You can know it's there, but how does it happen? What is it?

How do you know it? You can feel it, but what is it that you feel? You feel the energy within the hand.

It's very subtle at first, so you need to be alert to feel it. But that alertness that then goes in the body is taken away from thinking. And it's, and you suddenly, your hand feels more alive than it was before.

But that's only the beginning. You can feel both hands simultaneously. And then you realize you can also feel other parts of the body, your feet at the same time.

And legs. And then you become aware of an all-pervasive sense of aliveness in the entire body, energy field. And the amazing thing is, oh, by the way, you may also become aware that you are breathing because that's connected with the body.

You're breathing into the body. And the breath flows in and it flows out. And the more you become aware of your body, the more you become aware of your breathing.

The more you become aware of your breathing, the more you become aware of the body. There's a wonderful aliveness there. And what happened to your mind activity?

It subsided almost completely or completely because you cannot be aware of inner body and at the same time think. A few fragments may be there of thoughts, but not a sustained stream of thinking. It's not possible because all your attention, your consciousness has gone away from the conceptualizing mind into the inner body.

[Speaker 10] (3:07:07 - 3:07:59)

My question is about children. And it's a growing concern of mine that we have an increase of anxiety with children. And as an educator, what can we do to help them with this?

The anxiety in you or the anxiety in the children? In the children, they're labeling it. And at five and six years old, they know that there's a label for it and it's called, they're anxious.

And I've been teaching for a long time and it just seems to be getting to be greater and greater, young children and older children. How old are the children that you teach? The ones I have are primary, so they're grade one and two.

Grade one and two, nice.

[Speaker 2] (3:08:02 - 3:08:18)

Yeah, it's unfortunate, isn't it? You're experiencing that so early. A lot of fear, yeah.

Yeah, yeah. Are you free to do meditation in your school? That's a good question.

[Speaker 10] (3:08:19 - 3:09:06)

It is something that we're starting to do in the Canadian schools. And it's growing in popularity. And certainly, yes, we are allowed to do it, certainly in the public schools.

Okay, so they wouldn't be against you doing that? No. Okay, do you do it with them?

I do my best to do it. It's something that I'm learning and evolving with, so they do like it. The ones that are anxious actually like it probably the most.

But I'm not sure I'm doing it the right way and I was wondering if there are any strategies to use with children to help them maintain a sense of calmness.

[Speaker 2] (3:09:09 - 3:09:49)

So it's important that you center yourself first and you remain calm and be calm. And that's sometimes hard to do in your job, I could imagine. Right.

So it's going to be your practice first and foremost. As well, you can bring that in with the children, start the day, your day each. You get them all day, don't you?

When they're grade one and two? Most of the day. Most of the day.

So you can start the day with the meditation, just being quiet, just being still.

[Speaker 10] (3:09:51 - 3:09:57)

And do you have any understanding of why this is getting worse?

[Speaker 2] (3:09:58 - 3:13:41)

Oh my goodness, wow. You know, we've lost that connection to being. We make things, the world, more important than our own state of consciousness.

So it's, and we teach that to our children right away. You know, we're happy when they say their first words, we reward them, we're like, ah, yay, you know? So they'll, and it's not a bad thing, don't get me wrong, I'm not saying words are bad.

But from the moment that they come into this world and they begin to, then their brains start to form and they start to grow. They are constantly looking outside of ourselves. And that's a natural thing to do.

As Eckhart mentioned, it's natural. You can't stop a child going through the stage of age two. Mine, mine, this is mine.

Where did they learn that? Suddenly they know that it's mine and they don't want to share it. So they'll go through that process of developing an ego until it gets them in

trouble and they realize that, you know, they now have to now unlearn all that.

So we can't stop that natural stages that human beings have to go through. However, we can be the light in which we can hold and help the child go through it. So with this anxiety that's starting in very young children, I mean, there is more entertainment in the world.

There are more devices in the world. I mean, now when we are out to dinner or lunch or something like that, and we see a family sitting at a table, they're not even connecting with each other. They each have their own devices.

I kid you not, they are really on their devices. As well, parents now, because they're so stressed out, it's easier to put your kid in front of a device than to have to really be with your child. So it's important that, and this is the part that you won't be able to control, just as the parents cannot control what's happening at school.

They can do either best and do their best. So they're getting little aspects here and a little aspect there. So whatever their home life is, okay?

And whatever their school life is, and here you are, awakened consciousness. Now you have an opportunity to have them for that whatever, four, six hours a day, and you are creating this field of consciousness. And they get to experience that.

And this, it's vital, it's important. You can't control what's happening at home, but you can give them the gift of love and acceptance, and hey, this is a place where you can actually relax. You don't have to be stressed out.

You don't have to be anxious. And then they get to experience that. Now, when I had, my childhood was, you know, very dysfunctional, a lot of pain, body, in everybody, in my parents.

[Speaker 1] (3:14:17 - 3:30:18)

My ego is really aggressive. It comes up without me knowing. Only after the ego is gone do I find out how can I manage my ego sooner.

That is not uncommon. It's probably more than you, the questioner, who has that, who experiences that. As more presence arises, so first of all, it's important to invite presence into your life in ordinary situations, when you're not being challenged by another person.

The anger mostly is probably with people or situations, but most situations involve people. So be present when you're out in nature, by not labeling things, by being, by observing in that state of alert attention. And presence then emanates more and more through you.

This doesn't mean that necessarily you will, next time the ego comes up, being

aggressive, it comes up so quickly that you can't catch it in the moment. But as more, as the presence in you grows, manifests more strongly, usually what happens is the time period that elapses after you've been taken over by anger, gets shorter until you reach a point where a few seconds after it's happened, you suddenly realize it's happened again. Whereas before you might have read it several minutes or even an hour, in some cases to the next day, you realize, what was that?

When you had a huge drama with somebody, probably involving the pain body, your pain body is probably predominantly has the anger vibration predominantly. And pain body that is not recognized as pain body becomes part of the ego. In the same way that any thought that you completely identify with becomes part of the ego.

In the same way, an emotion that you completely identify with becomes part of the ego. Once you recognize the pain body as the pain body, then it is an energy field in you that still operates. But strictly speaking, it's no longer your ego.

Ego can only operate as long as you're unconscious. So although sometimes people say to me, I'm able to observe my ego now, in the way I use the term ego, that's no longer true. The moment you become aware of your ego, it's not really ego anymore.

It is still a behavioral or mental, emotional pattern that operates in you. But you are present when you know that there is this pattern operating in you, then you are not it. It operates in you and you are the space around it, which is the consciousness.

You know it's there. Then before it was ego, yes. But when you recognize it for what it is, it's no longer ego.

Ego means unconsciousness. Ego means complete identification. So whatever you recognize in yourself isn't really ego anymore.

And so then as presence grows in you, you reach a point when immediately after this episode, pain body episode, anger episode has just happened, you suddenly realize, oh, it happened again. And then I predict if it hasn't happened to you yet, it will, a time comes, perhaps very soon, when in the middle of it, it already has taken you over and you're shouting at someone. And in the middle of it, you realize what's going on, that you've been taken over by that.

You still may not be able to stop it, don't have to, but the awareness is there in the middle of it. And that may happen many times. And then you may find the awareness is there just the moment it begins to arise.

The moment the anger pattern wants to come in, the awareness is also already there. Now, whether or not at this moment you can stop it, we don't know, and never stop it by suppressing it. You stop it simply by shining the light of awareness on it.

That eventually stops it. So you can, and then at that, when the presence is strong enough for that, then you actually begin to have a choice. Do I choose to engage in the same way through my pain body in this situation?

Is this the best way of dealing with the situation? You may not literally ask yourself that question, but it is implied in that state of awareness. You have a choice.

You can no longer at the mercy of the old condition pattern. And then it begins to dissipate. So I predict that this will happen, that presence more and more will come in at earlier stages, and then in the middle of it, and then at the beginning of it.

But you need to cultivate or invite presence into your life in ordinary situations, in helpful situations, so that it can be there in challenging situations. Don't rely on challenging situations alone. That's not going to work.

Invite it into your life in situations where it's easy, but situations that lend themselves to presence. Nature, walking in nature, looking at the sky, or if you can't get out into nature, look at a flower, just for half a minute, a minute, and not just look. While you look at a flower, and this is just one example, it could be anything natural.

While you look at a flower, not only are you not only aware of what it is, you're looking at the sense perception. You don't need label. The name of the flower is irrelevant, all that you don't need for this.

You look at a flower, you can not only see whatever it is that you see with your visual sense, your sight, but there's more to the flower than what you see with your visual sense, and that is an alive presence. Very hard to talk about it. You remember the, I believe I quoted it the other day, from the saying from Saint-Exupéry, all that is essential is invisible to the eye.

What is all that is essential is invisible to the eye. So all of the flower is beautiful. Within the flower, there's hiding a presence that is invisible to the eye.

The flower has a presence there. It is not by accident that in many spiritual traditions, flowers are sacred symbols. In Buddhism, for example, and other traditions, certain flowers are sacred symbols.

The mandala itself, the sacred mandala paintings, basically many of them are based on flower designs, flowers are naturally occurring mandalas. And so there is, what is essential about the flower, yes, there is the external beauty, but the real meaning of beauty is there is an inner essence there. But you cannot sense that when you are looking at the flower through the screen of conceptualization.

So you have to drop the screen of conceptualization, which is thought, and look at the flower and give it a little bit of time, and then you begin to sense something. But where

do you sense that? You sense it in yourself.

What is it that you sense in yourself when you look at the flower? It's both in the flower and in you. It is the essence, the animating consciousness behind this manifestation of, this beautiful manifestation of form.

There is, beyond the form, there is, we could call it the animating spirit. And that is the same animating spirit, which is consciousness, that is in you. When you have access to it in yourself, you can sense it there, but giving complete attention, for example, to a flower can be very helpful in deepening the access you have to it in yourself.

So the flower can teach you stillness, because the flower is very still, and teach you other things, because stillness is only one particular signpost that we use to speak of it. So you sense the basic, the essence of the flower, which is sacred, and you can sense the essence of yourself, which is sacred, and you can somehow sense that the essence of the flower and the essence of yourself are one and the same. And that is the recognition of oneness, which is all, all the ancient mystics and so on have spoken about this.

And that is just, you love it. Basically, that means, that is what love is. You recognize yourself in the other.

It doesn't have to be another human being, or it's beautiful when you recognize yourself in another human being, but you also recognize yourself in nature. So this is important because that brings, so allow nature to teach you stillness. Now, nature, of course, embodies a completely different degree of consciousness from yours.

I will now make a mystical statement. You don't have to believe it. The flower loves it when you give it attention, because you add something enormous to the flower by giving it attention.

The flower is not aware of its own beauty, it just is. And when you unite your consciousness with the flower, through you, because ultimately you're not, the separateness that we see in the physical is not really there. Through you, the flower gets a glimpse of self-recognition.

The flower recognizes itself. So when nature is waiting for you to recognize it, and what nature alone is also involved in, it is part of the evolving universe that is becoming more conscious. And humans are an essential part of that on this planet.

So when a human becomes conscious of nature, the nature through the human becomes conscious of itself. And it's an amazing process. Whether or not this is true, you have to kind of find out for yourself by being more attentive in nature and giving, honoring what's there.

And as much as possible, relate to nature without the screen of knowledge. When you need it, it's fine. If a child asks you, what's the name of this flower?

You tell the child what the name is, but hopefully you don't say, this is a rose. Hopefully you say to the child, it's called a rose. There's a very big difference between saying, this is a rose, because that would be saying to the child that this concept is what it is, that the sound rose is that.

No, it's only a name. The name of it is rose. And so to prevent the child from getting lost in concepts at an early age, always, once you have taught a word, always bring the child back to the actual experience of it so that the child does not come to the misperception that the name of the flower is a flower.

There's a depth to the flower that gets totally covered up when you mistake the name for the flower. So that's why when you truly want to see it, you have to remove the mental label and you can only do that by being present. The alertness rises and then you communicate, you relate to the flower without the screen of concepts.

So this was something to do with presence, this part of the answer, although I went some distance away from this, the answer of anger arising and catching it. So it's vital to generate presence in normal life, in nature, and so on, so that it's there when the pain body arises.

[Speaker 15] (3:30:47 - 3:31:01)

I want to speak about loneliness, pain body, because since two years I'm traveling alone, trying to do like you, like doing nothing.

[Speaker 16] (3:31:07 - 3:31:08)

I'm trying.

[Speaker 1] (3:31:09 - 3:31:10)

That's a good try, yeah.

[Speaker 15] (3:31:14 - 3:31:42)

And then I have difficulty to accept this nothingness, and so then I spend time on devices, on Facebook, and then the pain body arrives, and then sometimes I see the world like it doesn't exist, and that other people are like robots. So it's a lot of suffering. I don't know how to overcome this kind of feeling.

[Speaker 1] (3:31:43 - 3:31:47)

So you've been traveling for a couple of years?

[Speaker 15] (3:31:47 - 3:31:55)

Yeah, like one year and a half. I started with India, and then now I'm following you because I went to Norway, New York, Costa Rica.

[Speaker 1] (3:31:55 - 3:32:00)

Okay. And you're not running out of money yet? No.

[Speaker 15] (3:32:02 - 3:32:03)

The universe gives me what I need.

[Speaker 1] (3:32:03 - 3:32:06)

Okay, that's good. That's a good sign.

[Speaker 15] (3:32:07 - 3:32:15)

But it's about like this connection with the world when I am alone and with devices.

[Speaker 1] (3:32:15 - 3:49:24)

Yes, you're not in a relationship at present, and you haven't been for the past two years, and the relationship has not arisen, or do you on purpose avoid entering relationship? Okay. Well, whatever it is, learning to be with yourself, at ease with yourself, loneliness can be a great thing when it comes transformed through acceptance into solitude.

Solitude only arises when you accept your aloneness, become completely present, and suddenly you sense your own presence. Which does not need anything, is already complete. Which is not to say that on the level of your form, there may not be a need for some company, whether it's physical or emotional or mental or altogether.

On the level of form, you will continue to experience certain pulls and certain needs. On the level of form, if you have no relationship, you may feel that sense of needing something to complete you on the level of form to some extent. That's not a problem if you are rooted in your essence.

You can be aware that on the level of form, there are certain needs, and these needs may be met at some point, or right now they may not be met. And that no longer matters that much. It is only of relative importance whether you have a relationship or you don't have a relationship.

On the deepest level, you don't need it. On a slightly up, on a form level, you're not complete. There's masculine, there's the polarities of yin and yang, not necessarily always related to the biological masculine feminine, but you are either, if you are yin, you need some yang.

If you are more yang, you need some yin. And that operates on the level of opposites and of form. It may be advisable for you to engage in some kind of activity so that you can not only practice presence by doing nothing, because it was never my decision when it happened to me.

It was not my decision to do nothing for a couple of years or so. By the way, I'm still good at doing nothing, but. But it wasn't my decision to do nothing in order to achieve some state.

The doing nothing arose because already I was so deeply immersed in presence that I had lost the balance as a human being. I had lost the balance between human and being. Because that, I love that word human being, the English language doesn't have a word for man and woman, like German has Mensch, which is the word for human being.

But in English, you have to use two words. But there's the human part of you, that's the form. There's the being of you, that's the essence.

Ultimately, everybody needs to be in some kind of balance between those two. I was immersed in being so deeply that I lost the balance. I wasn't unhappy about that at all, but I lost the balance between the human.

The human became so unimportant to me that I didn't do anything to even, I knew what am I supposed to do with my life? Even that didn't arise, that thought. It was so delicious, delightful to be immersed in being.

And that's how this period of complete, not complete, there was some activity because I had to occasionally get little jobs to survive. And occasionally people gave me money. But I did have temporary jobs to survive so that I was forced occasionally to come out a little bit out of the being.

But I didn't last in any job for very long. The moment I had enough money, I would stop again. So I got temporary jobs at various places.

For two weeks, I worked at the Kennel Club in London, filling out forms of puppies that had just been born of different dogs. The, fortunately they had no computers at that time yet because that would have been beyond me. So there was just that the bliss of being was so all-consuming that the balance between the human and the being was lost.

And then it only began to reestablish itself when people started coming to me and asking me questions. And the question pulled me out of the being because an answer was required, but the answer came from the being. So when I started answering questions, suddenly there was a flow and the answering of questions became my doing.

So that's how the balance got reestablished slowly. I would not necessarily seek inactivity as a way of achieving some kind of purpose presence, it is sometimes easier to

engage in some activity and even engage in relationships and see if you can stay present there. But it all comes back to really the present moment, whatever it is, wherever you are, wherever you are.

Is there enough intensity in you not to be drawn into mind for long periods of time? Is there enough intensity in you to stay present in that state of aloneness so that you can be the consciousness rather than the person, you are the consciousness. And it could be a great opportunity that you're able to do that, to just travel and explore, but you already went to India.

And so you did not seek, you did not find what you were seeking perhaps. And then you came to Eckhart and there you did not find what you were seeking perhaps. And the only place where you can find what you're seeking is within you in the present moment, doesn't matter where you are.

So intensity of presence is important to cut through mind. Are you motivated enough to have that intensity of presence? And it could well be that there's not enough suffering in your life to provide the motivation.

So that is a possibility, but that's not a problem because it'll come. If... My sense is that right now it's just too easy for you.

It's too easy. So the suffering is, I mentioned before, the best motivation for liberation is the desire to escape from suffering or realizing the possibility that is possible to be free of suffering. And that's why the Buddha chose that term to describe his teaching, which is very wise.

What's my teaching about? The Buddha said, I'll tell you what it is about. It's not about enlightenment.

It's not about achieving God realization. It's not about that. He's the end of suffering.

So it seems that he attracted mostly people who were at that stage where that meant something to them. I don't know if you are at that stage where the end of suffering means enough to you to provide the intensity for awakening. I was suffering.

That was the motivation. I didn't even have a name for awakening. The wonderful news though is, life always gives you what you need.

And it could well be that if you continue your life in this way, the way in which you live will create more and more suffering. Perhaps the loneliness will become unbearable. And so, and then the suffering of the loneliness might drive you into relationship.

And then something may go wrong in the relationship. And then the relationship will become unbearable. And then you will seek out another situation and something will go

wrong there.

And then that will become unbearable. And then suddenly you will want to be free of suffering. And there you have the motivation.

So whether you carry on the way you are now, fine. Life will give you what you need. Or if you think, okay, I'll try a relationship.

Great too. You will find the necessary suffering to get you there. Here a related question.

As I'm awakening, I'm becoming more aware of how often I'm angry and it is getting tiresome. How do I manage the expectations of myself? Well, let's see.

So you need to manage the expectations and then you need to manage the anger. Anger management and expectation management. Expectation means you beat yourself up for being unconscious, which is more unconsciousness.

Because the mental image of who you are says, I'm not good enough. I can't do it. You see, been at it for 25 years and I still can't do it.

You can't possibly be any good if you still can't do it after 25 years. Those are thoughts that float around in your mind. And how do you feel?

As I suppose that's Byron Katie would ask that. How do you feel when you believe in those thoughts? Not good.

You're beating yourself up and you feel an emotion. Feel bad about myself. More ego, more conceptualized identity.

In your mind, concepts in your mind about you, you derive your sense of self from that. More of the same. So the, let's say it's anger, and then you wake up after the anger reaction, say, I did it again.

I'm no good. So you have the second egoic reaction to the first one. Ha, ha, ha.

Good. Anger is something that is, comes in in many people very fast. So there may not be, unless there's already considerable presence power in you, there may not be enough presence to catch it.

It takes you over before you know it, especially old reaction. And before you know it, you're talking and shouting and you are not doing it at all. It's the pattern.

It's the mind pattern, mental, emotional pattern in you, which often related to what I call the pain body, which is old, accumulated, painful emotion, which could be anger, which could be a deep, depressed sadness. Anger is a very frequent one. The pain body energy is just waiting in people who have accumulated old anger, going back to childhood,

feeling powerless.

And what does a child do when the child feels powerless? Start screaming, that's all it can do. And sometimes it works.

Sometimes the parents come and say, okay, you can have the sweet if you scream loud enough. So it's powerlessness is always behind anger. And the ego pretends that there's your power there in anger.

But anger arises out of a sense of powerlessness. And there's often fear hiding underneath it. And when you are there looking at it, then you realize that at firsthand within yourself, there is a sense of powerlessness behind it.

And the ego is pretending to be powerful when really it's in a state of fear. You can see it even with little dogs. The smallest dogs are the most, bark the most.

And whenever they're little, I've seen little dogs, whenever a big one goes past, they get angry. Arf, arf, arf. Arf.

Arf. Arf. Because, I mean, if I were that size, I would do that too, probably.

Arf. Arf. Arf.

Arf. Chihuahua, or your little sweet little Bichon Frise. And a mastiff walks past, or a Rottweiler, who looks very quiet because the Rottweiler knows its own power.

It doesn't need to, it goes. Arf. Arf.

Arf. And the little one goes, arf, arf. Arf.

Arf. Arf. Arf.

Arf.

[Speaker 16] (3:49:26 - 3:49:27)

Arf. Arf.

[Speaker 1] (3:49:32 - 4:07:32)

Arf. But with dogs, we smile when we see that because we somehow recognize that pattern. And we smile, and probably the Rottweiler has an inner smile, too, when he walks past.

But with humans, it's more difficult to smile when they go, arf. And words come streaming out of their mouth. It's more difficult to smile, and what it's possible, not necessarily, you say, don't necessarily smile, but recognize it for what it is when you see

it in another.

Don't equate that with who that person is. Recognize it, that the person has been taken over by that energy field. And that already is a wonderful thing.

That already, we could call, is forgiveness in a wider sense. We don't equate unconscious behavior with who that person is. If we equate it with who that person is, that is, that's the real meaning of judgment.

Judgment is not to say to somebody, I realize that you get angry a lot, and that person then might tell you, are you judging me? No, it's a fact. If I see that you get angry a lot, that was just a fact, there's no judgment in it.

But if I equate that with your essential identity of who you are, you are an angry person, and then I always expect more anger from you, that's a judgment. Not recognizing a pattern that operates unconsciously through humans and taking that for their identity is judgment. And you can do it to yourself.

So you can judge yourself for those things. And that is just as much ego as judging somebody else. You can beat yourself up and call yourself no good.

And whatever else the self talk tells you in your head, it calls you you. In many people's minds, when they talk, when the mind talks to you, it says you. See, you are such and such.

You see, you can't do it. Sometimes it says I, it might say I in some people, but in many it says you. Isn't that strange?

You talk to yourself in your head. One part of your mind condemns the other part. When you see it, you can rise above it, and there's a suddenly an awareness that comes with it.

You're no longer trapped in those patterns. I would recommend particularly to become particularly alert when you know you're getting stressed. Something, a situation is building up in some kind of, for example, if you get, anger takes over when you get stressed, could happen.

When you feel stress building up towards it, you can become very alert so that you can, doesn't take you over. What you know the anger is about to come. Or if it's, if you know certain areas of your life are more likely to wake you unconscious, sometimes you know just beforehand that those are going to arise in the next minute or so.

And then you can be alert, feel the entire energy field in your body, be alert with every cell of your body, then pick up the phone and talk about the financial situation with your investment advisor. So that, and so you treat those as spiritual practices and realize

nothing is more important than consciousness, not the situation, it's consciousness. Some people's pain bodies are, consist, as I said, predominantly of anger.

And you can, in some people, you can sense their semi-dormant pain body in the background, even when they are not particularly angry right now. But there are people who are waiting for the next opportunity to be angry. That's their pain body.

And sometimes when you are sensitive towards other, you can feel energy fields, you can sometimes sense in other people they are waiting for an excuse to be angry. Somehow, when you look into their eyes, it's already there, but it's not them. It's that which occupies their inner energy field, it's the pain body.

And so they're waiting, and any excuse, and they will get angry at you or whoever it may be. So you become a grievance looking for a cause. Thank you for your teachings.

They have changed my life. I have a fear of aging, getting old, ugly, irrelevant. I'm not an obnoxiously vain person, but I'm critical and judgmental about how I look.

Thank you. Of course, everybody here suffers from a fatal affliction. It's called time.

And eventually, it's going to kill you. But before it kills you, unless it does that very quickly and suddenly, and if it doesn't do it very quickly and suddenly, before it kills you, it does things to you. Do you notice those things that it does to you when you look in the mirror in the morning?

And especially if you compare it to a photo taken 20, 30, 40 years ago, you notice the effect of time on you. And then it does something to the body too. But it does that to all forms, to all life forms.

It does that to an apple, just goes more quickly. If you put an apple on a windowsill for a few weeks, then you know what's going to happen to you. And I saw another related question about looking after our appearance.

And the questioner, he is afraid of getting old, ugly, and irrelevant. You may not need to get ugly because the less you identified with your external self and as you grow old, the opportunity is there for you to identify more and more with the presence. And the presence shines through the fading form.

And when the presence shines through the fading form, it's actually very, very beautiful. It's different from the kind of beauty that's there when you're 20 years old. And it's like the apple that's just been, just fallen from the tree and it's still not totally fresh.

And you have that biological, might have maybe beauty in this. So that's nice too, but it doesn't last. There's a deeper beauty that can shine through and it happens to those humans who are connected with the presence that they are.

And then you don't turn ugly. In the absence of that, if you're only identified with your physical form, then I must admit it could happen that you turn ugly. Irrelevant is another word the questioner uses.

In our civilization, old age is not valued. So people who grow old have the feeling that they are irrelevant or they are regarded as irrelevant. Old age is not associated with wisdom in our civilization because our civilization doesn't even know what wisdom is.

It's not highly valued. Cleverness, yes. High IQ, yes.

And whatever else, but not wisdom. How do you measure it? What is that?

But that is going to change. We already have in traditional cultures, ancient, older cultures, the elders are the most important people. And in the Western societies, the elders are the, well, to be charitable, they're called the elderly.

And they are somewhere in a home. And you visit them once or twice a month. And then they sit in their chairs watching TV.

Not realizing the opportunity of old age because nobody has told them. So you can appreciate your appearance if it happens to be good and you're still relatively young and your body looks good or your face looks good. You can appreciate that in the same way you appreciate other things, lovely things.

There's nothing wrong with that, but it would be important when you look in the mirror to also feel your presence so that you don't get excessively attached to the external form. You can appreciate it, but there's no need to be attached to it. Look how you can only not be attached to it if you can sense the underlying presence.

So when you look in the mirror, maybe you even apply makeup. They apply makeup to my face before I come on because it looks too oily otherwise, apparently. And I noticed last night it actually does because last night I didn't have makeup.

I saw myself on the little screen. I said, I'm very shiny. And it wasn't the emanation of presence that was coming.

It was a different kind of shininess. So before I go on camera, they apply makeup to the face. Does it mean I'm vain because I don't want to be shiny?

Maybe. So you may apply makeup, especially if you're a woman, men, I don't know, some men might do it too, I don't know. And there's no reason to think, oh, should I really, or shouldn't I, or there's something wrong with me if I do it.

That must be ego if I apply makeup. Don't complicate life too much. If you want to apply makeup, apply makeup, but while you apply makeup, feel the underlying presence.

And while you look in the mirror, sense the presence of yourself, the presence of presence, the stillness. And then it's not a problem when suddenly you look in the mirror again and you realize that 25 years have passed and you see, oh, the apple doesn't look the same anymore. It's wrinkly.

There are bags under my eyes. And then you suddenly feel the presence more strongly. And one day, perhaps you'll be 90 or 100 and you'll just emanate presence while the body is just getting shrinking.

And somebody comes and asks you questions and your answers may be simple, but there's wisdom there because you speak from presence. So you have not become, or you might've become old externally, but you have not become ugly and irrelevant. Time is a strange thing.

I described it just now as almost, it's one way of looking at it, at something that is ultimately going to destroy you. And it does that to everything, but you never catch time. You only catch the evidence it leaves.

It's a criminal. That criminal commits all kinds of terrible crimes, murderous sprees, and you can never find the criminal because all you can ever find is the evidence left behind by the criminal, which is dead bodies, but they all appear in the present moment. There's only ever the present moment.

Nobody can experience time as such. So time exists and doesn't exist. It exists on the surface of things.

But does not exist in the depths of yourself.

[Speaker 13] (4:07:49 - 4:08:15)

My question is, with medications, how do you practice presence when you're forced to take medication, in particular, for very painful ailments?

[Speaker 1] (4:08:16 - 4:08:24)

Yes, so do you take your own regular medication? No, I don't. No, I don't.

[Speaker 13] (4:08:24 - 4:09:10)

But you have been. But I've taken medication for toothaches, in particular, and sad to say, when I was in Africa, I had a toothache, and when I took the medication, because of my addiction conditioning, even when the pain went away, I kept on taking the Chordine. So for a full month and a half, I was in this Chordine haze in Africa.

But then when I came back to the United Kingdom, I did stop, and I have enough presence not to take it if it wasn't for the trigger of the pain of the toothache. So I just

want to ask, what do you do when you have a toothache?

[Speaker 1] (4:09:17 - 4:21:09)

I take medication. I'll tell you what I take, and it does not seem to affect my mind at all. What I take, I cannot get in North America, the United States or Canada.

So whenever I come to Europe, England, it's made in England but I can also get it in Ireland and places like that. And in Australia, they sell it too. So I always stock up because I do get toothaches occasionally and sometimes I get headaches, not very often these days, but it can happen.

So the only medication I ever take and it's pretty rare too, is this, it's basically aspirin but it's soluble aspirin because of a throat dysfunction I have, I cannot swallow pills. So I need to dissolve it's soluble aspirin. It's called Disprin, I highly recommend it.

It's called Disprin because it dissolves in water. So in extreme cases of a toothache or that, I take that, two of those in a glass of water. I notice no difference, strangely enough, in my consciousness when I take it but there may be other types of medication which if I took those like codeine, I think is what called, that might affect my consciousness in some way.

I don't know how. Also something that we need to also talk about is not just medication that are pain medications for the physical pain. We also need to mention in this context, medication that is prescribed to millions and millions of people for mental states such as antidepressants and tranquilizers which also of course affect your mind and may diminish your capacity to stay present because it may send you into a haze as you put it.

So now the, it's a terrible thing, for example, how many people, I know that in some extreme cases, I have to be careful with what I say because in the past I've made some doctors in the audience very angry. And I don't mind making a doctor very angry but I just want it to be balanced what I say. I know that in extreme cases, medication for mental conditions can be helpful in extreme cases.

There's no doubt about that. And there may be some people who are surviving due to it but there are millions of people who don't really need it. But the first thing the doctor, for a moment I'll just talk about the mental medication then I'll come to the physical.

But the doctors, even millions of children are being prescribed certain types of medication that affect the mind. And that is a huge mistake, I believe, except in the aforementioned extreme cases. So there's an addiction, a huge, huge, massive, mass addiction to prescribed drugs, prescription drugs.

In addition to the addiction to so-called illegal drugs, well, one of them is now becoming more and more legal. That's okay. So, but a huge amount of dependency on and

addiction to mind altering drugs.

And so they are specifically there to alter your mental state. And then you have the physical drugs that are meant to do something else, but have a side effect. They affect your mind also.

So I'm often asked, and I have often been asked, what about antidepressants and tranquilizers? And I could include now in this certain types of pain medication, should we take it or should we not take it? Can one still be present?

And that may vary from, there are many different types of medication. Whether or not you can still be present depends on two factors, mainly. One is how deep or strong your presence is.

When your presence is shaky, when it's just arising in you, even one or two glasses of wine can affect your presence. And that's why I basically, I forgot on this retreat, why I often recommend, if possible, don't drink alcohol while you're on this retreat, because if your presence is not, has not fully emerged yet, it is still just a tender plant. It can be affected by a small dosage of alcohol and you lose presence.

So you order a glass of wine and you say, obviously I'm not going to have more than one glass. And after one glass, your awareness has already gone down. So you don't remember anymore that you said that obviously I'm not going to have more than one glass.

And then because your awareness has gone down, you say, okay, I'll have one more. One more, please. And there you go.

I mean, you know that you've been there. Oh, yes. Now, another interesting thing is when you're, so the extent to which you are affected by certain types of medication partly depends on how powerfully the presence is already active in you and through you.

So if it's just a tender little plant, it gets affected easily and immediately. But if you're already firmly established in presence, you will notice a change in your mind, but strangely, it will not affect your awareness. I'm speaking from personal experience and I'm not telling you how and why.

I frequently, I confess. Almost every evening with dinner, I have a glass of wine and sometimes two, but rarely more than two. After two, that's fine.

After the second glass, I notice a small change in my mind. Hard to describe. It's a small, you describe it as haziness.

I don't know if I would use that word in that particular case. I know that there's a slight difference in my mind, but my awareness is there as before. Presence is there as before.

So there's a presence behind this change in the mind. Another example, a few years ago when we were in Amsterdam, you know what's coming now. No.

No. No. No.

No. No. No.

No. No. No.

No. No. No.

everywhere else too. So I said, well, I tried it 20 years ago. I didn't do anything.

I didn't like it. And they said, well, you must not have inhaled properly. So we got some and in the hotel room, I tried it.

And I could notice that it certainly did affect my mind but the witnessing consciousness was untouched by it. The witnessing consciousness was actually witnessing the haziness in my mind. So, and then I found that I don't need to do this again because my usual state of mind or consciousness is much more pleasant than the one after the smoke, much more pleasant and peaceful without, I don't need the haziness, but I can see that a person who is tortured on a daily basis by his or her mind can find some relief in that haziness that comes with smoking.

And I would not necessarily outright condemn every use of this. After all, it's only a plant. So for some people, it gives them some relief.

It's not the way to go. It's not the way you want to go, but it can have a little opening. I also tried acid once, but don't need to mention that because it's basically the same story.

So it did not affect the awareness in me, but this is my personal experience. Now, I have not experienced mind-altering drugs like prescription drugs, as far as I remember. I think I, the, so the question that is often asked of me when people say, can one still be present when one takes these drugs?

I can't really answer. I would have to actually to give you a truthful answer. First of all, it would be subjective because I can only tell you if I can still be present when I take this drug, I would have to try it.

And I would have to try every drug to give a truthful answer. So only you can know if you cannot stay, if it completely obscures your presence, then of course it's best to refrain from taking this, except in very extreme cases of toothache, in your case. But I used to suffer a lot from toothaches because for many years in my life, I couldn't afford to go to the dentist.

And I had a kind of phobia of dentists because I went to a very bad one once and the memory stayed in my mind. And with regular visits to dentists, the likelihood of having toothache diminishes. So that's a helpful thing.

You have the, in the United Kingdom, hopefully, or you can probably afford it, but it's free, I suppose. So in extreme cases, I would try, let go of codeine and try Dysprine. That's my spiritual advice to you.

[Speaker 12] (4:21:38 - 4:22:46)

Since I've been here, I feel like I'm doing the conscious suffering and I feel like I opened the top of a sewage and it just keeps coming and coming and coming. And I don't have my usual distraction methods like internet or alcohol or anything. So it's really, I'm being really present with it and I'm trying to also stay aware when the stories try to latch on to the pain and then I realize that it's just trying to make sense of it and it feels like an ancient pain.

And I'm surrendering to it, but at the same time, I feel exhausted and my physical body feels weak. And I'm just wondering, is there something I can maybe do for myself to just not so much ease it, but just somehow like go through it a little bit with a bit more strength or comfort or for physically speaking?

[Speaker 13] (4:22:48 - 4:22:49)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (4:22:50 - 4:32:16)

This is the strength. You are going through it without any of your addictions, whether it's the internet, alcohol, drugs or whatever. You are, this is strength.

The fact that you are going through this without any devices is strength. The only thing is is that the mind is telling you that you may have a picture of what strength is and maybe you have a picture of strength is when you feel really good and when you feel really happy. And that's a different kind of strength.

But this is a strength of emptying our baggage. And there really isn't any easy way, but just to go through it. Now, this is a critical point for you because you're at this where now you feel like as if, oh, I want it just to be a little bit easier.

And that's the point where maybe you might watch yourself and you see where you might pick up your device or have a drink or whatever your normal things that you do to not go through something. And there's hundreds of things out there that we could use as our devices. But this is the critical point.

And you're right, it is exhausting. So why not just be exhausted? There's nothing wrong

with being exhausted.

Maybe you have an image of yourself that you should not be exhausted, that you should be this, I don't know, happy bubbly person or somebody who looks really strong and who isn't tired or, I mean, the physical body gets tired. Emotional work to feel it is exhausting, especially when it's been a well of emotion that we have to go through. I'm tempted to say something at the same time I'm not because I don't want you to choose this because you wanna run from this, the emotions.

There was one time where I went through really, really very strong emotions. It was very difficult, very hard. Dark night of the soul, some people would call it.

And then the fellow that I was dating at the time, who was also awakening as well, he said to me, well, you can ask for it to be slowed down if you want. I went, really? I mean, that was a thought?

Okay. So I said, yeah, okay, I want it to be slower. And I got it.

But when I look back, it's something that I regret because now over time I have these little inklings of having to go through the dark night of the soul instead of going through it, just going through it. Now, we're gonna choose what we're gonna choose and whatever, however reason that happened, it happened like that. And it's an acceptance that it happens like that.

It's just a longer process. So if you can, I invite you to just really go into it. Allow your body just to be tired, rest more.

Go into, do an inner body meditation. There was a time during some deep meditation that I would go through, like a lot of meditation. And it was in the evening, it was bedtime.

And my body slept, but I was fully awake. And just watching my body sleep, feeling my body sleep. And yet my eyes were open the whole time.

Like I couldn't move, my body couldn't move. Our body is not our consciousness. So we can be conscious and have the body do its thing because it's an impermanent device and it gets tired.

And we can allow it to sleep, rest, yet be fully aware and conscious. So this is what I'm inviting you to do when you say you're tired. Go and lay down and rest your body and be fully aware, awake.

I mean, you may fall asleep and that's okay, it's not a problem. But it's an important time to now just nurture yourself in the, probably would feel like an enveloping emotions that just are there. So do some things for yourself that will nurture instead of going to your

devices, whether that means taking a hot bath, although I don't know if there's bathtubs here, whatever makes you feel more grounded and not so lost in the emotion.

So the fact that there is an awareness and you are the witnessing presence to this and you feel it, those two together are the vehicles for transformation and for letting this go. It's just, unfortunately, because whatever is down there, we don't know. We don't even know how long it's been there for and how much we've held down there.

So we don't know when it's going to end. So don't even go into your mind and say, I just want this over with. Of course, the mind wants this over with, but it's just having to go through it one by one or 10 by 10, it doesn't really matter.

It's just your experience in this moment. And if I had to guess, your mind is telling you almost like, I shouldn't be unhappy, but you're unhappy. And it's the happiness and unhappiness that we so desperately want on the conditioned level, on the level of form, which is not going to be the true happiness.

As we go through this, we have to go through, go to what is deeper, that is the uncaused happiness. So happiness that is not caused by any particular event or unhappiness that is caused by any particular event, not caused by any particular event. And this is the play and the balance that we must bring and that our consciousness, being aware of it, brings that.

So the full acceptance of that pain that is arising and allowing it to arise and feeling it while at the same time connecting to that awareness, that consciousness, who or what is aware of that pain? That awareness is who you really are, not the pain. The pain is something old that's there, something very old that needs to be let out.

[Speaker 12] (4:32:20 - 4:32:29)

I feel like a lot of it is not even mine. Yeah, probably, maybe it isn't. Some of it, some of it is.

[Speaker 2] (4:32:31 - 4:41:16)

But yes, we are, as we are the awakening consciousness through us, our individual forms, we are also awakening that which is, you can say past, present, and future, but there's no past, present, and future. You've heard of the 100th monkey syndrome where if there's enough people, a transformation happens, like everybody sort of goes into it, you know? Like for example, you get enough people talking about, I don't know, a particular thing.

Let's do the Coke, because we did the Coke commercial, okay? Enough people see that, and there's something happens, and enough people drink it, and suddenly it's like just spirals. It just like, everybody now changes.

And it could be on the other level, unconscious level, where there's enough people that are unconscious. It could take one person, say like, example like Hitler, who has somehow enough, in a way, charisma that he had, because his speeches were actually incredible, but it was that unconscious aspect of him that he was able to gather enough people around him where it almost turned that whole, the whole country into that. So the awakening consciousness that happening through each and every one of us, at some point, if there is enough of that, enough people that are awakened, something will shift.

So when you say you feel like it's just not yours, it is true. We are, past, present, and future, you can say, on a spiritual level, exist in the timeless realm, manifests in the body still, still here, still with us. It's like bringing something with you here to the present moment.

And when we awaken, we actually then, because we're so tied to each other, there's one connection, as we awaken, and something happens also on that level out there, whether it's past or whether it's future, because it really doesn't exist. I had this experience one time in a church in Switzerland. Some of it was old, some of it was new, and I was in the old part, and I had this experience where I just couldn't move my body because I saw past, present, and future happening all in this moment.

And when I saw that and had that experience, I realized that, wow, there is no time. On the spiritual level, there is no time that all dimensions are happening, but we only see a portion of that dimension. So we are more than just our body and our minds.

We are more than just our emotions or the events that happen to us and now that we have to work through because we just didn't have that ability to work through it then. But we can become lost when we lose that dimension of space in us, of stillness, and think that we're only this. And when we think we're only this, that's when it becomes difficult.

So let your light shine even more on this, not by wishing it to go away, because when you have even the slightest desire for it to be gone, you haven't fully accepted. Full acceptance means that you are willing to feel this forever. Yeah, I know.

But you know what? You know it'll change. Everything changes.

So this moment is not gonna be the same the next moment or a week or a year from now, but full acceptance actually means you're willing to accept this forever. And forever, on the form level, it just doesn't exist because all forms are impermanent. When you know that on the spiritual level, then you can really say, yeah, I'm willing to accept this, fully, completely, because we know that it will change.

But if you're not on this, the consciousness, the higher consciousness, then you think, oh my God, are you kidding me? I don't wanna feel this forever. Because remember, full

acceptance has no time.

There's only this moment. And this moment and the experience of this moment is what's happening inside you now. So this is where the mind and the body are fighting each other, the mind and consciousness, the consciousness that you are.

The mind is still saying, oh yeah, but I really don't want this. I'm willing to feel it, but there's something in me that doesn't quite really want this. And then be honest with yourself and choose.

When something arises in you of an emotion, you can ask yourself, am I willing to let this go? Not with the mind, but feel your body, and your body will answer you. If it's yes, your body will open.

There's an openness and a relaxedness that'll happen, that you're able then to let it go. Maybe you're not willing to let it go, and that's okay. So then you can ask yourself, okay, am I willing to accept this?

Because the acceptance could be also the integration. Am I willing to integrate it then as part of my experience of the totality of who I am, of body, mind, and spirit? Because maybe that integration, that acceptance on that level is kind of stirring the pot in you.

There's a movement that begins to happen when we accept it as an integration into our beingness, body, mind, and spirit, that it becomes and transmutes, transform into the one consciousness, so we can then use that experience as a teaching tool for somebody else, perhaps. So this experience, which is aki, we can say, let's call it aki, if we fully accept it, and we are the awareness, and we witness it, we accept it, allow it to be there, it goes through a process, a transformational process in its own time, and all we have to do is just be awake to it, aware to it, and it just transforms, like water, boiling water turning into steam, and transforms and connects with this life that we are, and then soon enough, it's just this life.

We have the memory of that experience, and now we're able to perhaps use that as a gift for somebody else who is going through the same thing. Just got to do the work, sweetheart.

[Speaker 9] (4:41:48 - 4:42:09)

For someone who's a little bit hyperactive, what's the best way to get a balance between removing content, which is really good, but then not getting annoyed when content comes in, and you think, oh, it's spoiling my peace. Is there some way to get a balance?

[Speaker 1] (4:42:09 - 4:42:12)

I assume the question applies to yourself.

[Speaker 9] (4:42:12 - 4:42:13)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (4:42:13 - 4:42:42)

So that someone is you. Yeah, yeah. Okay.

Just wanted to make sure. So you are hyperactive. Yeah, yeah.

Now, rather than explaining it to us in an abstract way, can you give an example, or one example of where this is problematic and how it manifests in your life?

[Speaker 9] (4:42:43 - 4:43:20)

So for example, here after the talks, I can go out to the nature, and I get a glimpse now of some kind of presence. Yes. And I also want to engage with other people, but I know once I get on a roll, for example, speaking how good the talk was, I'm into just a torrent.

So it's almost, should I just go and sit in the park for hours and hours, but that's too extreme probably. I'm creating probably more content, trying to analyze whether to stay out of the way or...

[Speaker 1] (4:43:21 - 4:43:27)

So when you engage in conversation, then do you tend to speak fast or...

[Speaker 9] (4:43:27 - 4:43:29)

Yes, yeah, yeah. I just totally lose...

[Speaker 1] (4:43:29 - 4:43:32)

The mind takes over and you're dragged along.

[Speaker 9] (4:43:32 - 4:43:32)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (4:43:32 - 4:44:34)

Yes. Now this being dragged along by the mind happens to many, many people, but perhaps you slightly more extreme form, your mind is even more powerful than the normal mind. And so you're dragged along before you know it.

Yeah. And so do you tend to sometimes avoid interaction in order not to be dragged along? Yes.

Yeah. So it's either you get dragged along or you sit there and can't interact. Yeah, it's like two settings, full blast or off.

Yeah. When somebody talks to you, of course, what is, how do you experience yourself when you listen to somebody? What is your...

How do you listen to another person? Is your mind already preparing what we're going to say or...

[Speaker 9] (4:44:34 - 4:44:43)

Yeah, definitely. Whenever anybody tells me the name, never ever remember it because I'm probably somewhere else when that's coming in. Yeah.

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (4:44:45 - 4:44:52)

Have you done any practice, meditation, any kind of meditation practice, formal meditation?

[Speaker 9] (4:44:53 - 4:45:01)

Yeah, I try. And I'm guessing if I do reasonably well for that first five minutes, when I get up and go outside, it's lovely.

[Speaker 1] (4:45:03 - 4:45:18)

Now, when you're out in nature by yourself, are you able to be present to some extent or is your mind still active while you're looking at the trees or at the sky?

[Speaker 9] (4:45:18 - 4:45:25)

To some extent now, I can. So that's progress definitely because I couldn't do that before.

[Speaker 1] (4:45:25 - 4:45:33)

So... So you find little spaces when you're of presence when you're not interacting with people.

[Speaker 9] (4:45:33 - 4:45:39)

Yeah, like wet tarmac for some reason, just, yeah, that works. I don't know why.

[Speaker 1] (4:45:40 - 4:46:02)

It's just a reflection of the... Oh, well, the most unlikely things can help you. That's fine.

It doesn't really matter what it is. So... Do you, are you in a relationship, married or...

No, no, no. Do you, have you had relationships?

[Speaker 9] (4:46:03 - 4:46:04)

Yeah, but yeah, yeah.

[Speaker 1] (4:46:05 - 4:48:14)

Not enough. Okay, the but is enough, but... I don't want to go too deeply into it because I'm not a psychotherapist and don't need to be.

Well, I would recommend that you practice here. There's still some time left. Everybody knows now who you are.

And the people here are much more conscious than people you would normally meet in everyday life. And everybody will be very happy to help you and to help you. And you can also help, for example, by just refraining from giving too much input when you're interacting, engaging in conversation.

Be more a listener than a speaker. Make that your practice for the time being. I'm not saying don't say a word, but be more like 80% a listener than a speaker.

And that, for example, you can do by asking questions when you're, rather than stating your view or whatever it is, ask questions that encourages the other person to speak more. If the other person speaks more, it forces you to listen and then make the listening into a practice while the other person is speaking. Are you able to, let's say, at any time, to feel your inner body?

Can you feel that?

[Speaker 9] (4:48:14 - 4:48:18)

The hands, but then I seem to lose them quite quickly.

[Speaker 1] (4:48:18 - 4:49:12)

Okay, but hands, you can feel the energy in your hands. The rest of the body is more difficult? Yeah, yeah.

Okay, well, it's a good start. It's a start. So I suggest that once you've asked a question, while you listen, you direct your awareness into the inner feeling of your hands.

And that keeps it there so that it doesn't, your mind doesn't take off. So you ask a question, where are you from? How long have you been with Eckhart?

How did you first discover the books? Have you been to other, many questions you can ask and people will be happy to help you by answering your questions. And they will be happy to help you by not asking you too many questions.

[Speaker 9] (4:49:13 - 4:49:15)

Yeah, no, thank you, that's good, yeah, that'll help.

[Speaker 1] (4:49:17 - 4:50:48)

So, and so while you listen, have your attention in the inner energy field of your hands. If you can amplify that and have your attention also in other parts of your body, for example, your feet and hand at the same time, that's even better. But hands is fine too.

So you feel your inner, the aliveness in your hands and from there you listen. And you know, just give it, this will help you prevent the stream of mind from taking you over. So that's the beginning of a little practice.

Another practice you can do is while you listen, you're aware of your breathing. And so you can even bring the two together. You can be aware of your breathing and your hands, but it's probably better for you to just choose one, one or the other.

So please help this gentleman and allow him to ask you some questions and give exhaustive answers. And don't ask him any questions, except, well, I'll ask you a couple of questions so you don't need to ask him. Where are you from?

[Speaker 9] (4:50:48 - 4:50:49)

Yorkshire in England.

[Speaker 1] (4:50:49 - 4:50:54)

Okay, Yorkshire, England. And so you don't need to ask him that.

[Speaker 9] (4:50:54 - 4:50:55)

So that's good.

[Speaker 1] (4:50:59 - 5:07:02)

And have you been to retreats? Before here with us here? No, it's the first one.

First one, okay. Well, that's another question you don't need to ask. Okay, I believe you can get there.

So, and of course, in addition to this practice with people, go out into nature and be engaged if necessary, even involve other senses, not just the visual sense or for most

people, the visual is the predominant sense, but also perhaps touch something, see what it, a leaf or plant, pick up a stone or on the beach, the sand or whatever it is, water, give it, be aware of the tactile sense perceptions.

All these things help you get out of your mind. And so, well, I wish you well in your practice and thank you. I am late a lot.

How do you be fully present, but also keep track of what time it is? Now, you may be surprised to hear that as some people are, that I wear a watch and I actually look at it quite often and I'm rarely late. Now, this is nothing really to do with presence because many people are not present at all, are late all the time.

And some people who are present may be late because they're not used to looking at a watch or they don't wear a watch. And there's absolutely no incompatibility between being present and being aware of what time it is or how much time you have left to go to a particular place because presence is the timeless dimension of consciousness. And it just means that what falls away is psychological time from your mind.

Now, what I call clock time or watch time, practical time, of course still operates in your life and in our civilization. So it's, you don't lose presence if you wear a watch. You can lose presence with or without a watch.

So it's just really changing an old habit of yours. So you can try wearing a watch and then you occasionally you look at it and say, oh, I have 10 minutes left, 20 minutes left. Are you leaving the present moment when you look at your watch?

No, because you're looking at your watch in the present moment. And an interesting thing about watch, unless you can have a watch with a dial or of course you can have a digital watch, digital watches. Some people wear a digital watch with just the numbers.

I would prefer, and if you are in doubt which one to buy, I would suggest that you get one with a dial because there the time is also represented spatially and you can actually look at a watch and know how much time you have left to get to your appointment if it's a dial because you have a spatial representation of time in your watch. If you look at the minute hand, maybe there, and let's say the minute hand is on the nine and you need to be somewhere on the hour, then even without a single thought in your head, you can know how much time you have left because you look at the space on your dial between the minute hand on the nine and the full hour 12. So you see a spatial representation of time on your dial which means it requires no thinking whatsoever.

So that's quite good. So looking at your watch does not need to stimulate thought. With digital, digital is more likely to stimulate thought and when you look at the digital, immediately you read out the number in your mind and then you have to figure out how much time you have actually got left.

You have to figure out the minutes and you have to start thinking. So a watch with a dial is to be preferred and then perfectly fine, no loss of presence whatsoever knowing that you have this space of time left to get ready, then you just get going. So it's tried out.

If you're not used to wearing a watch, maybe it's a little strange at first. Many people these days, I understand, especially younger people don't wear watches anymore but they're constantly looking at their cell phones so that's okay. It tells them what time it is and on your cell phone, you can have a dial, I suppose, you can change or you can have the digital.

Always prefer the dial. You can actually, another little practice you can do is look at your watch and know what time it is without any mental activity. Then you can, there's a knowing there which has nothing to do, you're not telling yourself what time it is.

You just know it by looking. It's a little practice. An additional reason why I wear a watch is that I, and this is simply a personal taste of mine, I like the ticking of mechanical watches and I like mechanical watches, the old-fashioned ones that you wind up because a lot of attention has gone into the making of a mechanical watch and somehow when a lot of attention, focused attention has gone into the making of something, somehow the end product is imbued with the sense of quality.

You have to pay a little bit more, of course, for a mechanical watch these days although they are not quite as accurate as the cheaper quartz watches. So practice, experiment a little bit with that. I'm not saying it doesn't matter whether it's mechanical or not, but the main thing is practical time does not need to interfere at all with presence.

A question here about what to do. Remaining silent in order to refrain from responding to a person's pain body. How do I respond without responding to the ego, the pain body of the other person?

Staying silent seems to only fuel their fire. When somebody has been taken over by the pain body, almost anything, well, probably anything you do will fuel the fire. Staying silent, not saying anything may fuel the fire and whatever you say will fuel the fire even more.

Staying silent is probably preferable to interacting with the pain body because if you interact with the pain body, and I'm talking about a situation when the other person has been taken over completely by the pain body. If the pain body is actually, there's a remnant of awareness in the other person, then one can still communicate, but you would still be communicating to the other, to the person if there's a remnant of awareness. And to know that if you said, let's say it's your partner, and I always recommend that when you're both conscious to have an agreement with your partner that to point out to the other that the pain body is arising when you notice it and you both agree that you will help each other be conscious of it.

And if that's the case and you've done that, then as the pain body begins to take over your partner and of course the partner is about to lose consciousness completely, you can say, I think that's your pain body coming up right now. And if there's a remnant of awareness in him or her, the person will say, it is? And would kind of put attention within it.

Yeah, I actually do feel very angry right now because of what you said or whatever it is. It's okay, there's a remnant of awareness. They're saying it's the pain, but there's a moment of, okay, let me see if that's true.

If the person has been taken over completely, you will no longer be able to communicate with that person. And if any communication will be received by the pain body, so you're not, and any answer that you get will not be your partner's. I'm differentiate now between your partner and that which takes him or her over.

When he or she is totally taken over, communication becomes virtually impossible because whatever you say, the pain body will answer back. And it will never, the pain body cannot admit that it is the pain body. The pain body always pretends to be the person.

So when you say, oh, you've become your pain body, can't you see? Of course they can't see, they're totally asleep. And you're talking to the pain body and the pain body will not say, yes, I am the pain body.

The pain body will say, don't give me that nonsense. Look at your own stuff. Why do you put it onto me always?

And you go on and on and on. My pain, you look at yourself, why do you always be yourself? You remember what you did last week?

That was the pain body. So whatever you say to the pain body will be wrong and will fuel the fire of the pain body. If there's a remnant of awareness, that's a different matter.

Then something is still possible. So if there's no remnant of awareness, then say as little as possible, be as present as possible, or compassionate if that's possible. Pain bodies are very challenging.

So high degree of presence is necessary. And sometimes the best solution is to remove yourself for a while so that the pain body can naturally come to, that particular episode can subside. So if you do remove yourself and go for a walk, then the pain body and the other person for a while will continue to renew itself through their thinking.

Or they might even make phone calls to somebody else to renew. But then after a while, it'll come to an end. And then hopefully a few hours later, or the next day, awareness comes back in.

And then there's the person that you know has come suddenly come back. I haven't seen you in a while. So it needs to be particularly strong when you're in the presence of a number of people who are mind dominated, as most humans still are.

It needs to be particularly strong when you're with somebody who is mentally disturbed.

[Speaker 6] (5:07:07 - 5:07:30)

How do I stay present with my family members when we're all together? And this comes up at dinner time. I can be present with myself and present with one family member.

But when there's three of them together or two of them together, my presence goes out the window and I get caught up in the drama of what's going on.

[Speaker 1] (5:07:30 - 5:07:37)

So how do you lose presence? You get drawn into- I get drawn into it.

[Speaker 6] (5:07:37 - 5:08:07)

I also have a special needs daughter, the younger one, and she wants my attention. My husband wants my attention. And I have a teenage daughter.

He usually doesn't want my attention at all. Yeah, but it's a dynamic there. And then my husband and my teenage daughter going at it and me wanting to protect her and then take care of the younger one's needs.

I basically just want to run away, not come back home. Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (5:08:08 - 5:14:43)

Yeah, well, that's also very good practice. You have to just be aware of what's going on and how, if you are able to not lose yourself. When you give attention, as you must give attention, of course, it's wonderful to give attention to your child or to another human being, but not to lose yourself in the giving of attention so that you are connected with the source of attention, which is within you, without losing this connectedness with a source, then your attention can flow and you can say something to your child, say something to the other, without losing yourself in that movement. And again, inner body awareness can be the anchor for staying present. So as you sit at the table, you have to feel yourself, feel your inner being.

And then you're rooted in being, and then you can give attention and you can feel the connectedness with being. You're not lost then in the mental realm. They may be, but something, if there's only one person who stays connected, it usually affects the entire energy field in the room, in the same way that a deeply unconscious person also affects the entire energy field in the room.

And if there is a deeply unconscious person there, for example, a deeply negative person that may not be the case in your family, then there would have to be, your presence would have to be quite intense to counteract that. It doesn't fight it. You don't fight the darkness.

Just the light needs to be stronger. You turn up the dimmer switch, but you have to turn it up anyway to some extent as you sit with people at home. There's also the additional factor that people with whom you share a lot of past, it's sometimes more difficult to stay present with them than people with whom you don't share so much past, people, acquaintances, friends, but family members that goes back often a very long time.

And, but it's a lovely challenge too. So practice when you're always just with one or two people there, and then there's enough presence power in you so that you can sustain presence even when there are more. And now you're, it's required, what is required here is vigilance of your own energy, your own consciousness.

Now, without the vigilance, we could call it attention too. As one Zen master explains that the essence of Zen is just this, the raised finger, which means that was his explanation for Zen. That's all that's needed, is attention.

That means alert presence, vigilance. So it needs to be particularly strong when you're in the presence of a number of people who are mind dominated, as most humans still are. It needs to be particularly strong when you're with somebody who is mentally disturbed, intense vigilance, intense presence required.

It needs to be particularly strong when you have a physical condition and a serious so-called illness, then that can be the motivating force for intense presence or vigilance. So this is, you can see how much more helpful the raised finger is than conceptual explanations. You cannot conceptually explain what presence is or what vigilance is to the mind because it immediately takes you beyond the mind.

And sometimes people ask, I had somebody after a week-long retreat some years ago who asked, can you just give us, just explain again the concept of presence? I just want to hear again what it really actually is. I didn't quite get it.

The entire week was a practice of presence. But his mind said, I didn't quite get it. Of course it didn't get it because he was expecting to understand conceptually.

And he thought, if I just explain a little bit more, then he'll really become present. No, I've already said too much. This presence is just attention.

Attention is non-conceptual intelligence. It's the spacious awareness, this. Attention basically means there's little or no thought.

There's just consciousness, just the light. So you shine the light on people and then you

can speak and the light is still there. And you speak, the presence is there.

In other words, as I'm speaking to you now, the presence is there, but the words are also there. They come out of the presence. And if there's a child here that says, daddy, daddy, he just took away my toy.

Tell him not to do that or whatever they say. You can look at him in that lovely presence in which there's also, there's compassion and benevolence. It's all part of that.

And you look at the child and say, okay, well, just don't talk now. You say whatever comes to you without losing yourself in the drama, the daily drama, the drama of daily existence, the nervousness of that. So that's your job.

[Speaker 6] (5:14:45 - 5:14:46)

Thank you. Thank you very much.

[Speaker 1] (5:15:05 - 5:38:52)

You feel something huge is missing in your life because your mother doesn't understand you. But that's because you believed in the thought that says that this should be when it isn't. And so you feel this enormous burden, which is not really created by your mother.

It's created by your own mind. For 46 years, I've been constantly criticized, capital letters, by my mother for everything. I always felt fear in her presence trying to fulfill her expectations.

I couldn't handle her criticism anymore. And three years ago, I decided to stop any contact, but I suffer painful fear, guilt, and hatred. I'm exhausted.

Please help. Yes, so you've gone from one unpleasantness into another kind of unpleasantness. If you see that your mother, whatever your mother says is totally conditioned by her mind, she's playing the same old record, CD, it's not records anymore, but nowadays, what do you play?

The old download or whatever. What? Yeah.

So to realize whatever comes out of her mouth is her mind regurgitating the conditioning throughout her lifetime, and perhaps being conditioned by her mother and so on in that way. So perhaps you've been thinking all those 46 years or whatever it was that there was some meaning or significance to what your mother said, but basically, it was just the noise of her mind, and she believed in it. She believed that whatever her mind repeated and repeated was the truth, there were certain patterns.

She could never get beyond being the mother. She knew better, of course, when you were four or five, but she couldn't let go of the belief that she knew better when you

grew up. She couldn't let go of the role of mother.

It continues to play in her. And so can you see that what she is doing is simply a replay of her mind without believing that it has any significance and so approach her in a state of compassion because she's completely at the mercy of her conditioned mind. And you don't have to buy into what she says because, of course, many people think, I really, I need my parents to understand me.

I want my mother to understand me. And they feel very unhappy if they're not being understood. And it may be beyond the capability of your mother to understand you.

And it certainly is beyond the present capability of your mother to understand you. So she is limited. You have to recognize her limitations in this lifetime.

Maybe before she dies, she will go beyond. Before death, it's possible. But for the time being, she's very limited in her state of consciousness.

And that is not to look down upon her, but to see it with compassion that what she does is extremely repetitive. And not to believe your own mind when it tells you that she needs to understand you. I need my mother to understand me.

Do you? Yes. Okay.

What happens if your mother's understood you? The mother says, now I really understand you, how you live. Oh, thank you.

And now what? It's just another same present moment. Or before the mother says, what you do is all wrong.

You shouldn't have done this. Why didn't you do that? Okay.

Same thing. It really makes no difference whether she understands you or doesn't understand you, except that your mind is telling you that it does make a difference. You visit your mother.

You have a cup of tea with her. She understands you. You go off and you look at the sky and you take a breath and it's the present moment.

And then you remember, oh, my mother understands me. Or you go and have a cup of tea with her and she continues with her old patterns and say goodbye and go off and you look at the sky and take a breath and you say, oh, she's still in her old patterns. Well, that's how it is.

It makes no difference unless you believe your mind when it tells you that it's dreadfully important that your mother should understand you. And that happens when you believe every thought that comes into your head and then the thought can make you unhappy.

My mother doesn't understand me and you feel something huge is missing in your life because your mother doesn't understand you.

But that's because you believed in the thought that says that this should be when it isn't. And so you feel this enormous burden which is not really created by your mother. It's created by your own mind.

So your mother is not to blame. You have to see that your own mind is creating this enormous burden. And when you see that, you can actually, you can let go and allow your mother to be who she is in that particular conditioned form right now and allow her her limitations.

I had a similar experience with my mother, although not as extreme as your experience probably. My mother did not continuously criticize me, but she made it very clear that she was unhappy with the choices I made in life. And sometimes she implied it.

She said, oh, well, you could have done so much, couldn't you? You had so many chances, didn't you? And with your intelligence, you could have done so much.

And I was already 45. And she said, but you threw it away. Oh, well, let's not talk about it.

And so allowing her, her limitations, with not, as I said, not looking down on her and say, you are so limited, but compassionately allowing her, that's how she, that's her mind, mental conditioning. She thinks in terms of a man needs a career. He needs to make money.

He needs to get married and have children. And he needs to show that he's successful and all those things. And that didn't happen with her son.

And she wasn't happy about that. So she couldn't go beyond the conditioning of her mind because that was conditioned by the particular culture she grew up in. And I could see that and it was fine.

Now, a little earlier, we talked about likes and dislikes. I had love for my mother because I could occasionally, one could actually glimpse beyond her conditioned mind. And occasionally you could see her being shining through her eyes when she stopped talking.

And that was just wonderful to see that, that aliveness in her eyes and the beingness in her. And even when she was talking, I could still sense it in the background. So I didn't have to react to her words.

I can allow the words to pass through me like some sound of leaves in the wind without any particular meaning or significance. And that was fine. And yet talking about likes and dislikes, I didn't like staying with her for more than a few days because it got too much.

Although I loved her, my preference was, after five or six days, to say, okay, I have to go now. And she got used to that and it was fine. I would come once a year, sometimes twice a year, and visit for a few days.

And that was surrender to that. My choice was not to say, okay, I'm going to now spend three months at my mom's place. But if that had been inevitable, if I had been forced for some external reasons to do that, it would have been fine, too.

I would have surrendered to it. But a few days was usually fine, was enough. As you know, Ram Dass tells you that as the great test, whether you're enlightened, if you think you're enlightened, spend two weeks with your parents.

And that's the great, that's the test. So my father was much more accepting. He accepted whatever I did.

Usually he said, okay. He was very unusual and eccentric. That's why they didn't get on, my mom and my dad, like total opposites.

How they ever got married, I don't understand. But he was eccentric. And even when I was still in school age, he said, do you want to carry on going to school?

I was 14. I said, no way, don't want to go to school. He said, okay, then don't.

So in some ways, he was quite enlightened. In other ways, still burdened with a huge ego, depending which segment of his life he looked at. So that's parents.

Now let's see if we have any of this is helpful to the questioner, because the questioner is now in a dilemma. Going back to the mother is suffering. Staying away from the mother is suffering for other reasons, guilt, and so on.

So I hope this question has some, provides a little bit of help, that see that what she says is all part of her conditioning. It may be possible for you to go back to your mother one of these days or next year, or the year after, and be in a state of allowing her her limitations without feeling the need to respond to her criticism, because she does it, because otherwise you buy into the old record and you just play the duo. Her old record is combined with your old record of defending yourself or justifying yourself and then getting angry, and you play out the same scenario every time you go there.

But you're there as a conscious presence. Allow her to be. Listen to her.

You can either say nothing, or you can say, yes, I know that's how you think, but that's not how I feel. I feel differently. That's how it is.

And then at first, perhaps go spend not too long with her. Visit her for half an hour, just to see what happens. And then the next visit can be a little bit longer.

And then you may be able to meet her with compassion and awareness and allow her to be who she is temporarily in her conditioned form. And sometimes if you allow, then people change and sometimes they don't, but they're more likely to change if you bring an acceptance. If you no longer oppose a person who always putting out their old stuff towards you, if you don't, which is her egoic identity, is continuously reasserted by her criticism of you, her criticism of you, she doesn't know that, but her criticism of you asserts her sense of self, her false sense of self, because every time she criticizes you, she is right.

She is so right. And the ego loves nothing better than to be right, because the more often you are right and the more right you are, the bigger the ego is. You feel more acknowledged in your sense of who you are.

That's why she loves criticizing, but of course she doesn't know what she's doing. It's all unconscious. But if you recognize that this is what she's doing, then you realize that's not your mother at all.

The true being of your mother is somewhere hiding underneath all that stuff. It's obscured by all the egoic conditioning. It's hiding somewhere there.

But you strengthen the egoic patterns by opposing them. And every time you defend yourself against her criticism, or you start getting angry and you shout back at her, whatever you do, you strengthen her patterns and you yourself fall into egoic patterns yourself. So you both become more unconscious, because even your defense mechanisms, the way in which you defend yourself is part of your egoic identity.

The victim, you're the victim of your mother. There's the victim identity. There's, yeah, I'm not right.

Why don't you leave me alone? Can't you leave me alone? Okay, you're...

So don't feed her patterns, which means don't oppose them. It makes no difference what she says to who you are and what you do. You just, you listen.

That's okay. That's what you think. That's fine.

Or you can use the famous expression that originated in therapy sessions. I hear what you're saying. Or you can say, I hear you, I hear you.

It's a nice saying. It's overdone a bit these days, perhaps. And people say, I hear you, even when I'm not really hearing you.

But if it's done rightly, if it comes from the right place, it's a wonderful thing to say, yeah, I hear what you're saying. As long as it's not followed by, but you are wrong and I'm right. So I expect a progress report about your mother sometime next year, perhaps.

Oh, please, could you say more about the surface of the present moment and going more deeply into the present moment? Thank you. The surface of the present moment, as I call it, is whatever you perceive with your senses, seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, whatever.

So that's the surface of the present moment is sensory perception, external. And that's already beginning, if to become more acutely aware of sensory perception, it's a way of entering the present moment. The expression you can use for that is come to your senses, come to your senses.

Because when you come to your senses, you step out of the stream of thinking. So to really give attention to something, you withdraw by giving attention to sensory perception, what's around you, you withdraw attention from thought. So there's not enough consciousness available now to make thoughts because the consciousness is not directed towards sense perception.

And that's the surface of the present moment. And that's already a wonderful thing to wake up into your surroundings where you are. And you realize you might have been for hours trapped in your thought, only peripherally aware of your surroundings.

And then you, oh, and you listen and you look and you feel perhaps a breeze touching your skin. There might be certain sense in the air. And that's the, I call that the present moment, but it's the surface of the present moment.

And then you become aware of yourself not as a person, but as a consciousness that is perceiving because without consciousness, there would be no perception. And so you become aware of that still alert background to your sense perceptions. And that is the depth dimension of the present moment.

That's the one thing that never changes. You're always that conscious. You are always that conscious space.

Now what the surface of the present moment undergoes continuous change, of course, there's the continuous flux of phenomena. And what does not change is the depths of the present moment because the depths of the present moment is the space of consciousness. So at the deepest level, the present moment is the unconditioned consciousness, the space for everything.

And that's, you can be rooted in that. And then you relate to the world, the surface world, which really includes your thoughts too. All your thoughts are invisible relative to the depths of the essence of who you are as consciousness.

Even your thoughts are a surface phenomenon in the same way that the ripples on the surface of the ocean are a surface phenomenon. But of course the ripples are one with the ocean. I often use that ripple analogy, waves or ripples.

The only tragic thing is if the ripple doesn't realize that it is essentially the ocean, and then the ripple thinks it's no more than a ripple. Oh dear, that's scary. Because there are other ripples that are bigger and there are even some waves.

But of course they're all very impermanent. But if the ripple realizes the attention of the ripple is no longer just on the surface of the ocean, oh, what's the next thing I need? Oh, that ripple looks scary.

I need a different ripple. I'll run away from this one. Oh, this one is nice.

I love you. Come, come with me. I need you.

I need you. Please come. Now, if we get together, we can almost become a bigger ripple.

Okay, let's get married.

[Speaker 16] (5:38:54 - 5:38:54)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (5:38:57 - 5:39:17)

But they still haven't realized the essence of who they are. So it's whatever happens on the surface only is frustrating if you don't realize the depths and the vastness out of which you have come, the vastness to which you're always connected and you don't know it.

[Speaker 11] (5:39:47 - 5:41:20)

Okay. I've read all your books and I listen to your recordings on a pretty much on a daily basis. And I don't say that to build up an ego that doesn't exist.

It leads into my question. What I find in trying to practice the power of now, trying to be conscious without thought is a very heavy inner dialogue of all the principles and things that I've read. Like, how should I do this?

What would Eckhart say? And actually my thought process starts getting more active. And I think I'm losing the presence by that thought process.

And then I think your latest book with the cartoons, which I love, which I think there's one with a little bird in the tree. He's talking to the dog and he's very upset. And the dog says, what's wrong?

And the bird says, well, you know, I'm thinking about yesterday and this and that, and I'm worried about what's gonna happen in a week, two weeks, it's about the future. What do I do? What do I do?

And a dog just looks at him and says, stop thinking. So how do I, you know, it seems you try to stop thinking, but and you read all this and you try to practice it. But yet in any given situation, I find that in order to get closer to practicing it or even practice it, it's causing a lot of thoughts to happen.

So it's a different kind of thoughts or those thoughts that I should break that kind of habit. And if so, how?

[Speaker 1] (5:41:20 - 6:08:56)

Okay, thank you. Thank you. Now, there's a lot of talk these days about not just talk, actually it's happening, addictions.

Many people are addicted to all kinds of things, substances, but one of the greatest addictions or one of the greatest addiction never actually, you never read about it in the papers because the people who are addicted to it don't know it. It's the addiction to thinking. It's actually addictive.

Can't stop thinking. It's like, can't stop drinking, can't stop smoking, can't stop eating, can't stop thinking. Thinking is the greater addiction than any of these.

And it's an addiction because it's, first, it's been a drug or it's just been around for so long and it's a pseudo sense of self. So it's a great reluctance on the part of most people to let go of thinking, which is equated with the state of sleep, to let go of thinking. There isn't that much to understand in this teaching.

There's a little bit to understand about how the ego works, but even that is just mainly a self-observation. The main thing about it is presence, presence. And presence is a space of no thought but presence can also be there in the background even when thinking is happening.

You can still be not completely involved in the thinking. Thinking loses the ability to create havoc in your life and confuse you. So your choice then is not to understand more or to bring some intellectual analysis to the practice, but to practice the state of not thinking, which can be arrived at by various ways, as you probably know.

If you don't think about it, just do it. Becoming more aware of the present moment and accept it as it is, slows down the overactive mind is one thing because a lot of the overactivity of the mind is an attempt to get away from the is-ness, the simplicity of the present moment. So to become more aware of the present moment as a practice, have perhaps little pointers in your office, at home, in your car.

Let's say present moment or whatever, or a symbol for it. And there are different entry points into the present moment. Present moment awareness means thinking subsides, may not disappear completely, but something else arises that is primary.

We call it presence or awareness. Buddhists call it mindfulness, which I don't use because it implies your mind is full of things, but it isn't, of course. It's just a mistranslation.

So to be present, first of all, use the present moment to become, but how do you become conscious of the present moment? Now, when you get it, after a while you can actually sense the presence of the present, so to speak, directly. And there it is.

It's just. But helpful things are sense perceptions take you out of thinking. If you're not judging the sense perceptions, labeling, naming, looking around.

Anywhere, wherever you are, look around. Practice sense perceptions without this compulsive interference of naming what you're perceiving, or that's a beautiful flow. I wonder what it's called.

I don't know what it's called. Oh, that helps. I can be free of thinking.

If I know what it's called, I can say, oh, that's such and such, and then drop that. And see what it means to perceive without the interference of concepts, words. At this moment, for example, you're looking at me.

Okay, now, let's say between now and now, were you thinking? No. Okay, and again, between now and now, were you thinking or present?

No thought. And while I speak, do you need to think to understand what I'm saying, or can you just listen and understand it? And this is what you're doing.

And so that's part of the teaching and the function of the spiritual teacher. Imparting information is secondary. What I'm telling you now is secondary.

What is primary is the underlying state of consciousness, which is presence, that's the teaching. But you can't talk about that, it's underlying. But a sign that it's working is that while you listen, there's no thought, it's just an alert presence.

And when the so-called teacher stops speaking for a moment, the alert presence remains, it does not need to be filled with anything. Shh, shh, like now. What is there to think about?

Nothing. Now, if we do this for longer, at some point, your mind will probably start up and think, how much longer is he going to sit there? And when that happens, you can allow your mind to say, how much longer is he going to sit there and say nothing, and then come back to presence?

And then some other thought will come, what's this all about? And then you can allow that thought to arise and then be present again, which means you're not really, your priority is no longer to follow the thought where it wants to take you, because the

thought has a magnetic pull, it wants more of your consciousness, but it wants to grow because it's a little entity. It wants to grow, so it wants your attention.

And in subtle ways, it tries to get your attention, says, it might even use a bodily feeling, says, gosh, I'm hungry suddenly, why didn't I need to eat something? And then you think of a red, what restaurant am I going to afterwards? And so the presence is gone, you are gone, you are looking for a restaurant in your mind.

Which means the thought used as some bodily thing to make thoughts out of it completely pointless because you can't find a restaurant because you're standing here. But it can use all kinds of things to manufacture more, to get your attention. And if you're not careful, if you don't know the mechanism, it's not so much an intellectual understanding, but a simple realization that this is what the mind does.

It tries to pull you in. It's fine, that's what it does. Once you know that, you can allow a thought to arise without following it where it wants you to go, which is into another bigger thought, into a bigger one.

So then you become like my dog when it finds a scent. And then suddenly, even when the dog is off leash, usually she's fine, she just runs around you, but suddenly she picks up a scent and then she goes off completely unaware of surroundings or anything. She just follows it.

And she could get lost. She goes off to the horizon sometimes, just disappears. And that's, when you follow a thought, it goes like that, you can wake up 20 minutes later.

And it started with her sleeping a little bit hungry and thinking of a restaurant, and it ends up with thinking about how unthreatful your life is. And. How is it possible to remain present if you are fighting a serious illness where the outcome is not sure?

Greetings from the UK. So somebody in England, perhaps it is, I assume it is the person who is asking the question. How is it possible to remain present if you're fighting a serious illness where the outcome is not sure?

Well, not only is it possible to be present in such a situation, it really is the only answer you have to that situation is to allow it to force you into presence, where there's no past, no future, don't go there. You just stay with this moment and you can become acutely present. You may not have much future anymore, so you can't go there.

Most humans still have the illusion that there's a lot of future. It's not really much anyway, but they still have the illusion and that there's some kind of fulfillment still coming in the next moment. It's not going to come if it's not here now.

Presence, especially a life-threatening illness, I have seen quite a few cases of people who awakened through contracting a life-threatening illness. In some cases, they died

soon after. In some cases, healing happened.

It's no longer matters really that much because the purpose of human life has already been fulfilled when the flowering of consciousness happens in you. And so those people who became fatally ill in the last weeks or months of their lives, they flowered, light was shining through them. They became like that.

Thought subsided, presence arose, the personality got burned out of them and was replaced by just conscious presence. The personality in such a dreadful situation either has to suffer tremendously. It can't survive in that situation.

Oh, what's going to happen to me? But if you surrender, it gets burned up in presence and all that remains of you, you die already in other words. You die, before you die, the personality dies and all that remains is this absolute field of presence.

And you might not be able to explain very much, but you just, there. It would never have happened without the illness. This can also happen as people get very old and approach death through old age.

I have also seen that happen. You reach the age of 95, whatever, death comes and the personality subsides and all that remains is the flowering of consciousness. You die before you die.

That's an expression sometimes used, I don't remember where it comes from, maybe Sufism. You dying before you die is, so it can happen through serious illness. It can happen through the approaching death through old age.

It can dying before you die can also happen when you lose everything through some disaster. Family members are lost, people around you, where you lose all possessions and all status, everything. And again, the personality that lived through identification with all these external things that have been taken away is in such dreadful agony that the only way out is surrender.

And then the entire structure of the mind made self collapses. Those are extreme cases. So when such disaster happens, there's always that possibility there of grace suddenly appearing.

So as I often say, grace is hiding behind every disaster. But for it to show its face fully, surrender is necessary. Surrender eliminates the ego.

And when the ego is gone, grace appears. To bring in little moments of presence into a busy day, nobody's so busy that they cannot have little moments of presence. And if you, I don't know if you have meetings frequently or not, it's always good to start a meeting with a moment of presence.

You can introduce that, you can explain to the people who work with you that it's important. Don't need more than half a minute to start with. Later on, you can build it up to one minute.

At first, people are not used to it, may feel a little bit uncomfortable. That's presence. And whenever you have these happening discussions, because probably part of your work is to discuss things, how things, what do we do now?

You can bring in presence by becoming aware of the background of alertness. When you listen to others, because then you're accessing also a more creative part of your mind. Well, it's not your mind, it's deeper than your mind.

You're accessing the deeper intelligence and you'll come up with probably better answers and solutions. So you bring stillness into a discussion, not by saying to anybody, telling anybody that you're doing it. You don't need that.

You just become aware of, let's put it like this. You become aware of your own alertness as you listen. There's an alert presence through which you're listening.

And that is very intelligent. You're not preparing mentally anything and not immediately judging what a person is saying. You give yourself a space and there's a space of alertness.

Sometimes people are too quick to react to what somebody else is saying. And they immediately say, I don't think that's going to work. Or, oh yeah, that's a great idea, but they haven't really given it any space.

So to become spacious in some areas of your work, you may not be able to sustain it all the time. But one area is when you are communicating with people, normally that would draw you completely into the mind and into thought. So you're accessing the higher intelligence that is within you, the deeper intelligence.

And then there are other things that you do. As you know, I often recommend when you get into your car, maybe you do that already. You just mentioned something about the car.

When you close the door of your car, give yourself 30 seconds to just be present. Unless it's an emergency, then you should go to the hospital or wherever you're going. So give yourself 30 seconds, but it has to be done in the right way.

You're not saying, okay, I got this, 30 seconds. And then you say, okay, here we go. You're just straining to get out of the 30 seconds.

So it has to be focused on your breath, for example, that helps, or the inner body, the awareness of the inner body. And practice the being. So you bring a little bit of being

into the doing.

At some point later, the two will merge completely. And then there are other moments when you can probably, things that you do frequently every day, there you can bring in awareness so that it's not a means to an end, and perhaps create a little gap. So have a number of gaps during the day, during a busy day.

You could say, for example, whenever you wash your hands in the bathroom, that can be an absolute presence. Well, and be, come to your senses, feel the water, smell the soap. And that can be a present moment, whatever.

You can probably make a list of things that you do every day. If there's a staircase somewhere in your building, then walking up and down the stairs can be a wonderful opportunity for being present at every step. So it's not a means to an end anymore.

So I would suggest make a list of things that you do every day or very often, and use these as to bring in spaces. So you have this very brief practices of bringing in spaces. And then even while you're engaged in the doing, there too, you can see if you can, as we mentioned, the discussions that you have, sense the presence that you are while you're listening.

Be alert, that you're actually then much more alert than you were in a normal state. It increases your intelligence, and it's an intelligence that's deeper than the IQ intelligence. That's something that I find in my life that arises because I also practice that, although I don't have discussions that often, but sometimes we meet.

And this alert listening, out of that, what I find often comes is questions. You ask questions. One of the most creative ways of participating in a discussion group is to ask questions.

Other people, when they say something, the light of your awareness shines on it. Then a question arises, another question. This is in the creative process of finding solutions and answers.

This is often overlooked, especially when you're very much identified with your mind, then the mind has certain preconceived notions and opinions and positions, and it'll just repeat those. So when somebody comes forward with an idea, it's totally new. If you're very much identified with your mind, it could happen that you say, oh, no, no, that's not going to work.

But with this, you develop the ability to listen, and true listening means you're alert and still. That's true listening. The auditory aspect is this very small one.

You're alert and still. And you may find that you may not have the answers, but you begin to ask questions. And then the other person who perhaps brought forward an idea

is then forced to reply, and it may drive him or her deeper to see where can we go with this.

So one of the most creative things, and the very creative people in that kind of environment, they are the ones who ask the most questions. This is how the entire philosophy of Socrates developed, because it's called the Socratic method, which is somebody comes and asks Socrates a question, but he has questions to him. And so he goes from one question to another and another.

When you read Plato's account of Socrates, I don't think Plato completely understood what Socrates was doing. Plato thought that he already knew the answer, but I don't think that's the case, because Socrates said, I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing, which means he was comfortable with the state of not knowing that I mentioned earlier. And out of that state of not knowing, often questions arise.

And in this question, then the answers suddenly come. It's a joint endeavor. The answer may not even necessarily come through you, but you ask the right questions, and then the group suddenly comes up with an answer.

And that is also spiritual practice, and it can be totally incorporated into what you're doing. So both setting aside little spaces when you become present during the day, and also then in many areas. So maybe the hardest is being on the computer screen to be present there, but there you could practice as much as possible, have a little reminder next to the laptop, whatever it is, and have a little reminder to, for example, to be in your body, to have inner body awareness, because computer draws your attention out.

You go, it's actually depletes you. If you, after a few hours, it depletes you of energy. It flows out, it absorbs, because all your focus is on there.

And so it's doubly important to, you may not sustain it continuously, but have a little reminder. So even while you are writing something or reading something, and this is something that may not, you may not succeed immediately in this practice, but it is possible to be aware of your body, have some background awareness in the energy field of the inner body. And then you sit and you can still deal with whatever it is you're dealing with.

Or because that is really, to be totally present affects the whole body. When you're present, you're present with your whole body. So that's something to do.

Another thing where you lose energy, I notice it when you go into a place where there's continuous stimulus for an exhibition hall or a big department store, and then you kind of, you look, and then after half an hour, you're already depleted. So, and then when you come home, then there's nothing wrong with a glass of wine and Netflix, but at least you will find you have not completely spent the whole day in complete unawareness.

[Speaker 6] (6:09:21 - 6:09:46)

A question for you regarding dealing with unconscious people and whether you yourself, maybe more so earlier in your life, whether you have felt lonely or isolated or frustrated in dealing with unconscious people and what your approach was to that at different stages of your life.

[Speaker 1] (6:09:47 - 6:18:42)

Right, yes. Thank you. Well, that perhaps is the main challenge for everybody because it is people mostly, to who we get challenged by.

Other sources of challenge are, of course, your physical body could present a challenge. There can be financial challenges, but most large part of challenges come through humans because humans are difficult. Many humans are still very much trapped in ego.

First part of your question, there was, I was relatively isolated for many years of my life when after the shift in consciousness, I carried on with my normal life. It had a certain momentum. I was still in the academic world and then three, four years later, I had to go out of that, leave it behind completely.

And then many years happened when I was not related to the world through any of the usual channels. I had no particular job, no relationships, no close relationships. And I spent many, many days, weeks, months not seeing that many people.

And gradually people would come to me for advice that happened gradually, it slowly grew through word of mouth. And then I had that kind of relationship with humans. But throughout, there's always challenges.

Even if you live in relative isolation, you will come into contact with humans that are unconscious. So I think the, you need to welcome that, because it's that, it's all these, those challenges force you to become more present. You remember I talked about the other day, if you want to make the body stronger, you do exercise, you do physical exercise.

And what is physical exercise? It's making life difficult for the body. That's a new way of looking at it.

But if you look at it close, you'll see it is true because the body suddenly has to make an enormous effort. You're forcing the body, you're giving the body challenges that were not there before. Lift a heavy weight, run a mile, or whatever it is you're doing.

And so then through being challenged beyond its comfort zone, the body gets stronger. And in the case of spiritual growth, we need all those unconscious humans to challenge us. Otherwise, the presence would not intensify and arise.

So the first thing we need to do, and I learned that also, to regard these unconscious humans as blessings. So rather than believing you shouldn't be here making my life difficult, regard the unconscious human as a necessary part of being here on this planet at this time. And so you can welcome them when they make life difficult for you.

The important thing is, though, that the unconscious humans do not pull you into unconsciousness yourself. That is the challenge, the biggest challenge. And what I mentioned in the previous session also applies here.

When you are being challenged by situations or people up to a certain point of human development, the moment a situation gets challenging or you meet a challenging person, you become reactive and become more unconscious than before you were challenged. So you meet an angry person, you get angry yourself. You meet a confrontational person and you become even more confrontational.

You're fighting. Then a certain thing happens, you reach that level where, beyond which the challenges make you more conscious. I think most of the people here will have reached a level where, you may occasionally be pulled back, yes, but may have reached a level where from now on, when challenges come into your life through situations or people, you become more present rather than be pulled into unconscious reaction.

And that's your spiritual practice. That can be your main spiritual practice. So if you realize relationships are your spiritual practice, whether they are short relationships or at work or family relationships, if you can shift the way you look at relationships and then regard relationships as spiritual practice, it's much easier to deal with unconscious humans.

And then the challenge is to stay present while they are being unconscious with you. I learned that early on when, after my shift in consciousness, my father's second wife was quite unconscious and then not only unconscious, she developed a mental illness, but the unconsciousness was already, the mental illness was already hidden in the unconsciousness. The mental illness she developed was acute paranoia and she was in a mental home for a while then came back home.

Whenever I visited them once or twice, as I mentioned before, I stayed in hotels, but many times I went there, visit, stayed with them. And I realized the moment I saw her, I would become intensely present. I would just go.

And then she would start talking to me. Usually the stories would start with talking about her enemies, the people who were waiting down in the street and would follow her, people she would see in shops. And according to those stories, there must be at least one or 200 people whose main occupation is to follow her and make her life difficult.

But that was the story. So I had to listen. The moment I arrived, she would tell me the

latest events of what happened to all these people who were following her and doing things to sabotage her life, all fictitious.

And immediately I went into a very intense presence. And by the second day, the stories would subside a little bit. And by the third day, she wouldn't talk that much.

And once or twice it happened that I was not acutely present when she was talking and immediately the old stories would come back up. She would even look at me suspiciously and say, what do you, why are you really here? What do you want from me?

So I noticed there was a, my consciousness had an effect on her state of consciousness. So that was particularly noticeable in that case. And she became more sane while I was there.

And the moment I left, she went back into a complete unconsciousness.

[Speaker 3] (6:19:50 - 6:40:27)

So, welcome. Here we are again, in the present moment, on the surface of life. Time has passed since last time, but at a deeper level, it's still the one moment, the present.

So usually, our live meditation lasts around 40 minutes or so, that's the average. Time passes, so I can say we're going to be here for 40 minutes, and yet you don't really experience the 40 minutes, you only ever experience this moment. So time is memory and anticipation, and of course, it's necessary for this world to arise.

To even understand what I'm saying, you need the memory of what I've just said. To complete a sentence or even a word, even to utter a word, takes time. I say time takes about two seconds or one second, time to say the word.

So you need to remember the beginning of the word, to understand it, you need to remember the beginning of the sentence, that's already memory. For music, you need to remember the preceding sounds, and then it forms a whole. And yet the actual experience is this moment.

The secondary experience is your memory. So you bring together the immediate experience of this moment, there's only this, with the secondary dimension of memory, and then the world arises, things make sense. Now there's a tendency about the secondary dimension of reality, which is memory, to obscure, distort the experience, the immediate experience, the aliveness of the present moment.

You can no longer perceive the present moment clearly. You see nothing as it is, you perceive nothing as it is, because you are overwhelmed by the memory dimension. So in actual, in your daily life, in a person's daily life, it manifests as a narrative in their mind, through which they interpret everything, all sense perceptions, reality.

The narrative in their mind, which is memory, which is the conditioned mind, colors, distorts everything they perceive in the present, and that manifests in countless ways. So it's the essence, for example, of what we call prejudice, you have a narrative in your mind about a certain group of people, a certain race, a certain political belief system, a certain religion, a certain social class, a certain gender, a certain culture. You have a narrative in your mind, and then whenever you meet a human being who belongs to that on the level of form, belongs to that race, or that culture, or gender, or subscribe to that certain belief system, you cannot actually experience this human being as a human being.

You see that passing through a narrative, and then you do it to yourself, you have a certain set of opinions, thoughts, of who you are, and that becomes a foundation for your sense of identity, and perhaps you subscribe to a particular belief system, political, religious, whatever it may be, it's a collective identity, and then it gets combined with a personal sense of self, certain things that happened in your past, or you interpret things in a certain way that happened in the past, or maybe it never happened, or it's a distorted version of what happened, and all that becomes a narrative. Me as the victim, for example, is a very favorite one for ego, collective ego, or personal ego, you can be a collective victim, you can be a personal victim, so an enormously satisfied sense of identity. It's dangerous, because there's this movement in the collective at the moment of emphasizing the victimhood of groups of people, and then so satisfied to the ego, you can make others wrong, you don't ever see who they are, you see them through the narrative.

Of course, groups of people have been victimized in the past, perhaps you as a personal entity has experienced victimization on a personal level, through other unconscious humans, whether it's your parents, or at school, or discriminated against for personal reasons, or whatever, of course all this happens, there's a big difference between seeing that this is what happened in the past, and deriving a sense of self from that. It's a huge trap, because then, the memory continuously obscures the present, or the potential, the conditioned mind, your far identity, is then what gives you your sense of self, and there's always a sense of superiority in that, concealed, sometimes obvious, sometimes concealed, you can have a far identity that you are better than most people, in whatever way, better looking, have more money, better social class, more intelligent, more knowledgeable, more physically stronger, there are many, many ways in which you can derive your identity from a sense of superiority, and even if it's a victim identity, which seems to be the opposite of believing that you are better than most, it's still a sense of superiority towards others, you're superior in your victimhood, morally superior, a dangerous trap, so you get, people get trapped in their conditioned mind, and that becomes their personality, and then the most essential thing is missing from their lives, and that is the dimension of depths, sometimes called the transcendent dimension, where the personality, the conditioned mind that makes up the personality, is

transcended, which means, you become aware of something that is more essential, more real, than the personality, the conditioned mind, our meditation here, the purpose of it, is to make you aware of that dimension, or to deepen it, you're aware of it right now, in the conceptual mind, we don't even understand what I'm saying, all that happens is the arising of a sense of depth in you, and a space in the stream of thinking, that otherwise is continuous, space arises in the stream of thinking, and you're conscious, but not thinking, and you know that you're conscious, and yet there's no sense of self, no concept, you just know, it is possible that the mind may come in and say, oh, I'm not thinking, oh, yes, that can happen, and then you acknowledge that, and then that thought goes, and again, it's just a presence, doesn't matter for how long, it's just something arises that is inner spaciousness, but there's an alertness that goes with it, and that's also very peaceful, it's an alive sense of peace in you, that has nothing to do with what's going on in your life, you could realize that dimension whether you're in a prison cell, or in a mansion, or whether you're sitting on a bus, or you're sitting in your Rolls Royce, doesn't matter, it's the same thing, and then that is so liberating, because then many things that before were so terribly important to have, to achieve, yes, they may still have some importance, but not absolute importance. Now the self, the form identity, of course, is still there, you still have a physical body with certain characteristics, and you have a psychological self, there's still you as a psychological entity, based on the past, of course, still there, and you acknowledge that it's there, and you even become comfortable with it, honoring it, but at the same time, knowing directly experientially that that is not who you essentially are, and one way of putting it is that that means you are rooted in being, and yet you acknowledge and honor the human part of you, the human dimension, because you are a human being, most people only know themselves as human, they don't know themselves as the being, without which there could be no human, human is form, being is essence, human is the regular wave on the surface of the ocean, being is the ocean.

[Speaker 1] (6:40:55 - 6:53:12)

Could you describe what it feels like to play the role of Eckhart with awareness of presence continually there? What does the sense of self feel like then with you, oh there must be an error here, what does the sense of self feel like then with you, with who you are, or something like that, so I understand the essence of the question, what does it feel like to play the role of Eckhart with awareness of presence continually there, so the question asks how do you experience yourself, it's very hard to answer because there isn't much there, there is a form identity there, but it's on the periphery, and there's simply a spacious presence there, there's a consciousness there, a space of consciousness, but there are no opinions about myself.

How do you know when the mind versus superior intelligence, which is awakened consciousness, is guiding you in a life situation? Again, we can make reference to the previous answer, there's some link here as an example, I distrust this person, what's

guiding you, the mind or superior intelligence? The mind, with distrust often come certain emotions like fear, when the awakened intelligence guides you, there's no anxiety associated with it, there are no negative feelings associated with it, there's just a powerful sense of right or not right, a powerful sense of peace comes with it, love almost, well in business you set certain goals that you want to achieve, and then you take action towards achieving those goals, and in the meantime there's a lot of interaction with other people who are also working as a team with you, and there's probably also perhaps interaction with other business organizations, so first of all the goal setting and the journey towards achieving particular goals that the organization has set itself, once you have a goal, you will find as you pursue your goal as a team together, continuously obstacles arise as you go towards it, whenever you create something new, you will find it's not, it is rarely a very smooth progression, you have to overcome obstacles on the way in the form of people or situations that go wrong, this doesn't work, try something else, the important thing is not to place an excessive emphasis on the achievement which is the desired outcome, but to be as present in the doing as you can so that the doing does not become stressful, almost every business is, people who are working in it are under stress, I believe, there may be some that are not, but the stress is not the way in which you want to conduct your business because the environment is toxic, a stressful environment is toxic, so you can always tell, is the goal something that is for the greater good or is it an ego-inspired goal, are you looking, this applies both in a business environment and it applies equally when you have personal goals, the same process is involved, when an obstacle arises, to immediately face the obstacle which comes in the form of a situation, something not working, something going wrong, somebody trying to sabotage you, perhaps from some other organization who knows what happens, to never react against the obstacle as if this should not be happening, to immediately to face it and see what is the way beyond it, how can I either dissolve it, bypass it or use it, what is, so that you don't enter a state of reactivity when obstacles appear on your path, that's important for anybody who pursues a goal, how, what is your relationship to difficulties and obstacles that arise as you travel towards your goal and the only conscious way of dealing with obstacles is not to react as if these obstacles should not be happening, so you have to look into what your relationship is with arising obstacles on your path, and this is not just in business but anywhere, the unconscious person in business or elsewhere gets upset, angry, aggressive, despondent, very stressed, every time something isn't going the way they want it to go, and immediately dysfunctional inner states arise and therefore they experience their accompanies where the entire environment is toxic, because everybody lives in that way and ego is also a thing that arises as much as possible, be aware so that you don't seek ego satisfaction in the doing, there's a personal ego, then one person can sabotage another person in the same company because you are not free of ego identification, so it's very important to be aware so that you do not seek ego satisfaction through what you are doing, be present in what you do so that the doing becomes joyful rather than placing so much focus on what you want to achieve that the journey becomes very stressful, then nothing

is worth achieving if the journey is stressful, you might, let's say you spent a year or two years with some scheme that you want, a new business model or whatever it is, what is the state of consciousness, the collective state of consciousness while you are traveling towards your goal, is it stressed, is it stressful, is there a lot of conflict, or is it a common enterprise and is the doing joyful, and it can only be joyful if you place more importance in what you are doing in this present moment than attempting to arrive at some future point, you know where you want to go to but as the Bhagavad Gita says, do not be too attached to the outcome, then it's much more likely that the outcome will be good, but if you have an excessive attachment, you need to achieve that, you have an excessive attachment to outcome, then the journey becomes very stressful, that's something that is important and I'm talking not from personal experience because I'm not in business, but I have spoken to people, quite a few who are in the business environment, and so I've met, I've met, been to some relatively conscious companies, they invited me, of course unconscious companies wouldn't invite me, and I have spoken to them and I'm surprised that these conscious companies actually, it's a joy to be there for all the, do the employees, whoever they are, are they your partners, do they enjoy being there, that is vital sounds very simple, or are they so focused on some kind of achievement that the doing is not enjoyable at all do they love being there, what is the relationship between, with you and your colleagues, partners and those things are vitally important and what, I don't know how many employees you have, again, it's important to make the environment as pleasant for them as possible, so your life is not determined by what happens to you

[Speaker 4] (6:53:13 - 6:53:32)

but by how you respond to what happens, and if you are unconscious, an ego, then every response or other reaction

[Speaker 1] (6:53:32 - 6:56:02)

to what happens to you makes things worse, or perpetuates the same problem, but in many cases makes it worse it's a reaction of the ego, and that's what's called, this is the wheel of samsara, of karmic action and reaction, action and reaction so really, karma is really to do with your, the unconscious conditioning of your mind, so it's not what happens to you it's always secondary, how do you respond to it, now we have react or respond, usually the way we use these terms is you react out of the conditioning of your mind, and usually it creates, it doesn't resolve anything, it creates additional or further problems reaction, reactivity, then there's response, so we use the term reaction, referring to the unconscious conditioning of your mind forcing you to act, and response, refer to the conscious responding to a situation or a problem through conscious presence, and that's where wisdom arises there, when you are, intelligence is not enough, what we conventionally call intelligence refers to the conceptual mind, the ability of the conceptual mind to categorise, memorise, analyse, logical thinking, all that

has its place, it's fine this is what is valued in educational system, conceptual mind, accumulate knowledge, classify, break it up into further fragments, examine the fragments

[Speaker 4] (6:56:04 - 6:56:56)

that's intelligence, the ability to do that, wisdom is something deeper, wisdom is the ability to see the totality of a situation, rather than one particular thing wisdom doesn't fight anything out there, wisdom starts always with acceptance of the present moment, acceptance of what is, then if action is called for, acceptance doesn't mean that you necessarily don't want any change

[Speaker 1] (6:56:56 - 6:58:04)

you can be in difficult surroundings, let's say you're homeless, and you can accept that at this moment, this is what is, but you don't live through a conceptual image of yourself as I'm a homeless person now that's a very painful mental conceptual identity, any conceptual identity, whatever it is, will make you unhappy, some make you immediately unhappy, some it takes a little longer, if you have a conceptual identity of you as the greatest this or that, it will take a little longer, eventually it will make you unhappy your conceptual identity of yourself as I'm a homeless person now, this is what I've come to, that's very unhappy, but if you're a homeless person but you don't live through a conceptual identity of yourself as a homeless person because you're no longer trapped in a conceptual sense of self, but you are an alert presence

[Speaker 4] (6:58:05 - 6:59:02)

then what's left is you're sitting on a bench in the park, sitting on a bench in the park, and there's the sky, and the trees, and you're breathing, and people are walking past, and it's no longer, your identity is no longer derived from any concept become a presence, but you also know that perhaps some action is necessary, perhaps you need to get up and look for somewhere to spend the night, and then you get up and find yourself walking there or there, and when you're in strangely, the more present you are, which is aligned with the now,

[Speaker 1] (6:59:02 - 7:30:58)

the more likely it is that circumstances will be helpful rather than antagonistic, that just the right thing, you find just the right thing as the right person or the right thing, you stumble upon suddenly a helpful thing that is, that is, the more you're aligned with the present moment, the more you experience, of course, yes, life will not be free of challenges, but there's a tendency for you to experience more helpful circumstances, because you're friendly with life, with the present moment, then it reflects back to you, your inner state, if the present moment is your enemy, that means, if that is your deeply

unconscious state, then life is your enemy, it reflects back to you, your inner state.

If a form gives you joy, it's not really the deepest, the true joy that is an intrinsic part of your self nature, it gives you pleasure, but pleasure exists in the realm of opposites, and what gives you pleasure will also give you pain, either because it leaves you or because it turns into its opposite. Every time you identify with a thought stream totally, you have reincarnated into that thought stream, your sense of self is completely in it, so you continuously reincarnate into arising phenomena, it could be external things, experiences, and you're totally, it matters absolutely. And so, one could say, the deeper sense of coming to the end of reincarnation is to no longer reincarnate into identification with form, into seeking yourself, or believing that yourself is in a form, and here we are speaking at the moment primarily of thought forms, so to this compulsion to reincarnate always into the next thought stream, to be totally fascinated by it, and always needing the more to make your reincarnation complete, and never getting there, that's, we are moving, that is being trapped in that normal state of consciousness, and that is still the majority on the planet is still trapped in that, but very powerfully, something else is arising now, and it's arising here. So the words, you give them attention, but they no longer have your, they no longer have your total attention, there's some attention that you give to the words, but you also give attention to the underlying stillness, even as you listen.

And of course, the moment you do that, the unconditioned consciousness is there in you, and your mind becomes still, without losing consciousness, you're fully aware, you're aware of the silence, but what really is that silence, or rather that stillness, the stillness is the unconditioned consciousness, awareness itself, and you're aware of that, now that sounds as if it were dualistic, but it's only because I'm using language, you're aware of awareness, when you are aware of stillness, and the moment you pay attention to stillness, you've become still, and that might at first be like a phenomenon outside of you, that you are attentive to, oh, and you may notice there is a certain alertness that comes with that awareness of stillness, and you cannot be aware of stillness through thinking, thought, stillness does not exist for thought, thought can come in subsequently, and say, oh, that stillness, how nice, or it can say, oh, you see, you've lost it already, I had it, I had it, only a moment ago, how can I get back to it? That was such a wonderful experience, and it's not really an experience, because it is, the stillness is always there, so during these days here, learning what that means, to be aware of that underlying dimension, not only in these sessions, and then when you leave here, become totally absorbed again, or reincarnate again totally, into arising thought streams and sense perceptions, but carry that awareness, awareness of underlying awareness, I'm speaking of things that you can't speak of, that's why it's sometimes a little funny, you carry that with you, not only here, although you can perhaps sense it more powerfully in these sessions, but then you walk out into, out there, into the gardens, and the river, and there, certain perceptions arise, and you're aware of those perceptions, and some of

them will be very beautiful, and occasionally, some may be ugly, this is the world, and you watch, and you, underlying the sense perception, is a field of alert, still presence, in which the sense perception happens, and that means, the compulsion, to reincarnate, into another thought stream, is suddenly not there, you're happy, not to reincarnate, for a while, into another thought stream, the true joy arises out of that state of presence, there is a very subtle joy in that, which in some teachings, been called happiness, but I wouldn't use that word, it might even be a wrong translation, that joy, is in essence, an intrinsic aspect of yourself, I sometimes call it the joy of being, and so it does not depend on what forms are arising at this moment, so there is, you enjoy the play of forms, but the joy does not come from the forms, if the joy comes from the forms, it's not joy, it's pleasure, pleasure is something you derive, because a new form has come in, and makes you feel good, for a while, and then it leaves you, and makes you feel bad, or the good turns into bad, so if a form gives you joy, it's not really the deepest, the true joy that is an intrinsic part of your self nature, it gives you pleasure, but pleasure exists in the realm of opposites, and what gives you pleasure will also give you pain, either because it leaves you, or because it turns into its opposite, such as in a relationship, marriage, divorce, pleasure, pain, or in business, gain, loss, and so Ramana Maharshi said, and of course that is a translation, and it may not be absolutely correct translation, happiness is your true nature, I would re-translate it, and perhaps in the original what he said is closer to that, joy is your true nature, but don't look for joy, you would create some new object, mind object, you don't need to look for it, no, simply do not reincarnate continuously, and it's so simple, these sessions are helpful, and they are helpful beyond words, the words are helpful pointers, but there is much more to these sessions than the words, and so be alert here to that dimension that is beyond the words, because that dimension is also beyond thought, and that is where we are going, to know what that is, which one could describe as consciousness free of thought, and this is the next step, one could say, in the evolution of human consciousness, which until now, we have just come to the end of thought, which means humanity, human consciousness being totally dominated, run by, identified with thought, it started, as the myth tells us, in the garden of Eden, which one could say, is a symbolic representation of the arising of thought, they ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, evaluate, judge, the arising of thought, loss of Eden, and I'm told, the translation of that word, Eden, is place of joy, thought arose, and it was a great thing, and gradually, over many, many thousands of years, identification with thought came in, self and thought became one, mankind had to move through that, now, that state of consciousness has become more and more dysfunctional, look at the history of the 20th century, dreadful, madness, so the dysfunction becomes apparent now, because we are arriving at the end time, you may have seen people walking around, I don't know, it may not happen in India, but in the West, with placards, the end is near, the end is nigh, we have arrived at the end, and perhaps they don't realize how right they are, when they say, we have arrived at the, well, perhaps they should put a little another word in, we have arrived at the end of time, because to be identified with thought, totally, is also to be governed by time, past and

future, to live exclusively through memory and anticipation, and all that that implies, and a completely limited and false sense of identity, we are moving out of that, a new state of consciousness is emerging, this teaching would be pointless, nobody would even hear it, if it were not emerging already, so this form is no more than a midwife, a mid husband, mid wife, I don't know, simply to help along the birth process, and I'm not here to make it happen, that would be frustrating, why aren't, and you are not here to make it happen in yourself, that would be equally frustrating, and you would come to the end of the six days or seven days here, and say, I was looking for this great spiritual experience, and somehow it didn't happen, I was looking and looking and looking, and because you were looking for something and you missed nothing, so you were looking to reincarnate into some experience and didn't get it, or if you got it, maybe you got it, or had such a great experience there, and then you're back wherever you live, and then a few weeks later it's wearing off, oh, I wish I could get that back, where is it now?

That was so great, and then you think, maybe I need to go back to India, back to India, that's where it is, so the essence of this gathering is very simple, but also very subtle, and it easily eludes you if you are too much in your mind, so not only here, but also out there, be there as a field of alert presence, that which you sense here, the underlying field, and know what it means, the beauty of this, to be free of thought, but don't look for that state, it comes by itself, and in one moment you are free of a million years of conditioning, as the unconditioned arises, because if you had to undo the conditioned bit by bit, you would never see the end of it, there's so much, so the unconditioned arises as the state of consciousness that is free of thought, that all the great teachings, not so directly, point to, some directly, some indirectly, when Ramana Maharshi was asked, how do we measure our progress on the spiritual path, how do we know if we are making progress, they asked him, and he said, and some people don't like this, they say, no, no, he didn't really say that, but it's there, the degree of absence of thoughts is your measure of progress on the spiritual path, it's as simple as that, and then some people say, no, what he really meant was, who is talking, thought, trying to convince everybody else that that's not what he said, but be careful here, not to make the state that is free of thinking into another future state to be achieved, because you can't achieve it in that way in the future, not as something to be added to you, it is an enormous, the greatest renunciation, and the only ultimately true renunciation is not so much the renunciation of worldly things, the renunciation of sexuality, the renunciation of possessions, the renunciation of certain kinds of food, whatever it may be, the ultimate renunciation is, and I'll say it, to renounce thought, and thought, it says, tries to convince you that in that renunciation you would become, you would revert to the state of the cabbage, the vegetable, and it says this is not a desirable state, and that is true, you don't want being a cabbage, it's beautiful for the cabbage, but the cabbage lives at one with the totality, all vegetative life, all nature lives totally in the state of oneness still, so it's totally right for the cabbage to be the cabbage, but it is not the destiny of humans to revert to the vegetative or animal stage, although compared to humans, nature and animals are very,

very sane, compared to most of human life, there's enormous sanity there, but because they have not left, they haven't gone out into more and more highly differentiated form and form identification, they haven't left the source, they haven't gone that far from the source as humans have, and so, yes, there's great, every animal is so rooted in being still compared to neurotic humans, wow, just look how an animal moves, it is itself, completely itself, not trying to be something, it is, but no, we are not going back there, the animal also is free of thought, although occasionally the beginnings of thought movements can be observed in certain animals, we go beyond thought, one could say we are rising above thought, where we do not lose the ability to think, simply means we are no longer reduced by thinking, we are no longer trapped in thought, we can now use thought, thought will operate when it's needed, it will be applied to a particular situation, but whenever even a situation that needs to be resolved, a challenge that arises, and it can only arise in the now, before thought arises, attention is given to it, and that attention is the state of thoughtless awareness, you're looking at the totality of the situation in stillness, alert, alive stillness, there's a looking, in that looking, enormous intelligence operates, and I'm looking in a wider sense, it may not necessarily be through the eyes, attention is giving to the situation, complete attention, in stillness. Ah, one more at least, if an enlightened person can find peace at any given life situation, how could he have the motivation to change anything, why would he improve his life situation, so if you can find peace in any life situation through surrendering, as we saw in the story of St. Francis, even out in the cold outside the monastery, how would you want to change any life situation, well, let's say, just a most simple example will show you the answer, rather than talking in abstract terms, the enlightened person is traveling on a bus, and I used to travel a lot on Greyhound buses in the past, in the States, and often you wonder, at the next stop, who is going to be the next person going to sit next to you, it could be somebody pleasant, or it could be somebody drunk, or it could be somebody who talks continuously, so the enlightened person is sitting there, and somebody comes in at the next stop, and he's talking and talking and getting out his beer and drinking and getting more and more drunk, and then starts bothering you, but there's a seat over there that's free, does the enlightened person say, I'm enlightened, therefore I'm not going to change seats, because what is the need to change my life situation, I'm at peace already, it is true that deep down there is the peace, but on the outer levels, certain situations are preferable to other situations, and one seat may be preferable to another seat, and so it happened once or twice that I did that, I changed seats on the Greyhound bus, so to get away from somebody next to me, but if the bus is full, then what do you do, you can't change seats, then you stay and be at peace, with where you are, which is perfectly possible, so the changes can take place on the surface of your life, there may be one place where you would rather live than the other place, or you would rather travel to this location than to that one, that's all on the outer, on the surface of your life, there are certain choices, and you make certain choices, if there is no choice, you're perfectly fine with there being no choice, the peace is there anyway, and on the outer levels, some things are more pleasant than others, and then I would choose the

more pleasant one, but perhaps St. Francis would have chosen the unpleasant one, maybe that's our difference, and maybe that's the difference between medieval spirituality and this, not one is better than the other, it's just different, but what matters is that at the core, the peace is there, so I believe everybody, even the Buddha must have made certain choices, he chose to go to that particular garden, somebody had given him a pleasure garden, so he moved himself from the forest into the pleasure garden, so why did he go from the forest to the pleasure garden, wasn't the forest good enough for you? No, it's just on the surface, that seemed to make more sense, and was more suitable, and he moved himself there, he would have been equally happy for the rest of his life in the forest, so that's quite simply how it is, so you're perfectly capable still of changing your life situation, if change is called for, why not?

[Speaker 8] (7:32:04 - 7:33:43)

My question is on karma, I grew up in a Hindu family, and often karma is talked about as something that provides a balance in the world, but it can sometimes seem rigid, and it's a powerful influence over someone's life, and when I listen to you speak, I feel so much peace, and so much hope, and you talk about presence and being as the keys to enjoying form, and creating positive circumstances in your life, or softening circumstances, and I wanted to know how karma fits into all of that, because there seems to be places in the world where there's not a lot of resources, where there's a lot of brutality, for example, I met somebody at work, and she was a refugee from Afghanistan, and she was a young girl, and the interpreter had told me that her brother and her father were killed in front of her, and she had another brother taken, and then I later learned that a lot of times the Taliban doesn't take the young boys to fight, they take them and they use them as sex slaves, and when I hear about stories like this, I just wonder how I can stay aligned with love, or trusting the universe, when I'm not able to see through your eyes yet, how do you hold both?

[Speaker 1] (7:33:44 - 8:17:05)

Thank you, thank you. Now, of course, everybody is born into a certain external environment, and also is born with certain predispositions, they may be partly genetic, they may be other things, that a person is born with certain patterns, in other words, we don't need to examine where they come from, but to see the fact that the human being is first of all born into a certain environment, which may be violent, or it may be relatively peaceful, and the person is born with inner patterns, you inherit certain, even pain bodies, partly inherited, some babies cry a lot, they have a relatively heavy pain body already, it doesn't mean they're spiritually less advanced, the opposite may be the case, there's no knowing, other babies are relatively peaceful, and so there's a whole set of conditioning that happens, you come into the environment with certain predispositions, then the environment conditions you further, and in all that, there's no choice involved, there's just influences, and so you find yourself in this world with certain

unconscious patterns that have become the conditioning of who the person is, the unconscious conditioning, so karma, as I see it, is the unconscious conditioning that runs your life, and that still applies to many humans, and karma is partly collective, you've been born into it, and partly personal, they come together, so really you can only understand karma not as an abstract subject, external to yourself, because then you get into belief systems and philosophy, we're not going that way, you can only understand karma by observing yourself, and by observing, and then you'll know many other things, but you need to, really if you want to understand karma, you need to look at yourself, and so I began to understand what karma is when there was something arose that was not part of karma at all, and really here we come to the key, the arising of consciousness or presence or spiritual awakening is not part of karma, it is another dimension that breaks into the karmic realm, so you do not become awakened by accumulating, as they sometimes say in the East, good karma, that's fine on this level, you can make the walls or the furniture in your prison a little bit more comfortable, but there is something totally from beyond karma that can come into your life at any point within the wheel of karma and rebirth, rebirth is of course part of karma, the deeper meaning of rebirth is identification with form, we don't need to even believe in transmigration or whatever, you can look at rebirth in your own life, every time you identify with a thought that arises which is form, you are born into that thought, because identify, your sense of self is in it, that's karma, you are reborn, karma then is unconscious identification with these patterns that you have inherited, the conditioned, complete identification of consciousness with the conditioned patterns, so consciousness is dreaming, one could say, this is why we use the word awakening in many spiritual traditions, consciousness is awakening, consciousness is in a dreamlike state when you are identified with the unconscious patterns, and then you are condemned to rebirth, in fact many times every day, you are reborn into a reaction, an emotional mental reaction, no presence at all, just rebirth into some form, or you're reborn into thoughts that arise and you completely believe in every thought, and then you act from those thoughts and emotions and the action creates further reactions and the actions confirm to you that you were right, if you have certain mind patterns about, for example, that other people are basically dishonest, just one example, people are so dishonest, they're all trying to get something from me, that tends to confirm itself in your life experience, you can try it out, or you may have experienced it before you became more conscious, that habitual thought patterns that you are identified with, and that is karma, creates in the external confirmation that it is correct, so if you think the world is full of evil people, you will meet many evil people, and in other words, unconscious people, and even people who are halfway between conscious and unconscious, when you come together with them, your belief will pull them into unconsciousness, and that's karma, so karma is the complete absence of conscious presence, and so it's automatic, it plays itself out, and time does not free you of karma, that is a misperception, that if you only spend enough time, eventually you can become free of karma, karma reduces itself and repeats itself, it's a wheel, and so the only thing that can free you of karma is the arising of presence, and how is it that

some person's presence arises, I cannot tell you why, I only know that at any point in the wheel of karma, presence can come in, and it can happen to a criminal in prison, condemned to death, it can happen to somebody who has never heard of anything spiritual, it can happen to somebody who has been meditating for 30 years, or not happen to the same person who has been meditating for 30 years, so in your own life, I can see from what you're saying that presence has already, I can sense that, presence has already come into your life, and presence frees you from karma, not all at once, karma has an enormous momentum, meaning the patterns in yourself, the thought patterns, the emotional patterns, the reactive patterns, there's enormous momentum behind that, but as presence arises, gradually, karma diminishes, the energy behind it diminishes, and gradually you experience a fading out of those patterns, they become weaker, you're no longer completely in the grip of those patterns, so as presence arises, there's a gradual fading out of karma, not that it matters that much anymore, because once you are present, you can, as the previous questioner said, when we were talking about certain thoughts still arising, certain negative thoughts, that's still part of the karma, the old patterns, the unconscious habit patterns inherited, they still arise, but it's no longer problematic, and they no longer cause the suffering that they would have caused before, because they are seen in the light of awareness, so the light of awareness arises, and in the light of awareness, the patterns no longer dominate your life, they no longer run your life, and if occasionally it happens that the patterns do take over, then after a little while, your presence returns and you say, ah, well, there it was again, pain body is part of karma, which may be strong in some people, not so strong in others, and so as presence arises, you are freed from karma, and then you have another completely different factor coming into your life, and so, for example, for a person to become free of collective karma, you need a considerable amount of presence for that to come in, and it then will remove you in one way or another, either internally, you find yourself completely free, you might still live in a violent society, but internally, you would be free, there is a possibility you can have a holy man or woman living surrounded by violence, it's possible, it's rare, but possible, or very often it happens that life removes you out of there and you find yourself somewhere else. So, let's say vast collective karma, for example, in the case of, let's say, you have the Taliban there, you have all kinds of unconscious movements, you had Soviet Communism, you had National Socialism in Germany, and for a person being born into that and not being drawn into that unconsciousness requires considerable presence, so not that many people, for example, in Germany, when Hitler came to power, not many people were able to remove themselves somewhere, some artists, some writers, they left, they could see what was happening, and they were strong enough not to be identified with the collective, when there had been a tradition of obedience to authority for hundreds of years, a tradition of following your leader, and so on, to take yourself out of that collective karma requires considerable presence, but some people had it. So, it is our destiny then to go beyond karma by being the receptacles for presence.

All you can do to be helpful in this world and help others is those people that you come into contact with, you may, everybody in this, who is awakening will find that sooner or later they become a kind of teacher to others. And what a spiritual teacher does, the teacher points out the possibility of awakening out of identification with unconscious patterns, which means the spiritual teacher teaches you to go beyond karma. So, I was a frequency holder for a large part of my life, never very interested in going out into the world and achieving the great things, I was kind of happy being withdrawn, and until something came into my life and I felt there's more that I can do, that was a thought that came.

I was doing little workshops with people, 10 people at a time, 15 people for a number of years, giving talks in people's living rooms, and then it was fine, in many ways I felt happy being a semi-hermit, and occasionally going out and doing little things, happy not being famous, I never thought I would want to be famous, but then the thought came, I could do so much more in this world, but it doesn't seem to be happening. And one day I sat under an oak tree, you could call this, there's a question, later on we'll have some questions, somebody's asking a question about divine discontent, the question is, do you ever experience what might be called divine discontent, that is a discontent that leads to something very positive.

And you could say that there was a moment that came at that time when I experienced a mild form of divine discontent, which simply is a sense of, there's more that I can do, that I could do, but it's not happening. That's a mild form of divine discontent, it's not some unhappiness that says, oh, I have failed, I'm in my 40s, and what have I achieved, that's not divine discontent, that's just a form of normal unhappiness. With divine discontent, there is not a lot of mind activity around me and my life, there's just a sense of, my present life situation has these limitations around me, but I could go beyond that, I could be much vaster, the world needs what I know comes through me, I know that the world needs that.

So why isn't the world, I'm speaking for some of you too, why isn't the world opening up these channels for me? So that was the divine discontent, so I sat under an oak tree in Somerset, where I would sometimes go, magnificent oak tree, and I said to the universe, which ultimately to myself, please use me. I was talking to myself ultimately, so, because I am that, please use me, I'm here, so I was a frequency holder, and yet after many years of a frequency holder, I had this sense of, okay, now expansion is what is called for in this world, a moment of divine discontent, please use me.

I didn't hear any answer, and then I said something that, some years later I almost said, maybe I said too much. I said, I want acceleration, okay, and then I went home, and nothing happened for a few months, I didn't know that while nothing was happening for a few months, in my little cottage in Somerset, somebody there, I don't take it literally, the countdown has already started, like the rocket ship, which goes 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, and then

one day I woke up and said, I have to move, I have to move to the west coast of North America, and that was the beginning.

And so the rocket ship had taken off, suddenly, and finally I landed at the desk of Oprah, a few years later, I never wanted that much, it's too much. And then, the lesson was to surrender to that, it wasn't too much, it was what was needed, if I had been stuck to some previous idea that I had about how my life should unfold, I would be saying, oh, I'm overwhelmed, it's too much. Well, this is surrender now to what is now, surrender to this enormous energy stream that's coming through, you asked for it, you said acceleration.

That is the greatest, the most amazing mystery, that the universe is not only conscious, but becoming more conscious, the universe is awakening, where it all goes, we couldn't possibly understand. It goes to something vast, it's like as if the grain of sand wanting to understand the earth or the universe, you can't understand, you can get glimpses of it when you step out of thinking, you can get glimpses of the vastness of it all that's unfolding, that we are part of that vastness, we are like a spark in the awakening. Consciousness that appears briefly, every human, you could look at every human as a spark of consciousness that briefly manifests out of that one consciousness, it comes out and then it brings back what it has learned, not the details, but the essence of what it has learned in this incarnation.

So the universe, every human life on this planet is that spark coming in, the consciousness coming, so it comes in and goes, that was your life. From a more universal perspective, human life is very short, and if you could look at it from a higher perspective, a more universal perspective, you would see this planet, and you would see continuously these sparks, billions of sparks, lighting up and disappearing all over the planet. Every lighting up and disappearing is one life, there's a one underneath it all, there's a one, coming again, and again, and again, and then it takes, it learns, it comes out, one amazing process, and you are part of that.

So it is liberating to know that, because it frees you from the delusion that all that matters is your little personal life. And all the problems that fill up your personal life, a few years from now, nobody will remember, just a few years. And I always, I like to look at old movie scenes from cities, where all these people are running around the city in 1903 or 1910, and they're all gone now, and I look at this, I showed, we had a retreat last week, and I showed one of those clips, people running around the city in 1900, hundreds of people, and now, where are they?

Nobody remembers their names even. And every life on the personal level was so important. So if you get to the transcendent dimension, it gives you a true perspective of how important the personal dimension is.

Yes, you look after it, yes, you honor it, you clean it, you make it better, but it's relatively tenuous and very fleeting. And so, a more important question than whether you have

achieved so-called success on the level of form, if you have, fine, be happy. But is it going to last?

Probably not, but that's okay, either the $50 million are going to leave you, or you're going to leave them. But so a more important question is, are you awakening? Are you aware?

Are you awake now? So the greatest achievement, my greatest achievement in life, a wonderful achievement, is, not that these books have come through me, but I'm not burdened by thinking anymore. And in fact, I don't have to think if I don't want to.

I just go. And it's so liberating because you're free of the person. I can take everything in, whether it's a city or nature, and it's beautiful, and you don't have to comment on it.

I could comment, but I don't have to. You're there as the awareness, and there's a sense perception, and there's a depth to everything. And here we come back to being with another human being.

When you're only meeting another human being on the conceptual level, you're not really meeting them at all. You're only ever seeing the conditioning of your mind reflected in the other. So there's no true meeting.

There's no true empathy. You cannot have this outflow of benevolence or goodwill, loving kindness, feeling a connectedness, because you cannot sense who you are beyond the person. Therefore, you can only react to the other person on the level of the person.

But if you are connected, then you can look at another human being and have in the background of your perception that spaciousness. And then you look at another, and you can sense beyond their personality, there is a conscious being. And that consciousness is one with your consciousness.

And when you realize that that consciousness that you can sense in the other, beyond their personality, which may or may not be pleasant, you can sense the deeper dimension of their being, and that changes the way in which you interact with other human beings. That brings only that state of consciousness of spaciousness can bring in love. That is where love arises.

Not the love that says, come to me. Don't you ever leave me. I love you.

I love you so much. You better remember that. No, the true, the loving kindness, I think that's a good expression.

The Dalai Lama said, my religion is, he didn't say my religion is Buddhism, he said my religion is kindness. So what he's talking about is ultimately a state of consciousness.

Because it's only kindness, this true loving kindness towards another human can only arise out of that transcendent state of consciousness.

Where you're able to be conscious, but you're no longer controlled, burdened by, I can almost say possessed by the thinking mind. You can then, then the wonderful thing that happens then is the consciousness that comes through you can actually throw into your thinking mind and use it for deeper purposes. To bring more consciousness to this planet in whatever way.

It can use your form, your form identity and use it to bring more consciousness through an activity, through making something, through a human relationship. Many ways in which consciousness can come into this world through you. And that's the beauty and that now becomes the purpose of your life is to express consciousness in this world.

And so there may be one or two of you who look back on your life, you say, I've achieved so much. Maybe you, I don't know if you would even be here. If you were totally identified with your achievements, you might be somewhere else up in the penthouse of your tower.

But let's say everything you ever did failed. Or it might be, as somebody told me, he said in a kind of half proud and half sad, he said, I've never failed at anything because I've never tried anything. Okay, so let's say you failed at everything you tried.

You had your business ideas and the business failed. And then you had your first marriage and the first marriage failed. And you had your second marriage and the second marriage failed.

And then you finally made some money and then you lost it all. And then you had to experience bankruptcy and then they put you in prison. And then they let you out and now you're here.

And then you sit here and you can go, this total failure of my life. So look at all these people, they're all successes, great successes. They're all comfortable, they're doing well, they're spiritual.

And here I am. And you can go that way or you can go and you can sense an alertness in the background and a spaciousness and a presence that transcends the unhappy person. And so all your failures have taken you to this moment of awakening.

And you realize that in essence, you are consciousness. Does this person who did bad things to you still live in you? They might even have passed away already as a mental emotional entity that you carry.

It's actually like a little gremlin. There's also the doorway into presence, of course, of totally accepting your experience of this moment. So if you can talk to whoever it is

you're talking to and just totally accept whatever he or she says in this moment, that's fine too.

There are various doorways into presence, but it's presence. Or you meet your ex, as they call them. I'm meeting my ex about something.

So all the stuff that happened, that accumulated before the divorce happened, all those years, it's back in your mind. And there's your ex and you have a very clear image of who he or she is and it's not pleasant. Your very unconscious ex.

And then you have to be really, really present so that you don't go into the old reactive mode. And then you're meeting this person. It's almost without the past.

That's an amazing thing. Yes, you know the past, but in the moment of meeting that person, there's not you as personality. When you become really present, what emerges is the other half of you emerges more.

The personality becomes relatively unimportant. The other half, the unconditioned presence, shines through. Then you're able to meet another human being.

You might share a lot of unpleasant pasts with him or her, but you can meet this person when the other, the deep eye, shines through you. You meet the person through the deep eye, which means you meet this person without reference to the past. You have that ability, well not you as a person, but that ability is in you of meeting a human being, even a human being with whom you share a lot of unpleasant pasts, without reference to the past.

So you're meeting that person in the present, fully in the present. That's an enormous thing and I know people who have practiced it. And many of them have reported back and said that sometimes, not always, and you're not doing it in order to achieve something else through it.

It is sufficient unto itself, however, almost miraculous transformations have happened in the other person, when you met the other person without reference to the past. So it's not that you want the other person to change, all that falls away. You're just not bringing the past into this encounter.

And then it is not uncommon for the other person also, without them realizing what's happening, becoming freed, at this moment at least, from their heavy personality, and something beyond the personality in them also shines through. And that's a miracle of transformation. That's why sometimes people, when one of the two who share a lot of unpleasant pasts, one of them becomes conscious, it can lead also to the transformation of the other.

Not necessarily. If it doesn't, it's fine too. At least you are free.

And you don't need the other to be free too, to be feeling that you are free. And so it can also happen with your parents, that suddenly the way in which your parents relate to you changes when you meet your parents without reference to the past, and in absolute presence. That's an amazing, amazing experience.

So I suggest you try it out. You have quite a bit of time to practice, and then Thanksgiving is still a long way in the future. And that's where to try it out, when you sit around the big table.

Well, that's for North Americans who celebrate Thanksgiving. You sit around the table, and basically this is the past. The past sitting around the table.

Some people are dreading it. Christmas too. Oh no.

Because you are facing the living past. So it's a miraculous thing. And again, one could say that is the real meaning of forgiveness.

It's not so much a mental act, mental acrobatics that say, okay, you've done dreadful things, but I'm so spiritual that I forgive you. I forgive you. At least I'm trying to.

At least I'm trying. You're not even trying. Why do I always have to be the first?

It's always the same. You're lost again. So forgive you is not so much a mental, to formulate certain things in your mind, and then trying to live up to a certain thought in your mind, which is very difficult, if not impossible.

But the real forgiveness is to enter that state of presence, so that you're not the personality that's conditioned by the past. And then you can meet the person, even the person who did something to you, if you choose to meet them. You don't have to meet a person who did bad things to you.

But the question is, does that person still exist in you as a mind form, as a thought form, as a mental, emotional entity? Does this person who did bad things to you still live in you? They might even have passed away already.

But they live in you as a mental, emotional entity that you carry. It's actually like a little gremlin that lives in you, and it's not pleasant. And so forgiveness means to recognize that for what it is.

It's not really the other person anymore. The person maybe passed away ten years ago. It's not the other person anymore.

It's something you carry still in your mental, emotional field that lives there. And so that is, again, something to recognize. And if you recognize it as something that lives in your mental, emotional field, then it's much easier to step back from it, and by no longer getting drawn into it.

So that's something to do with something that lives in you, and you recognize it as something that you no longer want or need, and then it gradually dissolves as you're no longer reacting against it. So you have one, you have a split in you as long as it's there. There's that mental, emotional entity, and then there's you.

There's another pattern in their mind that reacts against it. It's a bit crazy. But forgiveness then is really coming, meeting the other, if the other is still there, and you're actually now meeting them in person without reference to the past.

People with whom you have a grievance, people carry grievances, and they actually like their grievance. The ego loves grievances. Peter Church, 20 years ago, he did that to me.

30 years ago. Churchill, Churchill, he did to me. The ego loves grievances, but as long as you carry even one grievance towards, and grievance is a long-standing resentment.

Resentment could be short-lived, but grievance tends to be a very long thing. It goes on and on. At least that's how I define it.

The grievance goes on and on, and you carry it in your mind. And even just one surviving grievance in you can often prevent you from fully accessing presence, from actually fully awakening. It's like a dark spot in you that prevents consciousness from arising fully.

So you have to be really very careful to see what they do to you, and see that the addiction to a grievance is only, what is addicted is your fault. The personality derives, the egoic personality, the ego derives sustenance from the grievance and strength from the grievance. So if you harbor a grievance, that means that the ego itself is still operating.

It is not you who is harboring the grievance. It's the ego in you that is harboring the grievance. So if you have a surviving grievance in you towards another person, you need to know that ultimately it's not you, it's the ego, it's still operating.

So you can develop in other areas of your life, and the ego remains, can remain in you, even can attach itself, let's say you're awakening beautifully, but there's one corner in your mind where the ego survives because it has attached itself to a grievance. And there can be other corners too where the ego can attach itself to particular, anything to do with the past. It attaches itself to a particular thing in your mind and there it's waiting.

And occasionally it can, then even in other situations, the ego can still come back more easily because it's there, it's still feeding on the grievance. So it's not starving, it's still feeding on this grievance that you harbor.

[Speaker 4] (8:17:29 - 8:17:34)

I'm talking about obsessive thoughts that are probably not correct.

[Speaker 1] (8:17:36 - 8:55:22)

And then it covers your subsequent perception of reality gets totally colored by the obsessive thoughts and it can explain everything in those terms or the evils of the world have suddenly one explanation another one that's also in the collective. You can have a thought that the entire world is divided into oppressor and oppressed. Any human being either belongs to the oppressors or to the oppressed.

That was an idea in communism in economic terms in terms of social power. They divided humanity into oppressors and oppressed. And then they look at, you can look at any human being and to me, he's oppressed.

He's an oppressor. Now thing is, of course, oppressors and oppressed have existed and to some extent and some areas still exist. But to take one fragment of truth because the totality of human life is much faster than that.

This is one aspect. But if you take one aspect that then occupies your mind because of lack of awareness, you are possessed by a thought. And this thought is the entire world.

This is just one example. Could give many examples. The entire world is either the essential identity of any human being is either they are oppressed or they are the oppressor.

Now, of course, if that is the thoughts that dominate your mind, then obviously you would probably regard the oppressed as the good ones and the oppressors as the bad ones. So that simplifies life enormously. You immediately can decide who is good and who is bad.

And you are probably good, presumably. Even if you are an oppressor, traditionally, you now recognize your sins and you will atone for your sins of being an oppressor and you side with the oppressed and therefore you become one of the good people. It's like the civilization has made a great effort to come up with as many things as possible to prevent people from becoming still and spacious and taking a moment of, ah.

The normal thing to happen is that the connectedness with your essence identity is lost very easily in human relationships because the mind is so active and we live in a civilization that provides continuously, continuous and incessant stimulus, stimuli is the plural, continuous incessant stimuli for the mind, even more than even 30 years ago. 30 years ago, it was just radio and television and people would sit there for hours. But nowadays you have countless sources of stimulus for the mind that draws you into continuously thinking about what's your next Facebook post, what's it going to be and you look at the ones that are coming in, all these people are doing these fantastic things and me, I'm just sitting here and then you have to pretend that you're also doing taking

a nice selfie and then you project your self image which has existed for a long, long time before in humans, they have this part of ego to have this image of who I am but in this Facebook, now we have the opportunity to project that image into the world and it'll reach hundreds of people all at once and then you construct your life.

There are many people alive these days who without knowing it, they partly live for their Facebook image and they're just looking for the next thing that they can project out into the world. It's Narcissus. You might remember Narcissus looking at himself because they didn't have mirrors at the time but one day, he happened to look into a little pool of water and he saw himself and he realized that he was extremely beautiful.

He said, oh, that's me and the story goes he fell in love with himself, not in a good way, not by becoming one with who he is but the separation happened. This myth shows the beginning stage of the egoic sense of self expressed as a story. The image that he saw of himself in the pool is the mental image of the ego and stories are part of that image.

That's me. I'm me and my story so you have the image of me and then, oh, so this guy, Narcissus, he experienced that separation and then I think something bad happened to him but I don't remember what. And then you have other divine things that continuously stimulate the mind that almost designed for you not to become still.

It's like the civilization has made a great effort to come up with as many things as possible to prevent people from becoming still and spacious and taking a moment of looking at the sky and feeling the inner spaciousness arise and becoming aware of the leaves and the wind blowing and the noise of water, the simple thing, becoming still, alert, sensing that stillness within and, of course, a minute later, another text message is coming in. Of course, you have to look at it immediately and then I'm told, I didn't know that when I first started using text, Erin told me that the etiquette is that you have to reply immediately.

And emails are coming in, too. Oh, dear. I must be very important.

I'm getting all these messages. And people, I gave a talk with a big conference with people, business people and so on. They talked about how there's been articles in the paper, too, how people's lives get taken over by their devices.

When they leave work, they go home and the emails are still coming in, even in the evening. And they're still answering emails when they're in bed at night. And this is, some people are beginning to realize how dreadful that kind of life is.

And some more enlightened companies, they may not be totally enlightened, but they're beginning signs of enlightenment. They even forbid you to answer emails after a certain time in the evening. They might even, some have even disabled your phones.

I think VW, Volkswagen did that. The employees, they cannot use emails anymore after

six or seven in the evening. And this is very wise because otherwise people will go insane eventually.

So there are great opportunities in this new technology also, but it's also very dangerous. There are both. You can spread messages of awareness.

You can spread enlightenment through that also. It can travel and incredible madness too. So the essence then is the two dimensions.

Let's just put it like that of who you are. Balance them in your life and at work. And you will find inevitably in certain situations, one will become stronger than the other.

And then the situation changes and the other will become stronger. For example, when you have to deal with detailed information, conveying detailed information to somebody else, the mind has to be very active. You have to remember this, this, and that.

Then the being dimension will recede and perhaps you will be 80% in the mind. But then it's still possible to, even while that happens, to have that being dimension there. And other times when the mind is not required very much, the presence will come forth more and there will be very little thinking and just a wonderfully filled with this wonderful sense of beingness or presence.

A huge section of humanity through conceptualization, through conceptualizing that section of humanity say they are no longer human to you. Without the awareness you are at the mercy of whatever goes on in your mind including you have little or no immunity depending on your degree of presence or awareness. If there's little or no awareness, in other words total identification with the stream of thinking, then you are very susceptible to mental illnesses and dysfunctions and mental even mental pandemics that affect large numbers of people.

And this is interesting. You may have noticed on a personal level sometimes it happens that certain thoughts usually there's a stream of useless thinking and for many people it goes on and on. There's certain recurring patterns in it.

Yes, according to the particular conditioning of this person's mind. And occasionally it happens that one thought or a couple of a bundle of related thoughts get stuck in your mind and they refuse to go away. They begin to influence and affect other thoughts and they spread in your mind.

In some cases reaching every thought that arises in your mind is in some way contaminated by one original faulty thought that may be totally irrational but it has taken it has taken possession of your mind in a very minor and held relatively harmless way. It happens that you say I just can't get I can't stop thinking about this it just goes I can't get rid of it. And then you have certain ideas in your mind that are a over a distortion a complete distortion of reality and then you look at reality through the lens of

that distorted lens of your thoughts.

Any kind of prejudice for example is of that kind let's say you have a racial prejudice prejudice means prejudice pre-judgment so before you know the reality the judgment has already occurred. For example in the case of racism you have a judgment that a certain race has particular qualities that are regarded as negative in some way and then that becomes a lens through which you can no longer meet any human being belonging to that race because the conceptualization in your mind has already told you that this is has already deadened your perception to the aliveness of that human being you cannot you are totally blinded by the concepts in your mind through which you look at reality. It could also be political you can have a certain view certain political views of certain groups of people as happened for example in communism where suddenly the belief arose and millions of people got infected by it that reality or humanity can be divided into two groups the oppressor and the oppressed.

Now oppression of course existed in humanity and exists to some extent in some places more than others to some extent exists but is only one of many factors that determine societies and how they function together but so if you take one and say this is the only one the only valid one that means a huge section of humanity through conceptualization through conceptualizing that section of humanity you say they are no longer human to you at the moment you do that you conceptualize other humans you are completely desensitized to their inherent aliveness let alone the ability to relate to them and to relate to them and recognize the essence of who they are that is the same as as your essence so the moment you have then this belief takes a hold of your mind and you look you classify immediately every human being that you come into contact with is he or she oppressor or oppressed once you have deadened yourself to the aliveness of other humans the next step is very easy and often happens and that is violence and even killing them because to you they are no longer human and the there is a dysfunction inherent in the human mind which can manifest itself collectively and then it gets it's really bad and it manifests itself of course on a personal level and there are times in human history when this dysfunction becomes magnified so there are times of collective mental illness they usually they can last a few decades they can last a few years and then finally just like a physical illness finally it exhausts itself and comes to an end so this the basic dysfunction that's already built into the egoic consciousness then in a collective group setting which is could be a country or tribe or religion or a sect it suddenly becomes amplified and it in a country for example it can it get millions of people can suddenly be trapped in exactly the same dysfunctional mindset and usually violence happens then as it happened for example under Soviet communism in Russia national socialism in Germany Mao's cultural revolution in China millions upon millions killed if you if you want to learn about human dysfunction I recommend reading history books about that millions upon millions killed because they were regarded as not human anymore they had been conceptualized as the enemy in a small country like Cambodia it

happened in the I believe it was the 70s or 80s under the dictator Pol Pot and the army was called the Khmer Rouge army they killed one third of the population exterminated totally in the tortured put in prison camps everybody who lived in cities had to leave the city out in the countryside if you had the slightest education you were part of the oppressors if you wore glasses because it means you could read you were part of the oppressors if your hand did not show sign of manual labor you were part of the oppressors immediately sent to labor camps or out to the countryside to work in the fields and starve there and they did one third of the population starved to death or was killed and that was regarded as necessary to bring about a more just world all in service of the future so you transform the present into hell in order to create a better future the means justifies the end that's the belief but unfortunately that is not the case the means corrupts the end and the end becomes meaningless if you create hell in order to reach it so it's easily recognized as insane completely insane a very great part of challenges actually come from your own mind and that is I would suggest the greater part of challenges in your life are not through external events although yes they also happen but the greater part of challenges is the unobserved mind what your mind is doing and saying about your life the narrative in your mind and the dysfunction of your mind the misinterpretations of everything in your mind when you as I mentioned earlier when you look at life through the conditioning of your mind the veil of conditioning the narrative and you cannot separate what is from your interpretation of what is and then that is and and suddenly you realize okay this is here this is the challenge and you're not complaining anymore you're just looking at it and facing it and you become more alert through every challenge that arises even the little ones like your flight is cancelled you arrive at the airport it's a little challenge or you you stumble and you fall and you break something it's a little bit bigger challenge but the mechanism behind the reactivity is the same so first you can start with little things little things that go wrong flight is cancelled it's cancelled nobody's telling you what's happening and there are 50 people angry all around you so you're either drawn into that or you just okay because you see it as oh it's a sign for me to be alert it's an opportunity for intensified presence and then you become actually intelligent for the first time you access a one could say higher intelligence and then if right if a certain action is possible in that moment you take action and it'll be right it's not reactive it's action but not reaction and if no action is possible you're simply in a state of complete surrender and you feel great it's just and maybe you sit there for two hours and still nothing has happened and then perhaps you go and go to a hotel or you sleep on this chair and it's not it no longer creates a problem in the conventional sense of the word it's not it no longer creates an unhappy entity that is you it creates more alertness and I have had accounts of people who were given a very serious prognosis when they went to see their doctor and usually the case is that when the doctor tells you something that might imply that there is not much time left for you that's a terrible thing when you believe that your life is not complete yet that there is so much more that you wanted to do that you could do but you may not be able to do it so usually the first reaction would be very great suffering but in some people that also

has created I've had quite a few accounts of people who suddenly became intensely alert and present they refused to leave the present moment because they realized either through coming into contact with this or some other similar teaching or intuitively without having any guidance they realized if I leave the present moment I become unhappy if I go just a few months into the future where I may not be here anymore or the body or me or whatever I become unhappy so they got totally present and suddenly feel a sense of not only great alertness but almost elation there was an account a few years ago unfortunately I've forgotten his name a British musician relatively well known but not world famous and he was given he was only I believe in his thirties or early forties he was given this diagnosis that he would only have another year to live but this was an unusual case he reported he told in an interview he walked out of the doctor's office without going through the stage of suffering first he immediately experienced without having read any spiritual book he immediately realized this arising of very intense alive sense of aliveness and he lived completely in the present moment suddenly started living completely in the present moment and then he said in the interview he thought why didn't I do this before why did I wait for this and he felt not you can't call this not happiness what he felt it's not happiness that's a superficial thing something deeper than happiness he felt life itself the joy of life that is deeper than happiness or unhappiness perhaps even to call it joy is not quite right an intensified sense of aliveness and what is that what is that intensified sense of aliveness and what happened why did he or anybody to something like that happens why do they suddenly feel that and they didn't have it before because time was removed from them there was no more time no future and without future the ego cannot survive the sense of self the egoic sense of self needs future and it needs past it's built it's built it's up through the past and it needs future for its fulfillment and of course ultimate destruction but the ego doesn't want to talk about that so the ego got destroyed through that very quickly and so it has happened to people who have lost everything who had were involved in huge natural disasters or man-made disasters it doesn't happen to everybody some people remain stuck in terrible suffering but these it's always an opportunity for true spiritual awakening and so but you have come here now because you no longer need you've done the stage of suffering so suffering plays it may still be very important because it will intensify your presence when it comes but you don't need suffering as such because you are voluntarily inviting the state of presence into your life it begins to manifest through you when your primary objective is to be a conscious human being to manifest consciousness to be aligned with the unconditioned consciousness that you are then no matter what you do you will have a beneficial effect on the world the world will become a better place even through your very presence even if you were just a hermit although this is probably not your calling nor is it mine even if you were just a hermit and you would sustain this consciousness of your essence identity as I call it and you would be aligned with the unconditioned consciousness in your contemplative practice you would make a difference to the totality of human consciousness which is one single thing that there is such a thing as the totality of human collective human consciousness and if you

manifest from the aligned internally aligned state of consciousness whatever you manifest will have a beneficial effect on the world even if it's just a thing like let's say you want to become a great musician and at first sight you might say how does that help people but it does create music that touches people in the innermost of their being has an important effect and makes the world a better place if you create a through your conscious manifestation a hairdressing salon because you want people to have a wonderful experience while they visit your hairdressing salon and you give them your utmost attention while they are there you acknowledge them in their being and then they not only get their hair done let's presume that you're a good hairdresser that's a given you have to know your craft so I wouldn't recommend that you practice manifesting a fantastic hairdressing salon without having learned the craft of hairdressing so that's obvious hardly need to mention that but once you know that you are good at what you do then you manifest something that goes there in some way has an effect on the consciousness of every human who comes into in touch with whatever it is that you create so they come to have their hair done but not only that you speak to them you listen to them you embody the presence and when they leave they not only look better they also feel better within themselves without knowing why so you because the consciousness that you embody spreads out to others but all kinds of giving also require wisdom because you again good intention is not enough without wisdom so and wisdom implies that again we come to the same place wisdom implies that you are in connection with the unconditioned consciousness that is the essence of who you are that lies beyond your thought processes that's presence so you need to become present in your if you are not present you have no access to what to wisdom if you don't have access to wisdom in your life and wisdom is not is not IQ is not analytical intelligence nor is is it accumulated knowledge wisdom is something that this world knows very little of our civilization but it's in some ancient civilizations was highly regarded wisdom is an intuitive knowing that is much deeper than the the intellect which moves within the realm of the polarities so you have a good intention a good intention does not guarantee a good outcome a good intention can actually be have have unforeseen consequences that are the opposite of good so yes it's good to have good intentions of course you're familiar with the famous saying the road to hell is paved with good intentions so have good intentions but have have wisdom so that when you so that your intention does not produce ultimately the opposite of what was intended again in any course of action that you undertake it is very important the most perhaps the most important ingredient is to have access to the dimension the dimension within yourself within where wisdom arises and that is an essential part of any successful let's put it like that manifestation practice is that you that you have that wisdom so that you you not inadvertently create bad when you are wanting to create good which is not uncommon so you your consciousness then to be in conscious alignment with the essence of who you are here and now so that you don't operate from ego and are not just operating through the intellect or don't get drawn into one of the polarities of yin or yang that is that requires wisdom and awareness is awareness is inseparable from wisdom they kind of go together they're

virtually a single a single thing it's a subtle they're all very subtle and it's not complicated it might sound a little complex when i talk about it it is not it's not ultimately complex you just have to go deep enough within yourself to realize this and to live it

[Speaker 5] (8:55:36 - 8:56:26)

why woman needs a man why does a woman need a man yes at a certain age for example in my case i've been very successful in business been having adult beautiful daughters even two granddaughters having fantastic job which allows me to travel a lot all over the world having great friends very interesting personalities by the way why sometimes coming this desperate feeling of loneliness especially on saturday morning on sunday morning is it a question of being incomplete myself or just desire to share

[Speaker 2] (8:56:29 - 8:57:59)

well it could be both in your case just it could be not just a man but it could be any person that you do desire whether it's a woman or a man wanting a man it's the human aspect of us has this urge and usually it's when you're younger you have an urge you might want children or something like that but if you've already had children sounds like in your case you have children so now it's just a partner to share with and if you're saying that every saturday morning you wake up and you feel this loneliness which is quite interesting because this is the picture that I have and I don't know if this is your case but this is the picture that I have wasn't the worst thing when you were a teenager you didn't have anything to do on a friday night or a saturday night it's like something was wrong with you I felt that something was wrong with me if I didn't have anything to do friday or saturday night so I don't know if this is for your case so maybe you can talk about it a little bit more like what are your feelings

[Speaker 5] (8:57:59 - 8:58:47)

when it comes to and what are your thoughts when it comes to saturday I just think sometimes that it's not normal to be alone oh interesting for a woman yes but it's okay for a man I don't know for man no in my case maybe I was taught and I was brought up in very traditional family and I was taught to be a good wife this was the destination was married 18 years and just children husband very good one but not my person and being it was my wish to be divorced when children were adult send them to study in school and then I wanted this freedom actually very much and I enjoyed very long but now at certain age it comes this feeling of loneliness

[Speaker 16] (8:58:48 - 8:58:49)

yeah okay

[Speaker 2] (8:58:50 - 8:58:52)

so do you still believe

[Speaker 5] (8:58:52 - 8:58:54)

that believe that you

[Speaker 2] (8:58:54 - 8:58:58)

should have somebody in your life like a partner

[Speaker 5] (8:58:58 - 8:59:14)

yes so it's a belief it's a belief yes I feel really it's unnormal especially saturday morning that I don't want a person to prepare breakfast to take care of so it's a belief can you see that this

[Speaker 2] (8:59:15 - 8:59:17)

unhappiness is caused from this belief

[Speaker 5] (8:59:19 - 8:59:21)

I wouldn't say unhappiness

[Speaker 2] (8:59:21 - 8:59:27)

okay well whatever you're experiencing then what is it then give a name to what you experience

[Speaker 5] (8:59:27 - 8:59:28)

loneliness

[Speaker 2] (8:59:28 - 8:59:38)

loneliness but you're judging that loneliness because you think that you should have something so it's a type of unhappiness

[Speaker 5] (8:59:39 - 8:59:48)

would you say maybe yeah maybe all right maybe type of unhappiness no I wouldn't say I cannot call myself unhappy

[Speaker 2] (8:59:49 - 9:00:14)

no no not unhappy but there's some sort of judgment is there a judgment that there's something wrong that you don't have a partner okay so let's we won't call it unhappy for you but there's a judgment and do you see that this judgment stems from a thought the

mind because in reality in consciousness there's no problem

[Speaker 5] (9:00:17 - 9:00:27)

um I understand yes but should I resist this feeling or should you what should resist this feeling of loneliness no no no

[Speaker 2] (9:00:27 - 9:00:28)

no no

[Speaker 5] (9:00:28 - 9:00:29)

no first

[Speaker 2] (9:00:29 - 9:03:48)

you need to see that it is a thought and a belief and a belief is not real because beliefs change you can believe one day yeah I need a man and then you can believe the next day which maybe it happened because I'm understanding that you were married at one time so you believed that no I don't need a man otherwise you might have stayed married even though it was maybe an unhappy marriage so there's beliefs change that's what I'm trying to say thoughts change so and I can see you thinking about this really really hard and it's not about thinking about this so you experience a loneliness so go into the loneliness to feel what that loneliness is and when you go into the loneliness maybe some insights may come to you and you see everyone as a human being may experience loneliness but if you have this real like desire and you want to have this partner ask yourself why do I want to have this partner is it so I can feel somehow complete do you somehow think and believe that you will be complete when you have a partner so you're not going deep enough into yourself if you have a belief that something outside of you is going to fulfill you to make you complete you're not deep enough going within to find the presence and the consciousness the stillness within you don't judge yourself for that don't judge because we all do it all of us I've been there I've been there so many times that I end up choosing the wrong guy you know I kept on choosing the same shit but a different pile until one day I said you know what I don't even want a guy anymore I don't want it don't want it and then when I didn't want it anymore it's like Eckhart appeared so look at why you want a man in your life not to say that having a partner is not right or wrong it's just like why do you want this man in your life is it to somehow you will feel good feel complete feel whole because I'm telling you when you first meet you might feel like that but after a while you're going to end up resenting that partner because they're not going to be able to fulfill you they're going to be human they're going to get angry with you or upset you know you may end up fighting with them or you know but maybe you're so be so present you won't fight with them but it's still not perfect

[Speaker 5] (9:03:54 - 9:04:02)

this is the answer yes I was thinking like okay thank you very much anyway this was the question probably from many women

[Speaker 2] (9:04:10 - 9:17:57)

okay if I like to make a suggestion you may not like it but look at why you just ran away you know the heart what we might think is the heart as a human being has so many it's kind of almost a natural thing we go through our life and our society kind of informs us and tells us through the media through television that you know we need to have a partner we need to have a certain partner even but it doesn't fulfill you it doesn't complete you I had to learn that even through Eckhart I thought I found the most wonderful thing in the world you know like why not I mean he is compared to the other piles that I had he is but he's still a human being and I began to see within myself that nobody not even Eckhart can fulfill me can complete me that I have to fill myself and complete myself and look at why am I constantly looking outside of myself to make me feel like as if I'm good enough or that I'm okay because now I have a partner that's it's false thinking that's the true marriage it's not the external form as the true marriage the true marriage is within you this outer form of a marriage is a representation of how we should be inwardly will you love them forever love me forever well it's true right it's loving well I mean will I be faithful to me will I be faithful to the divine self not my ego self the divine self that is within you and then my guess is is when you go deep enough and trust that within yourself and and experience that relationship with your self the true self the divine self have that kind of relationship and this other periphery worldly relationship of having another man become secondary I bet you that man will pop up into your life I've heard many people say that as soon as they drop that desire and wanting almost like that I got to have a man or I got to have a woman is dropped then suddenly they appear and that goes really for all desires when we drop that desire if it's a real true desire and you are meant to have that it will come seek ye first the kingdom of God and then all things shall be added unto you even partners and it will be a partner that is going to be on that same level as you in terms of level I mean consciousness that state of consciousness or doesn't have to be the same consciousness but you will have that consciousness and when the choice comes along of a man that enters they may be on that maybe I don't like to use the words different levels of consciousness but for lack of better maybe on a higher level maybe not it won't matter because you are conscious and you know your true self you know you don't have to depend on somebody else to make you happy or fulfill you so then you come meeting with a partner you then you have your partner and you're both standing like this there may be times that you have to lean upon each other and depend upon each other but when one moves away you don't collapse and say oh my god he's gone you know oh no I've fallen down I'm I don't know worthless without him I need need need but when you come together and sometimes you have to depend on each other it's an interdependence but when the time comes

where well no I just want to remain independent so you're leaning a bit and he goes well you know what I'm just going to move away a little bit because it does happen right you can't expect your partner to always be there so you can lean on them that is codependency but when that partner leaves you go oh okay you're gone but I'm okay really and vice versa Michael he might be leaning one day and you're okay supporting it but then our support can only sometimes go so far because we're human beings we get tired and we just go oh hey hun why don't you stand on your own two feet for a little bit here and then you stand and you're both like this again so it's an okayness to depend but mainly it's an okayness to be like this two independent human beings that are sharing life together and sometimes this but then back like this sometimes this then back like this and this is the importance of standing independently and the independence is really our true nature when we're leaning too far and for too long we lose ourselves completely lose ourselves because now we become dependent and codependent at that so this is where we are moving to so it's a wonderful wonderful question and you're right it's probably many many people's question and it's a good question and I'm just pointing to come home to yourself first seek ye first the kingdom of God then all things shall be added unto you and it will and when you seek ye first the kingdom of God you might end up saying wow that was really a conditioning of mine that I really wanted a partner maybe I don't want a partner I don't want anybody I'm actually happy just as I am because I'm single but you won't know that until you come home to yourself and really be in that beingness that you are then we'll be able to see clearly what it is and what comes what goes because things come and go people come and go and it's wonderful it's really like the play of consciousness you know I've had to tell myself even you know even though Eckhart and I are okay and I have no desire or plans to leave the relationship and as far as I know he doesn't either but I have to tell myself I'm married to the consciousness within me so and I don't know the future I really don't know the future but am I okay right now with this yes absolutely and even when we have relationships they become they become tricky because you've got two people and not only two people we've got two people coming in my case from different cultures so you've got that added aspect when you find a relationship and you know that you'd like to be with this person but maybe it's really hard sometimes and as we spiritually awaken I find we need more and more time that we have to spend on our own and it's hard sharing the same space all the time with somebody so often times what will happen is that you know that's where the tension lies there's nowhere to go so for Eckhart and I we found a perfectly creative way to be together and that is that in Vancouver anyways we have another home but in Vancouver we have apartments that are right across from each other oh my god that is so ideal and I'm sure he would say the same thing because it's really hard to be with somebody all the time and it's not like we both leave our places to go off to our separate workspaces we don't we travel together we're together all the time there you know at home we have to find a creative way so we can have our space and we each value our space very much and this is how our relationship works so we have to get out of the conditioning so look at all your conditionings about what you think

a relationship should be like what do you think a man should be like what do you think a woman should be like and then drop it all because if you have those expectations you're not having a true relationship with another human being your partner you're having a relationship with an idea in your head so you have to look at all those expectations and see what they are and just let them go and really be in the moment and it's like that respect of seeing okay where is he coming from he has his needs I have my needs how are we going to make this work ah different apartments that's wonderful and it works it works we have also a house that's on an island where we made sure that the house is big enough where we can each have our space our quarter okay it's like I had enough of you not in a bad way it's in a way that I need to be alone now so I go to my studio or he goes downstairs and we have our separate time when we travel man there is no way that we could share a room together and teach this teaching takes a lot of energy we need to recover and if we had to share a small little room together it would be crazy it would make us crazy so in order to make it work okay that's fine we have separate rooms maybe close together if we can possibly but that sentence is fine but if there is any thought or any sort of urge inside of you of oh but I don't think I can live that way I need my partner right here and I need to live with my partner and I need it then that is something else that is the conditioning coming through that is a codependency coming through because you are not coming and being in your true self being in your true self is independent and not identified attached to anything outside of you and that includes your partner I hope that helps you

[Speaker 1] (9:18:27 - 9:36:02)

then there are other things that you do as you know I often recommend when you get into your car maybe you do that already you just mentioned something about the car when you close the door of your car give yourself a little 30 seconds to just be present unless it's an emergency then you should go to the hospital or wherever you are going so give yourself 30 seconds but it has to be done in the right way you are not saying okay Eckhart says 30 seconds and then you say okay here we go you are just straining to get out of the 30 seconds so it has to be focused on your breath for example that helps or the inner body the awareness of the inner body and practice the being so you bring a little little bit of being into the doing at some point later later the two will merge completely but and then there are other moments when you can probably things that you do frequently every day there you can bring in awareness so that it's not a means to an end and perhaps create a little gap so have a number of gaps during the day during a busy day you could say for example whenever you wash your hands in the bathroom that can be an absolute presence one and be come to your senses feel the water smell the soap and that can be a present moment whatever you can probably make a list of things that you do every day if there's a staircase somewhere in your building then walking up and down the stairs can be a wonderful opportunity for being present at every step so it's not a means to an end anymore so I would suggest make a list of

things that you do every day or very often and use these as to bring in spaces so you have this very brief practices of bringing in spaces and then even while you're engaged in the doing there too you can see if you can as mentioned the discussions that you have sense the presence that you are while you're listening be alert you're actually then much more alert than you were in a normal state it increases your intelligence and it's an intelligence that's deeper than the IQ intelligence that's something that I find in my life that arises because I also practice that although I don't have discussions that often but sometimes we meet and this alert listening out of that what I find often comes is questions you ask questions one of most creative ways of participating in a discussion group is to ask questions other people when they say something you the light of your awareness shines on it then a question arises another question in the creative process of finding solutions and answers this is often overlooked by especially when you're very much identified with your mind then the mind has certain preconceived notions and opinions and positions and it'll just repeat those so when somebody comes forward with an idea that's totally new if you're very much identified with your mind it could happen that you say oh no no that's not going to work but with this you develop the ability to listen and to the true listening means you're alert and still that's true listening it's not the auditory aspect is a very small one you're alert and still and you may find that you may not have the answers but you begin to ask questions and then the other person perhaps brought forward an idea is then forced to reply and it may drive him or her deeper to see where can we go with this so one of the most creative things and the very creative people in that kind of environment they are the ones who ask the most questions this is how the entire philosophy of Socrates developed because do you know it's called the Socratic method which is somebody comes and asks Socrates a question but he has questions to him and so he goes from one question to another and another when you read Plato's account of Socrates I don't think Plato completely understood what Socrates was doing Plato thought that he already knew the answer but I don't think that's the case because Socrates said I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing which means he was comfortable with the state of not knowing that I mentioned earlier and out of that state of not knowing often questions arise and in this question then the answers suddenly come it's a joint endeavor the answer may not even necessarily come through you but you ask the right questions and then the group suddenly comes up with an answer and that is also spiritual practice and it can be totally incorporated into what you're doing so both setting aside little spaces when you become present during the day and also in many areas maybe the hardest is being on the computer screen to be present there but there you could practice as much as possible have a little reminder next to the laptop whatever it is and have a little reminder to for example to be in your body to have inner body awareness because computer draws your attention out you go it actually depletes you after a few hours it depletes you of energy it flows out it absorbs because all your focus is on there and so it's doubly important to you may not sustain it continuously but have a little reminder so even while you are writing something or reading something and this is something that may not you may not succeed immediately

in this practice but it is possible to be aware of your body have some background awareness in the energy field of the inner body and then you sit and you you can still deal with whatever it is you're dealing with you wouldn't say to the wind how dare you unless you're almost mad so the vigilance then as regards your inner state is very important so that you no longer believe the outer is more important than the inner that's a great delusion some outer condition is more important than conscious the state of consciousness so the vigilance needs to be there and i'm saying that to you because there's enough awareness in you for that vigilance to arise without the vigilance you have no idea what's going on inside you and you project it all outside then you don't even know this is the essence of unconsciousness spiritually speaking many really unconscious people they don't even know that they are suffering because everything is projected outward all the bad stuff is out there other people and whoever they they blame it's all out there everything is projected they have complete unawareness of their inner state that's the essence of unconsciousness but even humans who have already began the spiritual path or the awakening process can still be taken over periodically regularly completely by the delusion that something out there is more important than the inner state of consciousness and then you go in that moment you become reactive and in that moment you become identified with the reactions which are mental emotional forms that arise and so you are lost and you think it's it's all out it's out there so the vigilance then can tell you the moment you become upset about something upset is a generic term upset could be about or upset could be anger it could be despondent it could be fearful or upset is anything that's not rooted in in the peaceful depths of being is upset so then you would notice anything that upsets you and you might be surprised that little things perhaps can still upset you just a tiny thing somebody not turning up for an appointment or a handyman not doing a good job all kinds of something taking too long somebody not treating you with respect that you deserve all kinds of little things can make you driving people get upset when they drive it's strange it's I mean none of the other drivers knows you and you don't know them but they are regarded by the unconscious ego as personal personally insulting to you somebody somebody pushes in from the right how dare you if a gust of wind came probably you would not get upset because it's hard to personalize that but if you are very unconscious extremely unconscious you can even get angry with that but it's less likely because it's just a gust of wind pushing you forcing you to go that way you wouldn't say to the wind how dare you unless you're almost mad but an unconscious person is just like a gust of wind it's no more than that it's nothing to do with you whatsoever so and of course you find these unconscious every day in your daily life you'll find people who are just acting out their unconsciousness some are driving around the streets and some you meet in other ways and it's never really personal they are definitely not in the traffic so be vigilant to see do you still get upset by other drivers and then it's not something to beat yourself up about say oh dear you see I'm no good I've been on the spiritual path and I still get upset by other drivers no all you need is to notice it and so whenever you become upset you notice oh what's going on and then always you know I confused there was a confusion in

my mind of what really is important I thought that thing out there was important and you forget this is important what is what do I bring to this situation and then you dissolve conflict quite often because often because you're surrounded still by many unconscious humans there are conflict situations that arise wherever you go you will find conflict where humans come together conflict situations arise it's amazing even places that should be quite peaceful church congregations committee meetings at your church or hospitals where things could be healing and peaceful places universities schools there could be over conflict even spiritual organizations because of course the people they may be trying hard but they are not there yet so there's conflict and that's why there's no need to react to that and say look at all these unconscious people or to say I'm done with spirituality look at all those so called spiritual people and look how they behave I'm done with that it's all it's all a farce isn't it all these and so on the mind goes on so again it's all put out there it's it's there's something wrong out there it's not me I'm okay no you become vigilant and whenever you are upset about situations and people oh that's a reminder then that there was a confusion about importance what matters and what is secondary and what is primary secondary is the external situation primary is your state of consciousness that you bring to it so when you are the moment you become upset you've forgotten that well that in itself can be a sign to become present again so if you are vigilant about getting upset about things then you can use it as an alarm clock any kind of upset in any situation that oh I must have confused what primary and secondary and okay and then you can bring your invite the alertness in and this is like sometimes compared to turning up the light with a dimmer switch and which is really what it feels like is from the mind identified reactive state and suddenly there must have been still a remnant of awareness from where you can notice oops I'm upset about this and then you can at that moment there is a choice okay there's a confusion about what is really important here and then you can invite in the presence attention and at that moment there's a shift from the mind identified reactive thinking state you might have just been talking to somebody about how dreadful somebody else is what they just did why can't they ever get it right and suddenly there's still a remnant of awareness in you oh and so you begin to witness that inside you and at that moment you have a choice you can say okay you recognize you got confusion of primary and secondary and then you go okay let's become present a deep breath might help looking around you might help anything that brings you into the present moment the mind brings up

[Speaker 7] (9:36:03 - 9:36:03)

okay

[Speaker 1] (9:36:03 - 9:39:47)

oh you step out of the mind identified state what that means when i say you step out of it means your consciousness removes itself from its from the thinking it where it was your consciousness was in in the thought forms you then reclaim the consciousness the

consciousness reclaims itself so to speak you reclaim the consciousness from its incarnated form in the thought or emotional form it had incarnated into this form this is the dream of consciousness you reclaim it or it reclaims itself because you are ultimately it and so consciousness then is withdrawn from the form the thought form the emotional thought what let's say let's say this is consciousness and this is thought then it goes consciousness was trapped in that thought it had become that thought in the same way that water can become ice so this is just so consciousness gets out of it and then the thought collapses because it was only consciousness that had been frozen had become hardened so to speak so consciousness is withdrawn from the thinking and then it is in its pure no form and that is the amazing it's an amazing thing when that consciousness is suddenly there that before was trapped in thinking that and that you experience a heightened sense of aliveness suddenly and that is the entire vibrational frequency shifts to one could say what it feels like a higher frequency so this is why we call it waking up because waking up is awakening spiritual awakening does not mean to suddenly see angels or talk to God what do I do tell me what to do that's not spiritual awakening it's fine if you see angels it's a beautiful thing but it doesn't mean that you're spiritually awakened it just means you're seeing an angel or even if you're channeling a spirit entity it does not mean you're spiritually awakened you're just channeling a spirit entity who may have a big ego who knows and then that ego gets added to your ego there are what is conventionally called love can be many different things and there are many different levels to it some people call it love when they fall into fall in love with someone which is a

[Speaker 4] (9:39:52 - 9:39:53)

clinging

[Speaker 1] (9:39:53 - 9:49:58)

a needing that is partly usually physical emotional needing of the other and that's called love but that is a lower manifestation of what is love and can easily turn into its opposite from one moment to the next as many people have experienced how the person that you fall in love with you hate a few days later a few weeks later suddenly love hate are so closely related the opposites in that kind of love but the love for your children is a different matter there is a strong emotional bond with your children and it can probably I haven't experienced a mother's love but probably I can understand that you may get a sense of losing yourself in the other and that's the that is that strong emotional bond and then there's another higher manifestation of love that may already be also part of your emotional bond but probably a mixture of emotion plus something else but that something else is spiritual love and in some languages there's completely different words for different kinds of love for example in Greek there was eros eros is one kind of love agape is another kind of love what I'm talking about here now is agape is the love of the other because it comes from knowing who or what you are and recognizing yourself

in the other and that is the spiritual love and that's the direction in which you are moving so the foundation for that is not I would say as it's conventionally called loving yourself that's a strange thing now many people quite a few people hate themselves more than they love themselves now it's better of course to love yourself and to hate yourself it's something that people who practice positive thinking and want to shift negative mind patterns may put notices up throughout their house with little messages to themselves which might say I completely accept and love myself well I'm sure that's better than I completely hate myself much better but there's still a duality there and it's a very strange thing who is loving whom I love myself who are you and who is that self that you love people who say I love myself don't think about it what that really means and there's a little bit of a duality there I love myself so there must be two of me there's the I that does the loving and there's the myself that's being loved strange really weird and then as you begin to awaken spiritually awaken to the presence then what gradually comes to an end is having a relationship with yourself until that happens people have a relationship with themselves which is sometimes even manifests as dialogues they have in their head one part of you talks to another part of you you are talking to yourself you really should make an effort to do better I know you can do better and the other part well I've done my best what else can I do then do my best then no that wasn't your best you should have done the remember the voice of your mother and then you hear the voice of your mother in the background you should really should be doing better why do you mess up your whole life you're just like your dad that was my mom when I gave up my academic career oh that's your dad in there you have a relationship with yourself very strange it's kind of split that happens and that's a part of a normal state of consciousness everybody unless they are awakened or at least awakening in which case that begins to recede but everybody else they have a relationship with themselves which may be sometimes good sometimes bad uneasy they are proud of themselves and then they are shamed and then they call themselves a loser or somebody else calls them a loser and they believe it all kinds of weird things narratives and so on and as you awaken spiritually what gradually comes to an end is having a relationship with yourself so what is that replaced with when you no longer have a relationship with yourself you are yourself I am there's not there's no longer two of you here there's just one and that happens when you no longer live through a narrative in your head that creates two of you sometimes even more than two you have a whole crowd in there sometimes and then you have various sub-personalities that are just lurking in the background waiting to get triggered so when do you no longer have a relationship with yourself that is the beginning of the end of living through a conceptual identity in your head you have a certain set of opinions about who you are which you have adopted from what other people society tells you who you are or you're reacting against what society tells you about yourself and you adopt the completely opposite position for example society might tell you that you haven't achieved anything but but you believe that you haven't done anything because the world is not worthy of you because you could write the greatest book ever written but what's the point?

The world is crazy anyway I can't be bothered if I wrote a book it would be the greatest ever you can have all kinds of ideas about yourself whether you adopt society's view of who you are or you adopt a reactive position against it it doesn't matter when you transcend that you again you just are yourself you don't no longer live through an opinion in your head about who you are because who you are is the presence and that presence that you recognize in yourself as your essence and it's when I talk about it it's always a duality it's not that you recognize the presence it's the presence recognizes itself you are you recognize that's that's what arises and then you look at the other it might be your child and then you have two things happening simultaneously one is the emotional bond that you feel with people close to you such as your children or other people that are very close to you you feel an emotional bond an emotional connection but in addition and more fundamentally there is a recognition in you of the presence or the essence of the other and that's not emotional to recognize the essence of the other but you can only recognize it through your own essence the essence that you are and then you look at the other and you can sense beyond the personality they are consciousness and you can look into their eyes and no matter what behavior they manifest as personalities you kind of sense something that is beyond that and what you recognize then in the other is yourself because it is the consciousness that you both share is the one consciousness and to recognize the consciousness of the other as your consciousness as one with your consciousness that is spiritual love and there you don't lose yourself

[Speaker 17] (9:49:59 - 9:50:00)

you you

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[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 1:42)

You have found yourself, and so you don't lose yourself in the other anymore. If there's only emotion, then you could lose yourself in the other. But the emotional bond, and then the recognition of the other as yourself happens with anyone.

You have the same love for somebody you meet casually somewhere for a few minutes as to a close family member. But with a close family member, you have the additional emotional bond. But the spiritual love is not, does not single out one or two people as special.

The specialness comes in on the emotional level, and that's fine. So that's gradually you will, there will be a shift. The emotion will still be there, but there's an underlying recognition of the other because you've recognized who or what you are in your essence.

And there's no longer, then emotion is fine. There's no loss of self in it anymore because you know who you are or what you are. So gradually that dimension, because I can predict because you're here, that gradually that dimension will come more and more into, and the relationship with your child, children, son?

[Speaker 9] (1:43 - 1:43)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (1:43 - 2:02)

And it doesn't do away with the emotion, but something deeper comes in, and that transcends the emotion. Transcend doesn't mean that it excludes it or it comes to an end. Transcend means it contains it, but it is much vaster.

[Speaker 6] (2:30 - 3:25)

I want to speak about like loneliness and the pain body because since two years, I'm traveling alone, trying to like you, like doing nothing. And then I have difficulty to accept this nothingness, and so then I spend time on devices on Facebook, and then the pain body arrives, and then sometimes I see the world like it doesn't exist, and that other people are like robots. So it's a lot of suffering, and I don't know how to overcome this kind of feeling.

[Speaker 1] (3:26 - 3:30)

So you've been traveling for a couple of years?

[Speaker 6] (3:30 - 3:38)

Yeah, like one year and a half. I start with India, and then now I'm following you because I went to Norway, New York, America.

[Speaker 1] (3:38 - 3:41)

Okay, and you're not running out of money yet?

[Speaker 6] (3:45 - 3:46)

The universe gives me what I need.

[Speaker 1] (3:47 - 3:49)

Okay, that's good. That's a good sign.

[Speaker 6] (3:50 - 3:58)

But it's about like the disconnection with the world when I am alone and with devices.

[Speaker 1] (3:59 - 29:35)

Yes, you're not in a relationship at present, and you haven't been for the past two years, and the relationship has not arisen, or do you on purpose avoid entering relationship? Well, whatever it is, learning to be with yourself, at ease with yourself. Loneliness can be a great thing when it comes transformed through acceptance into solitude.

Solitude only arises when you accept your aloneness, become completely present, and suddenly you sense your own presence, which does not need anything, is already complete, which is not to say that on the level of your form, there may not be a need for some company, whether it's physical or emotional or mental or altogether. On the level of form, you will continue to experience certain pulls and certain needs. On the level of form, if you have no relationship, you may feel that sense of needing something to complete you on the level of form to some extent.

That's not a problem if you are rooted in your essence. You can be aware that on the level of form, there are still, there are certain needs, and these needs may be met at some point, or right now, they may not be met. And that no longer matters that much.

It is only of relative importance whether you have a relationship or you don't have a relationship. On the deepest level, you don't need it. On a slightly up, on a form level, you're not complete.

There's masculine, there's the polarities of yin and yang, not necessarily always related to the biological masculine feminine, but you are either, if you are yin, you need some yang. If you are more yang, you need some yin. And that operates on the level of opposites and of form.

It may be advisable for you to engage in some kind of activity so that you can not only practice presence by doing nothing, because it was never my decision when it happened to me. It was not my decision to do nothing for a couple of years or so. By the way, I'm still good at doing nothing, but it wasn't my decision to do nothing in order to achieve some state.

The doing nothing arose because already, I was so deeply immersed in presence that I had lost the balance as a human being. I had lost the balance between human and being. Because that, I love that word human being.

The English language doesn't have a word for man and woman, like German has mensch, which is the word for human being. But in English, you have to use two words. But there's the human part of you, that's the form.

There's the being of you, that's the essence. Ultimately, everybody needs to be in some kind of balance between those two. I was immersed in being so deeply that I lost the balance.

I wasn't unhappy about that at all, but I lost the balance between the human. The human became so unimportant to me that I didn't do anything to even, what am I supposed to do with my life? Even that didn't arise, that thought.

It was so delicious, delightful to be immersed in being. And that's how this period of complete, not complete, there was some activity because I had to occasionally get little jobs to survive. And occasionally people gave me money, but I did have temporary jobs to survive.

So I was forced occasionally to come out a little bit out of the being, but I didn't last in any job for very long. The moment I had enough money, I would stop again. So I got temporary jobs at various places.

For two weeks, I worked at the Kennel Club in London, filling out forms of puppies that had just been born of different dogs. They, fortunately, they had no computers at that time yet because that would have been beyond me. So there was just that the bliss of being was so all-consuming that the balance between the human and the being was lost.

And then it only began to reestablish itself when people started coming to me and asking me questions. And the question pulled me out of the being because an answer was required, but the answer came from the being. So when I started answering questions, suddenly there was a flow.

And the answering of questions became my doing. So that's how the balance got reestablished slowly. I would not necessarily seek inactivity as a way of achieving some kind of presence.

It is sometimes easier to engage in some activity and even engage in relationships and see if you can stay present there. But it all comes back to really the present moment, whatever it is, wherever you are, wherever you are. Is there enough intensity in you not to be drawn into mind for long periods of time?

Is there enough intensity in you to stay present in that state of aloneness so that you can be the consciousness rather than the person? You are the consciousness. And it could be a great opportunity that you're able to do that, to just travel and explore, but you already went to India, and so you did not seek, you did not find what you were seeking, perhaps.

And then you came to Eckhart, and there you did not find what you were seeking, perhaps. And the only place where you can find what you're seeking is within you in the present moment. It doesn't matter where you are.

So intensity of presence is important to cut through mind. Are you motivated enough to have that intensity of presence? And it could well be that there's not enough suffering in your life to provide the motivation.

So that is a possibility, but that's not a problem, because it'll come. If... My sense is that right now, it's just too easy for you.

It's too easy. So the suffering is, I mentioned before, the best motivation for liberation is the desire to escape from suffering or realizing the possibility that is possible to be free of suffering. And that's why the Buddha chose that term to describe his teaching, which is very, very wise.

It's, what's my teaching about? The Buddha said, I'll tell you what it is about. It's not about enlightenment.

It's not about achieving God realization. It's not about that. He's the end of suffering.

So it seems that he attracted mostly people who were at that stage where that meant something to them. I don't know if you are at that stage where the end of suffering means enough to you to provide the intensity for awakening. I was suffering.

That was the motivation. I didn't even have a name for awakening. The wonderful news though is life always gives you what you need.

And it could well be that if you continue your life in this way, the way in which you live will create more and more suffering. Perhaps the loneliest will become unbearable. And so, and then the suffering of the loneliness might drive you into relationship.

And then something may go wrong in the relationship. And then the relationship will become unbearable. And then you will seek out another situation and something will go

wrong there.

And then that will become unbearable. And then suddenly you will want to be free of suffering. And there you have the motivation.

So whether you carry on the way you are now, fine. Life will give you what you need. Or if you think, okay, I'll try a relationship.

Great too. You will find the necessary suffering to get you there. And so this is why we are here.

And this is the meaning of retreat. It's a retreat from yourself in order to find what the Buddhists would call the no self or what other teachings would call the deeper self or the Atman or your Buddha nature or the Christ within, whatever term you want to use to point to it. And that's why we're here.

So all the external things here are helpful. It's easier here to connect with the depths of who you are and realize the depths of who you are. Of course, when you leave here, then you get challenged again.

It's not that you don't get challenged here too. And especially if you are still very much identified with the mind, you find many challenges wherever you go. This isn't right.

Don't like that. He doesn't look very spiritual to me. Or the opposite.

All these people are so much more spiritual than me. Do they know that I'm not spiritual? So the practice is to voluntarily as much as possible relinquish identification with the thinking mind and your usual self.

And what very much helps with that is just bring, just as much as you can, don't walk around as a heavy personality and person. No, walk around as a light, as a field of conscious perception, like a little child. It goes and look at everything.

In other words, presence, presence practice. Here, it's more easier than in your usual surroundings. Presence practice, present moment practice.

There's a lot of nature here. I recommend taking walks in nature, looking at the trees, at the sky. There's a lake, the grass, the flowers, many, many lovely things.

Be as present as you can and alert. And as you walk around from one building to another, from here to there, really perceive. That already is a liberation from the usual self because you're not thinking, you cannot really perceive your surroundings fully when your usual self is talking to you.

And it's probably not talking about this present moment, it's talking about what you're going to encounter when you get back home, or what happened last week, or it's

doubting that being here is actually a good thing, or it's criticizing something that shouldn't really be here, but it's here. You don't want to, because that's not a retreat. You haven't really retreated, you've retreated on the external level, but you have not used this opportunity to retreat from your usual self, your usual mind.

So use the opportunity and retreat from the usual self, which is your usual mind. And the quickest way to that is alert presence. And you may notice, let's say just you're walking from point A to point B, somewhere on the campus here.

Let's say you're walking on the way there, it's from your room to the library, and you're walking immersed in your usual self, let's say it's a three minute walk. And then suddenly you wake up in the library, perhaps you open a book that says, be present. And then you walk back from the library and suddenly you go, amazing shift.

If your entire world has been transformed, the way in which you experience the world or your reality has completely shifted into something different. You're suddenly a field of consciousness that is perceiving the multiplicity of life in the universe. In fact, it feels that you are a manifestation of this universe perceiving itself.

And you see so much aliveness and beauty all around you. And other senses are part of that also. There's not just the visual, you listen.

There's a sound, there may be birds, other sounds. You breathe in the air, you feel, you hear the sound of your steps on whatever it is, gravel, if there's a sound, or you've sensed the softness of the grass. And you look at the sky without labeling very much.

You don't need to mentally call it what it is, what for? You know what it is without calling it what it is. You don't need to have a mental comment that says, oh, that's a lovely sky.

I wonder if the weather is going to last. No, you don't need that. And this is the discovery that you don't need that.

When you need it, you have it. But if you want to tell somebody the weather forecast, you have it, but you don't need it. You perceive more deeply by not labeling.

And that is the retreat from the mind. And then it becomes a true retreat. So you walk from point A to point B as in that sense of wonder.

And then you sense there's not only then what you perceive through your senses, because after all, that is the surface reality. It's beautiful. But as you perceive the beautiful surface reality of multiplicity of life forms, you can also sense an underlying stillness or presence.

As yourself, I can sense it at this moment. At this moment, words come out of my mouth, but I can sense the place where these words originate. And they do not originate in my

mind.

My mind becomes an instrument for it. It formulates the words, but the words originate from a deeper place. And when you listen to these words, you can also listen to these words from that deeper place within yourself and something within you responds, not in words, but it's like a recognition of what it is that I'm talking about.

And so you can, as I speak from that deeper place of alert stillness, you can listen from that deeper place of alert stillness. And now that's a real retreat. Now it's become a retreat.

So whether you're on a retreat depends, of course, on your state of consciousness. So use the opportunity of being here and as much as possible, let go of the usual self, which includes your life situation that you've left behind temporarily. Everybody has one.

You have a certain life situation that's to do with where you live, who you live with, the job you have, your financial situation, even your health situation. It's all to do with your life situation, but you don't want to carry, you don't want to be a walking life situation because then you have to juggle all these things in your mind to keep them going. What about this and what about that?

And at least one area probably is problematic in your life, whether it's your living situation, your home, whether it's your relationship situation or your marriage or whatever it is, or whether it's your financial situation or your job situation or your health situation, it's unlikely that there's not at least one that's quite problematic. And for many of you, it's more than one. There may be even some of you if all these are problematic.

But do you want to walk around as a problematic sense of self? Not saying I'm going to ignore all these problems and never take any more action for the rest of my life. No, it's not that.

But when you don't need that, why be burdened by that? And right now, there's nothing you can do about any of it. So why not step out, transcend your life situation?

And I use that term in the power of now. Instead of being immersed and carrying around with you that your life situation is a burden, a continuous burden, a burden some sense of self, instead of that, be the life. You are life.

You're not just a life situation. You are life. You are an expression of the one life that manifests as the universe.

Underlying the universe, there is the oneness of life. You are that one life that was there before the Big Bang, if there was a Big Bang. You are the one life, the one out of which the whole universe came, and not only out of which the whole universe came, out of which the whole universe continuously comes, continuously brings forth life, new forms.

And you are that. And so, isn't that a much more satisfying way of being in this world than a walking problematic life situation? You are life.

So, and here on this retreat, it's the recognition that you are a manifestation of the universe, of the consciousness that underlies the universe. And you are that universe experiencing yourself, or the universe experiencing itself. And you go, it's all so wonderful.

This mind-made sense of self is also a manifestation of a much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

[Speaker 4] (30:08 - 30:37)

My question is, how do you do the power of now for business? And specifically, I understand this with our personal lives, but in business, I find we're making future goals and plans and such, and trying to align my team with those, and when things don't work out, so how do we sort of use what we're learning here in a business context?

[Speaker 1] (30:38 - 31:33)

Right, well, in business, you have, you set certain goals that you want to achieve, and then you take action towards achieving those goals. And in the meantime, there's a lot of interaction with other people who are also working as a team with you. And there's probably also perhaps interaction with other business organizations.

So first of all, the goal setting and the journey towards achieving particular goals that the organization has set itself. Before I continue, may I ask what kind of business?

[Speaker 4] (31:34 - 31:36)

It's an online business.

[Speaker 1] (31:37 - 31:37)

Okay.

[Speaker 4] (31:37 - 31:38)

Mm-hmm.

[Speaker 1] (31:39 - 31:41)

And what does it do?

[Speaker 4] (31:41 - 31:45)

So we sell information products, business training products.

[Speaker 1] (31:45 - 40:01)

Okay, okay. So that is a potentially a helpful thing for people. Once you have a goal, you will find as you pursue your goal as a team together, continuously obstacles arise as you go towards it.

Whenever you create something new, you will find it's not, it is rarely a very smooth progression. You have to overcome obstacles on the way in the form of people or situations that go wrong, this doesn't work, or try something else. The important thing is not to place an excessive emphasis on the achievement, which is the desired outcome, but to be as present in the doing as you can so that the doing does not become stressful.

Almost every business is, people who are working in it are under stress, I believe. There may be some that are not, but the stress is not the way in which you want to conduct your business because the environment is toxic. A stressful environment is toxic.

So when you can always tell, is the goal something that is for the greater good, or is it an ego-inspired goal? Are you looking, this applies both in a business environment and it applies equally when you have personal goals, it's the same process is involved. When an obstacle arises to immediately face the obstacle, which comes in the form of a situation, something not working, something going wrong, somebody trying to sabotage you, perhaps from some other organization who knows what happens, to never react against the obstacle as if this should not be happening, to immediately to face it and see what is the way beyond it?

How can I either dissolve it, bypass it, or use it? What is so that you don't enter a state of reactivity when obstacles appear on your path? That's important for anybody who pursues a goal.

How, what is your relationship to difficulties and obstacles that arise as you travel towards your goal? And the only conscious way of dealing with obstacles is not to react as if these obstacles should not be happening. So you have to look into what your relationship is with arising obstacles on your path.

And this is not just in business, but anywhere. The unconscious person in business or elsewhere gets upset, angry, aggressive, despondent, very stressed every time something isn't going the way they want it to go. And immediately dysfunctional inner states arise.

And therefore they experience, there are companies where the entire environment is toxic because everybody lives in that way. And ego is also a thing that arises as much as possible be aware so that you don't seek ego satisfaction in the doing. There's a personal ego.

Then one person can sabotage another person in the same company, because you are not free of ego identification. So it's very important to be aware so that you do not seek ego satisfaction through what you are doing. Be present in what you do so that the doing becomes joyful rather than placing so much focus on what you want to achieve that the journey becomes very stressful.

Then nothing is worth achieving if the journey is stressful. You might, let's say you spent a year or two years with some scheme that you want a new business model or whatever it is. How, what is the state of consciousness, the collective state of consciousness while you are traveling towards your goal?

Is it stressed? Is it stressful? Is there a lot of conflict?

Or is it a common enterprise? And is the doing joyful? And it can only be joyful if you place more importance in what you're doing in this present moment than attempting to arrive at some future point.

You know where you want to go to, but as the Bhagavad Gita says, do not be too attached to the outcome. Then it's much more likely that the outcome will be good. But if you have an excessive attachment, you need to achieve that.

You have an excessive attachment to outcome, then the journey becomes very stressful. That's something that is important. And I'm talking not from personal experience because I'm not in business, but I have spoken to people, quite a few, who are in the business environment.

And so I've met a lot of people I've met, been to some relatively conscious companies, they invited me. Of course, unconscious companies wouldn't invite me. And I have spoken to them, and I'm surprised that these conscious companies actually, it's a joy to be there for all the, do the employees, whoever they are, or their partners, do they enjoy being there?

That is vital. Sounds very simple. Or are they so focused on some kind of achievement that the doing is not enjoyable at all?

Do they love being there? What is the relationship between, with you and your colleagues, partners? And those things are vitally important.

And what, I don't know how many employees you have. Again, it's important to make the environment as pleasant for them as possible. Don't, encouraging people to, I'm sure if you are in that kind of environment that is probably more conscious than many others, and you are here, that's a good sign.

So I believe your company is already relatively conscious. Is there any particular problem still that you think is something that you have not been able to go beyond?

[Speaker 4] (40:08 - 40:56)

No, I just, as I'm trying to become more present myself, because a lot of what you talked about before, that's when I first got into business, it was for ego satisfaction. It was because I was trying to achieve things probably to make myself feel better. And now I've realized that doesn't work.

So now I'm working on it personally, and I'm trying to transfer these skills into the business. So you talked a little bit about that, and I guess the biggest takeaway I had is, it's okay to have goals, it's okay to project into the future as part of business and knowing what you're going. I'm the type of person that's like planning and planning everything down to the detail.

And I realized that that can be counterproductive and to know where we need to go. And then as challenges come up, which is normal, to then become present, become more present.

[Speaker 1] (40:57 - 41:03)

Yes, welcome the challenges rather than resent the challenges. With the team. Yes, together.

[Speaker 4] (41:03 - 41:04)

With the whole team, yeah.

[Speaker 1] (41:04 - 42:23)

Yes, so you can teach them. So I'm sure you have a lot to teach them. So it's wonderful.

So you will probably grow into something big and then invite me and I'll talk to you. Thank you. Relationships will reflect back to you your predominant state of consciousness.

And that's why they are so useful. And so if you are a hermit, then it's very easy to fool yourself as to your state of consciousness. If you avoid contact with other humans, because it's just, you just don't want to know anymore.

[Speaker 2] (42:24 - 42:26)

It's just too unsettling.

[Speaker 1] (42:29 - 45:11)

Then of course, yes, you can probably be in sustained states of if you're lucky enough, somebody brings you food, you don't, you can be in sustained states of presence and believe that you have finally arrived, but it will not yet be deeply rooted within you

because it has not been tested in the fire of relationships. As a monk, I knew years ago, a Buddhist monk was telling me that he was in the East somewhere and he, the Westerner, but he had become a Buddhist monk. And his teacher, the abbot of the monastery where he was allowed him to go up a mountain and sit in a little hut for half a year.

And somebody would bring him food every day and he had nothing to do but meditate and sit. And after a few, first, the first month was dreadful, unbearable because he was sitting there with his mind, torturing him. On the inner and the mosquitoes torturing him on the outer level.

And then gradually he was able to let go of that and more and more presence was arising. And he then said, and then in the last month or so, presence was almost continuous and he was convinced that he had reached the state of liberation. And then a message came from the monastery which somebody had realized that your visa has expired.

And so he had to travel to the big city and stand in line at the consulate or whatever it was. And it took hours and then he was in the wrong line and said, I've just been standing here for two hours. No, this is the wrong lineup.

You have to go to that one. And that was the wrong one too. And when he finally got to the official, he was hitting his table.

I've been here for five hours. And then he suddenly became aware and he realized all that beautiful presence was gone. That's relationships.

And that was an easy relationship. Just an official.

[Speaker 2] (45:23 - 45:23)

Relationships.

[Speaker 1] (45:24 - 1:25:02)

Now, there are many kinds of relationships. We will talk about that. The essence of relationships, the question is always whether relationships are working harmoniously and beautifully or whether they are conflict-ridden is determined by whether there is space in your relationship.

Then that applies to any relationship. The question is, is there space in this room? What does space mean?

I don't mean space in the sense of distance between people. That's another aspect. I mean, inner space.

There is a line in Kahlil Gibran's prophet which talks about space, but this is not what I mean. This is also true, by the way. He says, let there be spaces in your relationship, which means don't cling to each other all the time.

Occasionally go your own way and then come back together. That's also true. But what I'm talking about here is inner space in the relationship.

And what that is, you probably know already, and we will come to that now as we address the different kinds of relationships that you encounter in life and see how the arising new consciousness can be sustained in those challenging situations because there is no doubt that human beings are very challenging. The others are the human beings. So you have, well, of course, the first thing that comes to mind when you talk about relationships is the intimate relationships, which often usually start off as romantic and then become something else.

Those, this is what all usually comes to mind, what is what many films are still about, movies that you see, a large part are still about that. And it is what many people's lives are preoccupied with, what people look to for their sense of fulfillment and happiness. And at the same time, those intimate relationships are one of the greatest sources of unhappiness.

So a little contradiction here, of course, people look to it for their fulfillment and happiness, and in many, many cases, the opposite happens. And in many, many cases, the people experience a shift from the very person that was going to, was supposed to make me happy, now makes me unhappy. That's the normal course of relationships.

I read the other day, I don't know who said it. And he said, there is no marriage in which a week after the wedding, there's no marriage in which one week after the wedding, you cannot find grounds for divorce. And the secret is in continuing to find grounds for marriage, he said.

Before we, let's put this aside, because that is the most problematic. But you are engaged, we will come to that, of course, but you are engaged throughout the day and throughout your life in many kinds of relationship, different types of relationship. You have relationships with your children, if you have children.

You have relationships with your grown-up children. You have relationships with your parents, relationships with siblings, family members, relatives. You have relationships with friends.

You have relationships, casual, brief relationships when you interact with people to do this or that, to buy something, to ask for information. On the telephone, these are all relationships and they're all part of, if you, if there is dysfunction in you, egoic dysfunction, that will manifest in all relationships. If you respond unconsciously out of

the ego, then usually it amplifies, it fuels conflict and you bring more unconsciousness.

But in a strange way, you also, your state of consciousness affects other humans, even humans you don't come into contact with. That's a little mysterious, but all humans at a deeper level are connected. There's one collective human consciousness, which is an aspect of the greater consciousness of the universe, just a ray of the greater.

There's a collective human consciousness. On that deeper level, every human is connected to every other human. And what you, if you embody, if you begin to awaken into the state of presence, it's not a state, but let's call it a state.

If you awaken into a state of presence, dimension of presence, that makes it easier for other humans to also awaken into presence. And so in a subtle way, that's how humans are connected. For example, in a somewhat different way, it has been discovered when one person makes a new, fantastic discovery, quite often, almost at the same time in other parts of the world, some other humans have made a similar discovery almost at the same time.

It's often been discovered that's because all humans are connected at a deeper level. So in that sense, even if you have little or no contact with other humans, if you're present, you still affect the totality of human consciousness. But most humans are continuously interacting with other humans.

And then you become a teacher of presence. Obviously, if your profession involves a lot of contact with other humans, let's even a helping profession, then more obviously you become a teacher of presence when you realize that whether you are a teacher or a social worker or a doctor or a nurse or a therapist, a psychotherapist or physical therapist, so if you're in some kind of helping profession, then you become a teacher of presence. Of course, whatever you're teaching will be a different thing, but you realize when you convey the whatever it is that you, the modality that we used to interact with those humans, helping capacity, if you're present, that presence flows into the way in which you relate to the other human being.

Let's say you're a therapist. A therapist spends a lot of time listening to humans and they're talking. That's usually encouraged in therapy.

So you're listening and the other person, your client, your patient, whatever you call him or her, is talking usually about their problems. And then the therapist has a certain modality. He or she has been trained in a particular therapeutic approach, whatever it may be.

Could be old-fashioned psychoanalysis or something more modern. So the therapist will be applying their particular modality to be trained to approach the situation in a particular way. But when the therapist becomes a teacher of presence, in addition to

being a therapist, there's an energy that arises when the other person is talking, the therapist is listening.

In that listening, there's an energy of presence because the therapist, if he's a good, if he becomes a teacher of presence, he's no longer listening so much to the conceptual mind, but listening in the state of the clarity of presence. Just, it's more than listening. Presence is there and you embody the presence for the other person who does not have presence yet, hasn't discovered it yet.

And then the most important part of your therapeutic relationship becomes a state of presence. And then you find yourself, regardless of your training, whatever you have been trained to say or do, you may find intuition coming in more and more. Maybe you've been trained in a particular therapeutic approach, but you will then gradually, your intuition will become more important than whatever you've learned when you're training as a therapist.

More and more, you will find your intuition will come in more. And suddenly you say something and you didn't know beforehand until you said it. It didn't come, you don't come from a place of knowing, you come from a place of not knowing, which is very deep.

And then you become an effective therapist. Only, and so I have met therapists, they've spent years sitting with people and applying their techniques, whatever they learned. And then gradually, or maybe not even gradually, they began to realize, or maybe they didn't realize even consciously, just gradually the ability to listen grew in them.

And then that became just presence. And then they became extremely effective as therapists, because presence was taking over. Whatever their training became secondary, in some cases they all completely didn't use it anymore.

But sometimes it comes only after, the question is, when can presence use you as a channel? Sometimes it requires a lot of practice before presence can use you as a, not always, but sometimes. This not only applies to helping professions, it also applies to presence arising in you when you are engaged in some creative endeavor, whatever it may be, you're a musician, or an artist, or whatever it may be, a composer, maybe, interesting.

Is presence able to use you as a vehicle, or as a conduit, can flow through you and inspire what you create and do? Yes, but often it requires many hours of practice so that the channel is ready for presence. There was a, I've often, a few times quoted, there was a writer who discovered, who examined creative people, like musicians, who created things that were, became classics, never, whether it's classic, for example, in music, classical composers, like Mozart or Beethoven, or modern pop music, like the Beatles.

And he looked at the hours they spent practicing their craft, so to speak, thousands of hours before presence was able to suddenly come in and they became inspired. And he stipulated, he even, he calculated, and said, 10,000 hours you need. And then there's a possibility for presence to flow in, and then what you then create through presence, you don't create it, what is being created through you becomes unbelievable.

How can a human create such beauty or such powerful thing? Even with, I mean, if you look at the Beatles is relatively, compared to Beethoven, Beethoven, Mozart are more complex, classical music constructions. Nevertheless, the Beatles also, the songs were deeply inspired as a quality to make many of their songs that, this is why they stay around, they'll still be played 200 years time, 300 years time, whereas most other music disappears after a few months or after a year, definitely, or even a few weeks, popular for three weeks and then it's gone, because it's just noise.

With a little bit of hype, you can make that noise popular for a little while and then it disappears. But some, there's a quality, what is created through presence, there's a quality to it that you cannot define, but almost everybody can sense it and feel it and even be touched by it. So I wouldn't say that, in a way, in a wider sense, you could say people like that, they are also teachers of presence.

They teach through whatever they create through presence, becomes extremely helpful to other humans because it still contains the energy of presence. How do I truly forgive myself for not being present with another, Janice? Well, I assume the question refers to something that happened in the past, not in the present, because if the other is here with you now, then there's nothing to forgive, you just be present.

So it must be something that you were not present with someone in the past because there was not enough presence in you. You cannot manifest any behavior beyond your level of consciousness. Either you had no idea what presence was, you were not yet able to access that dimension of consciousness, or it was there very weak in you, not strong enough perhaps to survive in that particular interaction or relationship.

Some parents have that feeling also because when they look back upon how they brought up their children, they cannot believe how unconscious they were as parents. Now, there's no such thing as totally conscious parents. No matter what you do, there's always something that you don't do right.

Absolute perfection is just not possible. But there are now for the first time perhaps in history, there are parents who are relatively conscious, who are endeavoring to be conscious as parents. In my generation, it was unheard of.

Conscious parents, what is that? You just, the parents brought you up in the same way that they were brought up and in the same way that was sanctioned by the surrounding culture. That's how you were brought up.

Conscious parents, what's that nonsense? And of course, in my generation, I didn't know anybody who had even remotely conscious parents. My parents, of course, they did the best they could.

They loved me to the best of their ability, but they were both very unconscious. In the later, when my dad was very old, some of the egoic self broke off, little bits of pieces of his ego disintegrated. There was still an ego left, but the massive ego that he had before started to dissolve.

If he had lived beyond his age, he reached the age of 90. Perhaps if he had lived to 100 or 110, he might've gone much further still. But my parents were deeply unconscious.

There was constant conflict at home, terrible drama and scenes and shouting and screaming and physical violence. It was a nightmare. And that was not uncommon.

Of course, even nowadays, there are children, still many, who have to endure that, still many, but there are conscious parents. And I have met children who are born into a conscious family. And that's a wonderful thing.

It's a new thing. So forgiving yourself for not being present, there's always a tendency of the ego to identify with certain conditions. So the ego identifies with the condition of unconsciousness and says, that was me, and I was wrong.

I should have been conscious at the time, but you were not. You couldn't have been more conscious at the time than you were at the time. So there comes a, you forgive yourself by realizing that nobody can act beyond their level of consciousness.

And whatever you did in the past was an expression of, on your personal level, of the evolutionary state of yourself and on a collective level, you manifest the evolutionary state of humanity until you begin to awaken. And then you become a forerunner, at the forefront, spearheading the growth of consciousness. There were many silly things I did in relationships when I was in my 20s, unconscious.

Nothing drastic, fortunately, but it could have been, but hurting people, but not being aware of it, ego, egoic motivations, and so on. I wasn't even there. I was, there was conditioning operating through me, the ways in which my mind had been conditioned.

I wasn't awake yet, so it was a kind of dreamlike state. So how, it shouldn't be that difficult to forgive yourself for something that you did in a dream. And it's the unconscious state is very much like that.

If you have still an opportunity to go to this person and perhaps explain that you were unconscious, if that is, we don't know what level of consciousness this person's at, whether this person would be able to listen to you and even understand what you're saying. So, or this person may not be alive anymore, or there may not be an opportunity

to speak, but either way, you forgive yourself by realizing that there is ultimately nothing to forgive. And that even applies to another person because if forgiving goes both ways, sometimes you have to forgive yourself, but you also have to forgive somebody else.

If you do not want to carry the enormous burden of carrying a grievance, which is a dreadful thing, that could, just one grievance towards another human being, that is a heavy grievance that you carry, can stop the arising of presence in you. So letting go of grievances is vital. And again, it's whatever somebody else did to you, they acted out of their level of unconsciousness.

So then it, rather than make it into an identity, somebody does something that's unconscious to you, and then you transform it mentally into that person's identity that makes it almost impossible to forgive. In ordinary human interaction, it is very important to overlook things that humans do because every human being that you come into contact with will manifest, even if they are awakening, they are in the awakening process, they will still manifest occasionally areas of unconsciousness when they interact with you. They might lie to you for some reason here and there.

They might do this or that. And then if you focus on that excessively, you say, he lied to me. Okay, have you ever lied to anybody?

No, I never lie. Okay, then you need to. He lied to me.

And then you focus on that and you amplify that and you make that into part of his or her identity. And then it's very easy to do that. And this is judgment.

And you focus on that little thing and you amplify it and it becomes part of who you think that person is. So if you want to have a relatively harmonious relationship, many things you need to overlook in the other person because every person has his or her unconsciousness that occasionally manifests. Hopefully not massive unconsciousness because you might not want to be with him or her to have a close interaction.

But some unconsciousness, yes. Some insensitivity may arise in theirs. They may say or do something that is selfish or that they may have a very one-sided perspective of something.

They may misperceive you. They may misperceive your motivation. You misperceive their motivation.

All kinds of things. So to forgive in a present situation means to overlook. So it's not the big forgiving, but an overlooking of things so that you can focus on the being of the other person rather than focus on the faults, which are unconsciousness.

So the same applies to human beings. If you see a fault, don't dwell on it as applies to you if you're looking for a home in California. If you see a fault, don't dwell on it.

This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. Your sense of self-worth is diminishing, and that's a source of great suffering.

So the story, if we go back to the beginning, the story of you, let's travel back in time to a prehistoric, mythological time where we encounter a young man going for a walk in the woods, and his name, according to ancient Greek mythology, is Narcissus. Narcissus, the young man walking in the woods, very happy, contemplating nature, not disturbed yet by incoming text messages, or Facebook postings, or Instagram, or possible Tinder dates, not distracted by anything, just being there, present, enjoying the aliveness of the present moment. And then this young man came upon a pool of water or a little pond, a very still pond.

And of course, at those times, there were no mirrors yet. There was no technology. Mirrors had not been invented.

He looked into the pond, and he saw his own reflection in the pond. And he was amazed at the beauty of his own reflection. Now, you might think, is that perhaps a very ancient prophecy of the selfie?

Can't take my eyes off it. No, it was not a prophecy of the selfie, but there's a connection, of course. There is a connection.

This is the glass surface of the selfie, and here we have the reflection of his own image in the water. Now, the story goes that he fell in love with his own reflection, and he could not get away from it. He got drawn back to it again and again.

And although the story says that he fell in love with his own reflection, a more precise way of putting it would be to say that he became obsessed with his own reflection, because ultimately, I don't know if you have experienced it ever, falling in love is a kind of obsession. Not loving. Love is something else.

I'm talking about falling in love, of course, is a very obsessive thing. I need you. Don't you ever leave me.

And then, of course, he or she leaves, or you leave. That's a long story. We all know it.

And he lost his happiness. He was no longer happy. There are different versions of the story, but in the more ancient versions, eventually he commits suicide.

So that story, in mythology, often expresses a deep truth which otherwise humans would not understand or could not express in any abstract way. The truth needs to be embedded in a story. And there's a very deep truth here that points to the arising of a mentally-created self image that people have and live with.

So it's almost as if you had a phantom that walks with you wherever you go that is your mind-created image or concept of who you are. And that is what we call the ego. The ego is a mental image conditioned by the past, conditioned by your environment and many other factors, a mental image, a conceptual sense of self that you identify with so completely that you disappear in it and live through it.

You believe that that is who you are. And that is the conditioned mind-made self. It consists of layers, different layers.

At the most fundamental level, first of all, everybody identifies, first of all, with your physical body. That's the most fundamental level of identification. You are, you believe that you are the body.

You identify with the body that you are. And the body, of course, already is a problematic thing to identify with because you compare this body, that you say, I am this body, this physical form, and then you compare to others. And it can be a source of pride if your body is better looking or stronger than most other bodies.

The ego gets in there and feels inflated, greater. And it can also be a source of suffering or shame if your body is not the way you think it should be or society tells you it should be, or when you compare it to others, it's not as strong or as beautiful as others, then you're, again, you suffer. You have a sense of self that feels less than.

On the other side, you might have a sense of self that feels more than. People who have a strong or beautiful body, when I was young, I would have given 20 years of my life if God or the universe had said to me, I can give you a beautiful, strong body and make you into a good-looking man that attracts countless women, I would have said, it's a deal. 20 years of my life, I'll be happy, but it didn't happen.

But I can see how people who are good-looking or strong or both, how easy it is for them to seek a large part of their identity in their external appearance. And that can be fine for a while, but inevitably, of course, what is a source of pleasure for some years, gradually and perhaps even quickly turns into a source of suffering because the body does not last. And a day comes when you look in the mirror and the mirror image is no longer the same as it was 10 or 20 or 30 years ago, especially if you have a photo of yourself next to the mirror.

Something went very wrong here. And then it becomes a source of suffering. Now, in our civilization, there are repair jobs that you can do that for a while will help you feel you're still okay, good-looking, but inevitably you suffer, begin to suffer more and more because who you think you are is diminishing.

Who you think you are, the value, your sense of self-worth is diminishing. And that's a source of great suffering. And of course, humans who identified with a negative body

image, they are suffering already when they are young.

They don't have to wait until the body grows old. So we have identification with the body and then you put clothes on the body, of course, that they become an extension of the body and they can add something. They can hide things.

They can conceal things that don't look so good or they can enhance things that look good. And then it's nice when people are looking at me and it feels good to the ego. In particular situations, you may lose awareness and regress to total identification with some reactive pattern.

[Speaker 2] (1:25:02 - 1:25:30)

And it could be the pain body, a usually problematic area for many or most people is relationships of whatever kind or on whatever level.

[Speaker 1] (1:25:31 - 1:26:50)

It's where people seek their happiness and it's where many people find their unhappiness. And so I'm talking about both intimate relationships, somebody you live with, and I'm talking about other kinds of relationship also, at work, other family members, relatives, friends, and even very brief relationships because any interaction with another human being is, I'm using our relationship in a wider sense, any interaction with another human being is a relationship. You are relating to that person.

And so it is, for many people, most of their or a large part of their suffering or unhappiness, unfortunately, is derived from relationships. They tend to go wrong so often or present so many problems and obstacles.

[Speaker 2] (1:26:52 - 1:27:05)

And it seems that human beings are just so terribly difficult, except one.

[Speaker 1] (1:27:08 - 1:27:30)

The one who is listening to these words. You remember the statement, know thyself, famous words of wisdom.

[Speaker 2] (1:27:31 - 1:27:36)

Knowing yourself, there are two levels to knowing yourself.

[Speaker 1] (1:27:38 - 1:35:53)

One is a level of mental, emotional, and reactive patterns that you display in your life and the ability to be aware of them. That is one level of self-knowledge, of knowing yourself. That is the kind of thing that in sometimes in good therapy sessions, if you have

a good, aware therapist, it can be helpful to become aware of that level in yourself so that you know what your predominant patterns are.

Doesn't everybody know what their patterns are? They are so identified with their patterns that there's no awareness left. And that usually means when a person is so unconscious, that unconscious, the definition of unconscious, the way we use it here in a spiritual sense, not in a clinical sense, I'm not talking about unconscious, but in a spiritual sense, unconscious is to be totally identified with thoughts and emotions.

So there's no room for any awareness left. So you are in the grip of the thought, in the grip of the emotion, and often the thoughts and emotions are linked, go together. They have you in their grip so that they basically, you are them, you are the emotion.

And those people who are so unconscious, there's still millions around, you might've noticed. Often they have a tendency of seeking always, there's always the people are always to be blamed out there. There's always people that point their fingers at why these people are so bad and what they're doing to you or how awful they are.

There's never looking at oneself. Jesus already had that statement. Why do you see the, what is the saying about the, but, yeah, you see a little splinter in the other person's eye, but you don't see the huge splinter that is in your eye.

Very profound statement. So why don't you find that first, he says. So in other words, he says, know thyself, be aware of your own patterns.

And most people here have that awareness, but perhaps not all the time. For many of you, when you are challenged in a particular way, in particular situations, you may lose awareness and regress to total identification with some reactive pattern. And it could be the pain body.

As you know, the pain body is old accumulated emotion that still I regard it as an almost autonomous entity that lives in you. It's a way of looking at it, but there's a lot of truth to this. There's an emotional field that lives in you as almost as an entity, one could say.

That sounds slightly spooky, but one could say that even a thought is an entity. When you think a thought, it is an energy formation. It is a little being that you give birth to.

So it has a life, it depends, for its life, it depends on you, on your life, but it is a little entity. And so in some forms of either deep unconscious or when mental illness, sometimes it can happen that the mind gets completely taken over by these little thought entities. And so you're totally then totally occupied.

Your mind is totally, pocky, another word for occupied is, I won't say it, it sounds too spooky. So you're totally occupied by these thoughts. And they pretend to be you.

So that is total lack of awareness. So it's essential for your spiritual growth to be continuously alert and aware. And vigilant so that you are able to be there in the background, so to speak, as the awareness in your daily life.

So that you're not completely taken over by the arising thoughts and arising emotions. When you interact with people, when you become upset about this or that, always any kind of upset or disturbance in your energy field can be very helpful. Do not believe that, oh, I shouldn't have this disturbance in my energy field, or I shouldn't be upset because I'm spiritual.

I don't get upset about these things anymore. But be honestly, observe what arises, and then observe how does it arise? And as I already mentioned last night, very often you will find it is caused by certain thoughts in your mind, certain interpretations, certain reactions.

It can also happen that a reaction comes so suddenly that it's just an emotion waiting to come up, an emotion. And this is what the pain body does. As you may know, the pain body is not necessarily always active in you.

There are periods when the old emotional pain that you still carry around with you is dormant, and then it leaves you in peace for a while. Then you are fine. You meet somebody, and this person is lovely, and it all goes fine.

And you might spend some time together, and it's still fine. And then you go on vacation together for the first time. And then there comes a moment when something else comes in that's not fine, either in you or through the other.

And what happens in relationships, the pain body periodically needs to feed on a certain experience that corresponds to its energy field. The vibrational frequency of its energy field is, ah, ah. A good external image of the pain body in, I think it's in Lord of the Rings, is this little being.

I can't remember the name. It goes, ah, ah. Ah, ah.

[Speaker 9] (1:35:53 - 1:35:57)

Ah, ah. Ah, ah. Ah, ah.

Ah, ah. Ah, ah.

[Speaker 1] (1:35:57 - 2:20:49)

Ah, ah. Ah, ah. And even the little being once was a normal being, according to the legend in this.

It's kind of modern mythology. That being was once a normal, lovely human. And there is

still, although this being has been completely taken over by what I call the pain body, occasionally there are still instances when the original being that's been completely taken over still shines through.

There's a little bit of tiny glimmers of awareness come in occasionally. And then you almost feel sorry for it. But then again, the pain body, and if you feel sorry and you give in, then immediately the pain body will take advantage of that.

So that's a lovely mythological, modern mythological illustration of the pain body. So to observe that in yourself, in relationships, how it periodically comes up, either in your partner or in yourself, wanting some kind of drama, amplifying something little into something big, because it wants to feed on your partner's reaction. It wants the emotional negativity.

It needs emotional negativity from the other in order to suck it up. And then you give back of it to the other, the pain body. Then mutually they energize each other.

And that is unconscious. That is how couples, many couples, most couples perhaps, unless there's already considerable consciousness there in both of them, or at least one of them, they go through that periodically, don't realize that that is what it is. And at first, there are even people who feel they need that drama to feel that the relationship is still real.

And that is, there comes a point when it gets too much. So then the pain that arises so often and so frequently, it gets too much, I can't live with this person anymore. And then you separate.

But if you haven't, if the awareness hasn't come in so that you can be aware of your own pain body, what you contribute to it, then you will repeat the same thing in the next relationship. So the pain body needs to re-experience emotional pain through drama. And whoever it comes up first in, it is usually an over, it's always recognizable by being an overreaction to something, an event, something you said, something you did, or something you failed to say, or you failed to do.

But the person who is displaying the pain body does not know it's an overreaction. So only an outside observer or the other might see that it's an overreaction. But to the pain body, it seems a totally natural reaction.

So you need to know what situations, there may be certain situations in your life that tend to trigger the pain body in your relationship or at work. There may be certain people that your pain body is susceptible to, resonates with. If you live alone, then the pain body has a little problem.

What am I going to feed on? I can't have drama with myself, or can I? Yes, you can.

You can have the drama in your mind. You can have a stream of destructive and negative thoughts in your mind, either about yourself or others. They may not be here, but you have the thoughts about them.

They may be in your past, they may be dead. But the pain body, if there's nobody around that the pain body can feed on through negative emotion, it will feed on negative thought streams, your thought streams. And this is where the addiction to negative thinking comes from.

You can speak out, maybe you can post something on one of the many platforms that are available, something that is sane rather than insane. But it may, perhaps you can post something that points out the insanity of it all. So how you respond, and that, if you're, I have to, we can use the two words, react, respond.

The way I use them is, react means it's a karmically determined reaction. You react out of the conditioning of your mental, emotional field. Response implies that you are present, and your action is no longer determined by the mental, emotional conditioning of the person.

There is a higher intelligence, one could say, or I call it wisdom, but in other words, there's a higher intelligence that can then operate in your daily life. A higher intelligence, which we could call wisdom, but it's not the conventional intelligence that you can measure in IQ tests. That's a very limited version of intelligence.

There's a higher intelligence that comes in through presence, that deals more intelligently with any situation that arises in your life. That's the only possible way of dealing intelligently is by dealing with the situation through presence, especially important, of course, in human relationships, because there's so much unconsciousness that happens in the interaction between human beings, between two human beings, and larger numbers of human beings, and then groups of your collectives of your millions of human beings here, and another million there and there. You can see when you look at politics and affairs and to what's happening in the world, there's very little intelligence.

The way they deal with things, and you would be, you're amazed. How can they be so short-sighted and ultimately have to use a simple word, stupid? But these people have degrees.

They have university degrees. How can they be so stupid? Well, they only activated a very limited version of intelligence that you can measure in IQ tests.

That's not enough. I'm sorry, I don't want to offend anybody who has a very high IQ, or is a member of this, there's an organization called Mensa, I believe. So if you have a very IQ, you can be a member of that, and that's good for your identity, of course.

Intelligence. So I don't want to take anything away from you, but that is not real

intelligence. Yes, it's a form of intelligence, but it's a relatively low form of intelligence.

A much higher intelligence comes in through presence, and that is lacking in the world. There are, occasionally you see, very rarely you see a politician, actually you can see, oh, this person has some real intelligence and insights, and it's usually not the people who are running things. If it's a politician, it's usually somebody who's been pushed to the periphery of politics, and from there he or she comments on the stupidity of what's happening in the world.

I've observed it, it's in different countries, a similar phenomenon. There are, okay, there are a few people here and there who can see clearly where we are going and what we are doing, and it's crazy. Because there is a lack of true, this higher intelligence that is beyond the egoic mind.

And, well, at the moment it doesn't look good because we are going, what, no. I was going to use that weird expression about the hand basket again. So when you can see it, now it's important when you look at the state of the world, it's important that you do not enter a reactive mode because that will draw you into unconsciousness.

If you watch too much television or current affairs, you will be drawn into, most likely, unconsciousness, unless you watch it as an, unless you watch it as an anthropological study of how misguided humanity can be. So you need to stay present while you look at all this and see what's happening. Question may arise, shouldn't I be doing something to, well, there may be something you can do, bring some sanity into this world, perhaps through saying something, speaking out, pointing out something, not creating enemies.

If you see people are deluded in what they say or do, don't make them into enemies and attack them and say, you are totally crazy. No, it's the, it may be that the, what they, what they do may be and probably is dysfunctional and stupid, or the opinions they hold may be extremely misguided and irrational. So you can address the opinions that they hold their mental positions and point out the irrationality and so on, without making the people who hold the opinion into enemies.

So don't equate the mental positions that people hold with who they essentially are. You can speak out, maybe you can post something on one of the many platforms that are available, something that is sane rather than insane. But it may, perhaps you can post something that points out the insanity of it all.

Some people do that, so that's a good thing. No, because some people may suddenly see, oh yes, that's true. So higher intelligence comes in and that can then deal with situations and that's the end of karma.

What humanity is doing now collectively is karma playing itself out, the movement of unconsciousness. And so, as we mentioned yesterday, with reference to individuals, you

remember we talked about responsibility. Can you hold a person responsible for what they do if they are unconscious?

We talked about that yesterday. If they are in the grip of their mental, emotional conditioning, that is part, that's their karma. Can you hold a karmic formation, person, can you hold a karmic formation responsible for what they do?

Not really. So there's a deep wisdom in what Jesus said, forgive them for they know not what they do. Forgiveness means the realization that they are not responsible, they cannot do otherwise.

But we also, and this also applies to the collective, what all the politicians are doing and so on. They don't know any better. They are in the grip of egoic reactivity and short-sightedness that comes with it and so on.

But as is the case with individuals, although they may not be and cannot be held responsible and yet they have to suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness, this is how humans ultimately awaken. They are not responsible, but they still have to, they create suffering for themselves and others. And through the suffering that's created by the unconsciousness, an awakening happens.

So in other words, the ego is necessary for the awakening to happen. The ego ultimately self-destructs. It has built into it a self-destruct function.

That is ultimate wisdom. So that also applies to the collective. Already, if you look at the 20th century, the wars that happened and the internal conflicts in countries that happens, the countless millions upon millions killed by other humans, what they did, the terrible suffering, this is all the movement of unconsciousness.

They don't know what they do. And then humanity suffers and suffers and suffers. Through the suffering, gradually an awakening happens.

So the ego's dysfunction creates suffering and ultimately the suffering acts as an awakener. It's just a question of how much longer is the suffering going to go? And what's the next stage, you may ask, on the scale of collective suffering?

I don't know, but it doesn't look good at the moment. But you are here to represent, to embody the higher intelligence. I mean, hopefully you don't make that into a mental concept.

I embody the higher intelligence. It is true, but it should not become a mental concept that you identify with. And so the sanity, you embody the sanity in a world that is still predominantly, one has to say, insane in many ways.

Not all of it is insane, but a lot of it, some important parts are insane. So let's then see

what the, whatever comes is, may be bad from a lower perspective, doesn't look good. But ultimately, everything that happens is in the service of the evolution of consciousness, even in your own life.

And if it applies in your own life, it also applies to the collective of humanity. When you wait for the next challenge, do you completely, does it completely draw you out of yourself? Ha ha.

Now let's look at a little bit from a different chapter. You can see that it doesn't really matter where you open the book. That's ideal for meditative reading.

He that knows how to walk interiorly and to make but little account of things exteriorly does not look for places nor wait for seasons to perform exercises of devotion. The man of interior life soon recollects himself because he never wholly porous force himself upon exterior things. Exterior labor is no prejudice to him nor any employment necessary for the time.

But as things happen, so he accommodates himself to them. Let's look at those two sentences, very important. The man, the person, the human being, of interior life soon recollects himself because he never wholly porous himself force upon exterior things.

A lovely way of putting it. The interior man, again, we had that before. It means, it points to who you are at the level of awareness, the unconditioned being, the timeless in you, the essence of who you are, the interior being, soon recollects himself.

Never really, you never, the interior man never completely loses himself in the external. He or she soon recollects himself because he never wholly, I'll just put it into slightly more modern English. He never wholly porous force himself upon exterior things.

To pour yourself into exterior things, to completely lose yourself in exterior things, you observe it all the time. When you just, before you see it in yourself, look at other humans around you, how they lose themselves or that the slightest challenge comes in the form of an unexpected setback, something going wrong here or there, some difficult situation, a person not doing what I expect them to do, whatever it is, how quickly people pour themselves into exterior things. And so this thing suddenly becomes of absolute importance.

That's what it means, pouring yourself out into things, which ultimately, of course, you pour yourself into your thoughts. Every thought that arises takes complete possession of you. You pour all your attention into that.

So you're continuously lost, a continuous loss, amazing. You can see it in others. Just wait, people around you, how, what they do when challenges come.

Okay, you've done that. Now you've recognized in others. The next step is, oh, can you

recognize in yourself?

Do you do that also? When you wait for the next challenge, do you completely, does it completely draw you out of yourself? And when it does, don't beat yourself up.

But even just noticing that that's what's happening is a huge gain in consciousness. So you don't beat yourself up and say, oh, I can't do it. No, just notice it.

Any pattern you notice in yourself means there is some consciousness. There's awareness there. It's when you don't know it, that you're completely trapped in it.

And if you don't know it, there's not much you can do, except after the challenge has passed, perhaps you can look back and say, oh, I completely lost it there again. And when that, so awareness comes after the challenge, which is even, which is still better than no awareness at all. And because if there's no awareness at all, even the most unconscious reaction, you will justify afterwards to yourself and to others.

The ego is good at finding excuses and justifications. The most absurd justifications will do. It's an automatic defense mechanism of the ego.

So if you're very unconscious, of course you wouldn't even be listening to this. I'm not talking to people who are totally unconscious because they're not listening. They can't.

There's no space in them to listen to this. Without a little bit of space at least, you can't listen to this. It will be dreadful, completely meaningless or threatening.

There's a difference between appreciating something and being attached to something because you derive your sense of identity from it. This, by the way, also applies to possessions because in a way you could look at the body as something that you have rather than something as you are. Although I've said somewhere in a book, just as a meditative practice, you are your body, but not the physical body where you go deeper into the body.

That's another story. But really the physical body, you are not the physical body. Even the language knows that.

When people use language, in all languages, I assume, people refer to my body. And they say, I have a body. I have a good-looking body.

I have a ugly body, whatever. But they say they have a body. So they must have realized language has, maybe a little bit of wisdom has crept into language.

And so you say, I have a body, which means you are not the body. So anyway, everybody says they have a body. So they are not the body.

But to appreciate something that you have, whether it's a body that you have or some

kind of object that you have or some kind of ability that you have, whatever it may be, to appreciate that is fine. To like it, you love it, but not in a deeply attached sense that you do not, to appreciate something is different from deriving partly your sense of identity from it. Let's say you have a nice, an object that you own, and you, perhaps it's been with you for a long time or not, and it looks nice, it has quality to it, perhaps, whatever it may be, and you appreciate it.

There's nothing wrong with your body. If you happen to have a lovely body, you appreciate it, you look after it too. You do your best to keep it going through good nutrition and exercise.

Nothing wrong with that. And even to say, oh, I look great. But in a superficial sense, not that knowing that it's not going to last, nothing is going to last.

Everything will leave you or you leave it. And to appreciate something is actually an important thing. You can incorporate it into your practice of gratitude, which is a spiritual practice strongly linked to present moment awareness.

On this, gratitude is to appreciate the goodness of things, whether you own them or not. You can walk and have gratitude for the beautiful things, such as the flowers, the trees, the sky, the sunshine. Gratitude doesn't necessarily mean thank you for this.

It doesn't necessarily involve words. It's just to give it attention and to appreciate it, its aliveness or its beauty. You can have gratitude for the flowers that are here, which means you appreciate the goodness of so many things in this world, but you are not attaching yourself or using it in the service of your sense of self.

So there's a difference. I have a car. Well, I talked about my car that I had when I lived in England.

I had this Lada, beautiful, lovely car. And I loved it. I had gratitude for it.

People laughed at it. And I was sitting, driving. Sometimes people say, ah-ha-ha, a Lada.

And I realized the people who are driving this car are either relatively poor or they have no ego. In my case, both was true, both applied. And then 17 years ago, I was no longer poor and I bought a luxury car and I still have it.

And I'm going to keep it until either it dies or I die. And I love it just as much as the Lada. It just embodies quality.

Don't use it that much, but it's still there. And when I go down, I greet it, say hello. Hello.

And it seems almost that things, even so-called inanimate things seem to almost respond. It's almost as if it could sense you. A weird thing happened when I left England.

I sold my Lada. A friend of mine needed a car. I sold it, not very much.

And this car had never broken down while I had it. And it was a month after he started using it, it broke down completely and couldn't even be repaired. And...

And... And... And...

And... The car was not happy, it seems. So yes, the appreciation of things, a gratitude for something that is in their field of awareness, whether you own it or not, become secondary.

There are people, of course, who tell you, I've met some very wealthy people who tell me, I have this wealth, but I'm not attached to anything anymore. And whether or not this is true, you can't really know until you experience loss. So if you say, okay, I have a Ferrari.

I don't have a Ferrari. That's not my type of car, but somebody says, I have a Ferrari Tester, Testeros, Testostero, Testerosa. I have to get the name right.

But I'm not identified with it at all. And so, but you, but of course you have this car and it's red, it's red and it's very noisy. It's meant to be extremely noisy because it attracts attention.

Everybody looks when you drive. Baa! Baa!

Baa! Baa! Baa!

Baa! Baa! Baa!

Baa! But I'm not attached to it. I'm not at all.

I'm not at all. And then one day you come back and somebody has scratched your car. And, Baa!

or somebody, it's gone completely. Somebody stole it. You were not attached.

No. So when you say I'm not attached, you may not know whether this is true or not until you lose it. So to appreciate the difference between ego attachment, to have some in the service of ego, or to really appreciate seeing something without using it in the service of the ego, there's a big difference.

So whether it's a body or objects or abilities also, if you're good at certain, you have certain abilities, whether they are physical or you're very good at something, it could be playing an instrument, or you're a great expert at this or that. And again, that's lovely. Again, the question is, are you deriving your sense of identity from it?

Let's say you're a great musician, piano player, and you derive your identity from it, and

then something happens, perhaps something happens to your hands, and suddenly you can't play anymore. There would be, that is maybe a certain amount of pain can be involved in that, but if there has been an ego attachment, if this function was the main source of ego identity, you as the famous, let's say a famous pianist, then, or let's say a sports person who is very good, he got a gold medal or whatever place, and suddenly an injury, can't do it anymore. Does your whole life suddenly collapse, and the rest of your life you're unhappy, you're totally defeated?

It does happen to people, because their sense of identity was exclusively derived from that great ability that they had. And that is the difference between appreciating it, being grateful for what you can do, but your identity needs to come from a deeper place, a more real place, the only real place from being, not some kind of function that you may be good at, because at some point, most likely, you won't be good at it anymore. And so it's very, a huge difference between those two approaches to what you can do.

Important, be careful that you don't derive your identity from something that is part of the flux of impermanence. Impermanence, it could leave you at any moment. That's the summary of the entire course, and the course is about as long as the Bible, it's huge.

But it can summarize in these few words. If you understand what that means, you don't need to do the course, you might still enjoy reading it, but you don't need it. Now, a few, these are the interesting lines here.

About defensiveness, when you feel the need arise to be defensive about anything, know that you have identified yourself with an illusion. It is not danger that comes when defenses are laid down. It is safety, it is peace, it is joy, and it is God.

So, when you feel the need arise to be defensive about anything, know that you have identified yourself with an illusion. When you become defensive about something, then it will be something that is conceptual, you as a concept or some concept you hold that you need to defend because you've identified with it, so you are defending your sense of self, your fictitious sense of self. That means you're defending an illusion.

When you don't defend because the truth of who you are does not need to be defended, so to let go of defenses can be a way of accessing the deeper dimension of who you are. And, of course, it takes you beyond ego because the defensiveness is ego. Ego is conceptual identity.

And then there's one short line here. In my defenselessness, my safety lies. You're safe already, so you don't need to defend anything.

That brings me to, at the very beginning of the Course in Miracles, before even page one, there are a few lines that are supposed to summarize the entire course, and they go like this. Nothing real can be threatened, nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of

God.

That's the summary of the entire course, and the course is about as long as the Bible. It's huge, but it can summarize in these few words. If you understand what that means, you don't need to do the course.

You might still enjoy reading it, but you don't need it. Nothing real can be threatened, nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of God.

Herein, meaning knowing this, lies the peace of God. I'll just let it be at that. I'm not going to interpret those lines.

I believe it's the most powerful if you just let them sink in. Judgment, again, the choice to judge rather than to know is the cause of the loss of peace. The choice to judge rather than to know.

So judgment is applying concepts. And then you have another dimension that Course in Miracles calls to know. And Course in Miracles would say that the judgment is not real knowing.

It's the illusion of knowing. You have no idea of the tremendous release and deep peace that comes from meeting yourself and your brothers, brothers and sisters, totally without judgment. You have no idea of the tremendous release and deep peace that comes from meeting yourself and your brothers and sisters, I'm adding the sisters, totally without judgment.

So when you meet another human being without imposing conceptualization, it does not mean you become defenseless or it just means that you know the deep truth and the deeper reality of that human being. But you also know in a non-conceptual way if the personality of that person is dysfunctional, has deep unconsciousness. You see that also.

It's not a judgment. You just see it for what it is, but you don't mistake the personality and its unconsciousness for who that person is.

[Speaker 3] (2:21:17 - 2:22:42)

For many years now, I've kind of been dealing off and on with certain degrees of depression, sometimes more intense, sometimes less intense. Actually, lately, a lot less intense in large part due to discovering you and kind of reading your works and stuff, which has been super helpful, so thanks for that. But one aspect of this is that my ability to feel things has, as I feel, greatly kind of diminished over time.

Things that I used to be excited about don't excite me anymore. I don't look forward to things. When I kind of hang out with my friends and things like that, which is stuff that I enjoy, the joy kind of goes away very quickly, but what doesn't go away and what I can

feel is the kind of negatives in my life, the sadness and the suffering and stuff, and it got to a point where I started to crave it in a certain degree because feeling those type of emotions almost kind of reminded me of my ability to feel at all and sort of reminded me of my humanness.

So I guess my question is, how do you eliminate suffering when suffering in a certain way is all that you have left?

[Speaker 1] (2:22:44 - 2:30:20)

Right. What about your practice of giving attention to the present moment? Now, we give attention to the present moment.

You first, you become aware of whatever it is that you feel within, and then you need to be aware of within and without, that's part of the present moment, so that your attention is not completely absorbed by whatever it is that you feel, because there's also the vastness of the outside world. And so presence, to be present means to be present within and without in both worlds. So you acknowledge whatever it is you feel inside you at this moment, be also very vigilant to see whether there are any associated thoughts with that feeling.

Are there certain thoughts that go through your head that reflect what it is that you feel? For example, if you feel depressed, do you have thoughts that are telling you that life is, after all, not worth living or whatever the thoughts are saying, that people are, people suck, life sucks, I suck, we all suck, I don't want to be here, that kind of thought. So you need to observe, be aware on both on the, as far as the inside is concerned, be aware on both on the level of the emotions and feelings and on the level of mind activity, what kind of thoughts, and so it requires vigilance so that you don't indulge without knowing it in unconscious thinking, and you can't separate the unconscious thinking and the feelings, so only you can know.

I don't even know whether you can answer this question now because you have to find out in the moment of it happening what kind of mind activity accompanies those unpleasant feelings, and to see whether this mind activity actually feeds the unpleasantness that you feel or the suffering that you feel, that's a very important thing. What role does your mind play in all this? Very important.

Is your mind feeding it? Because this is, you have a big pain body there, which is not in itself a bad thing because the pain body becomes a strong motivating force for you to awaken. I also had a very heavy pain body.

That's why I had to awaken, couldn't stand it anymore. And you at this point too, can't stand it anymore. That's good.

So be very careful so that you examine your thinking. Am I feeding the feeling? And if

you are, that means there's enough awareness for you to realize it.

Then you let go of the thoughts. And one way you can do it by, you remember I just mentioned, be present within and without. You can use, for example, your sense perceptions, directing attention to your sense perceptions that takes attention away from thinking.

And then you experience, the next step would be, you still feel the unpleasantness, but you're also observing sensory perception around you. There's the sky, there's the flower, my hand, the hand. And you don't have to, I'm labeling it now, but you don't have to label it.

It's better not to label it, just to perceive it fully. Come to your senses, look around. There's an entire world there.

And your suffering ends here, where your skin is. The suffering that you experience is inside you. Just one step next to you, there's no suffering.

Isn't that strange? So the table isn't suffering, I'm suffering. And this inch on the chair here is not suffering.

It's just inside this back of skin, I am the suffering entity, that's me. And then if you don't know that, then you identify with that feeling. And then you look at this, then you call, and you still have the conditioned thinking that reflects the suffering, and say, oh, it's all pointless.

The trees are pointless, the sky is pointless. What's the point of it all? I don't see any beauty in this.

And this flower is going to die soon, of course. It all, everything dies soon. So what's the point in even living?

When there's a dog, he doesn't look that healthy. Whatever it is, then you would just look at the world around you through the feelings. So to be present, you have to not label and just look.

And take in auditory, visual perception, breathing. So, and then, of course, if you give more attention to your surroundings, especially when you're in nature, but nature is everywhere. Even if you're in the middle of Seattle, there's a sky.

Well, it's usually at this time of year, it'll be gray, but that's fine, too. There's sunlight filtering through the sky, and you have lots of trees. Lots of trees.

The evergreen state, Washington, as it says on your license plate. So that's good, you have that. And that takes your attention away from, you're not denying what you feel, but you're adding a dimension to it, the external dimension.

And then nature has a very healing effect if you truly give attention to nature. And you're no longer fueling the suffering that you feel inside you. Of course, it doesn't go away immediately, or a miracle could happen, and it does, but usually not.

It's just the beginning of it gradually dissolving or becoming transmuted. Now, looking back retrospectively, if you even know the answer to this, what kind of mind activity accompanies the suffering that you feel in your body? What are the typical thoughts that go with that?

[Speaker 3] (2:30:22 - 2:30:38)

I guess it kind of depends on the situation. Obviously, it comes in kind of phases, but a lot of it is just kind of generalized self-loathing, I guess, I don't know if that's the right term.

[Speaker 1] (2:30:39 - 2:34:44)

Watch out for what kind of thoughts. It might even be helpful to write them down if they're repetitive thoughts, to see what kind of repetitive thoughts you can catch. Because they can obscure your awareness so quickly, especially old thoughts that come again and again and again, they become part of your fictitious identity of the self, the egoic self.

So you carry with you then the burden of an unhappy self. I remember that, I had that too, carrying the burden of an unhappy self. That is, and that is what motivates you to awaken.

But there's already been a diminishment of your depression. Absolutely, yeah. So that's a good sign.

That means presence is arising and it is gradually dissolving this pain body in you. But your work is not to renew the pain body through unconscious thinking. So you need to be really alert and watch your mind so that you don't create more suffering by unconscious mind activity.

And if you no longer feed the pain body, because that's, now the pain body, of course, also feeds through drama in relationships. It has the two ways of feeding. In your case, perhaps more through your mind, but I don't know, could be also enacting and reenacting drama, emotional drama in relationships with a partner, family members, or whoever it may be, usually people you're close to or work with, but the closer, the better.

The intimate partners are the best ways for the pain body to renew itself through. So don't add to the pain body. It wants to feed, it wants your unconsciousness, but don't give it to the pain body.

You're not feeding it with your mind anymore and you're not feeding it by being drawn into insane drama in relationships. So you're watching it. There it is.

It may not be pleasant, but it's not that bad. Your presence is infinitely more powerful and it doesn't even fight the pain body. It just, by shining the light of awareness on it, it gradually dissipates, or a better way of putting it, it gets transmuted because the energy is not lost.

There is enormous life energy in it, but it's trapped. It's trapped energy, so it's felt as negative. When that's freed, it becomes part of presence.

It is fuel for presence. The pain body is fuel for presence. That's amazing.

So you have plenty of fuel for presence. That's the good news. I have, as you may remember, occasionally mentioned the symbolism of the cross.

Well, one of them, the cross, the intersection of the vertical and horizontal dimension.

[Speaker 2] (2:34:47 - 2:35:11)

And that's a useful reminder for your life so that at any time you don't lose your connectedness with the vertical dimension, which opens up in the present moment, which we could call the being dimension.

[Speaker 1] (2:35:12 - 2:36:29)

In that vertical dimension, you are already whole, complete, there's nothing to add in your, because that is your essence, the timeless essence of who you are. And that is connected to the source of all life, connected eternally to the source. It is an emanation of the source, whatever name you want to give to what I now call the source, the origin.

So that is your connectedness to source, and that is your oneness with the source, only to be found in the vertical dimension, which we can also call the being dimension. It opens up when you become present. There is a, no matter how long, cessation of the stream of thinking, and a space opens up.

[Speaker 2] (2:36:29 - 2:36:32)

An inner spaciousness.

[Speaker 1] (2:36:33 - 2:40:08)

And in that, you realize the depths of who you are, but there is no conceptual realization. There is only a silent knowing, a silent realization of the being that you are, the presence that you are, vertical. And the horizontal dimension is the dimension, we could call it the doing.

It includes thinking, because thinking is a kind of doing also. So the moment you move into thinking, you're in the horizontal dimension. And then doing, also thinking then becomes doing.

You do something. In order to do something, immediately time needs to come in. You need time, whatever you do, you need time.

Even to make a cup of tea, you need time to make it. And in doing, thinking also requires time. So time comes in.

That's part of the horizontal dimension. And you need time there. Time is the, has the two polarities, the time.

It's on the one hand, it enables you to grow, it enables you to evolve here in this dimension, but to acquire new knowledge, new experiences, to try things out. And as a person, you can become more mature. You can acquire more knowledge.

But if there's a continuous lack of vertical, then the limitations of the person will increase as the older you get, you realize that whatever you achieve on the horizontal dimension has enormous limitations and are ultimately never fulfilling. But it's not to be denied. You're here, you need the vertical, you need the horizontal also, and you need to give it, you need to honor it.

You can't just say, okay, I'm not going to be bothered with anything anymore because it's all future, no, nothing, just leave me alone. I just want the vertical. Then the horizontal dimension will make demands upon you.

And if you don't challenge yourself, it will challenge you. And even if you challenge yourself, it will still challenge you. So that's the two, these dimensions, the art of living is to bring the two together so that when you're engaged in thinking and doing, you don't completely lose yourself in the thinking and doing.

And then you give an importance to the world, an absolute importance to the things of the world, including your possessions and your achievements and whatever it may be, the economic situation. You give an excessive importance to the things of this world, and then this world will consume you and you will lose yourself in it.

[Speaker 2] (2:40:09 - 2:40:11)

And that's a terrible fate.

[Speaker 1] (2:40:11 - 2:43:07)

And there's a difference between honoring the things of this world and giving it, the things of this world, an absolute importance that they don't have. They have a relative importance. So you need to deal with it, but at the same time, know that there is

something more fundamental.

It doesn't exclude that, but there's something more fundamental and that is the being, the being, which is the consciousness of you, but that you is not the person. So the great thing about things going wrong on the horizontal dimension, which happens from time to time, you might have noticed in your personal life or in the collective, things go, no matter how careful you are, no matter how many insurance policies you have and pension plans, there's nothing wrong with these things, but no matter what the world will challenge you and you will notice there's something unstable about the world. There's something unstable about people. You trust in this person or in that person, and then suddenly they turn into somebody else.

There's no matter what, wherever you go, you find an element, small and very often big, an element of instability. And so, and then after a while, when that's all you know, you become distrustful of the world and of people too, because you never know what they're going to do next because you've trusted so many men or women and then say, I don't want to know of men or whether it's men or women, it doesn't matter. I trusted them and they always disappoint me.

As the Buddha already recognized, every situation and every person, if that's all you know, and if that you give an absolute importance to it and you demand that it should satisfy you and make you happy, whether it's a personal situation, will disappoint you, disillusioned. And then you become, that's a wonderful word. I'm disillusioned.

Well, that must be a good thing because it's the end of an illusion. I'm so disillusioned with this world and people. And then people formulate weird theories on the basis of that about the world and they can tell you how bad it all is.

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:43:13 - 2:43:15)

So that's important to remember.

[Speaker 1] (2:43:19 - 2:45:40)

The horizontal dimension, whatever happens here in this world, will let you down. If you give it an absolute importance, it will let you down. And if you don't give it an absolute importance because you are connected to the vertical, out of which emanates, that it's a continuous source of satisfaction of the beingness of you, then yes, the world may still let you down, but it doesn't matter very much anymore.

It doesn't make you unhappy. You are quite okay with recognizing the limitations of the things of this world. And you don't become unhappy and you don't judge people on the basis of behavior they manifest as part of their mental-emotional conditioning.

You don't confuse the mental-emotional conditioning of a human being with who they essentially are. You can look beyond that dimension because that is part of the horizontal and you can look deeper. And that's a wonderful liberation, but that can only happen if you are connected to the vertical.

If you're able to become still and present, doesn't matter how long, but you find these inner spaces, inner spaces of awareness where thinking is replaced with awareness or presence. And then you look a totally different way of looking at another human beings through the veil of thinking. Even if you've accumulated a lot of psychological knowledge and you look at another human being, the psychological knowledge, it might have a lot of truth in it, but it's very limited.

All you're recognizing is the conditioning of that human being that makes up the person. And so you're looking at it through the veil of thinking and then you let go of that.

[Speaker 2] (2:45:40 - 2:45:46)

And then you look at a human being through awareness or presence.

[Speaker 1] (2:45:46 - 3:38:04)

And there's no conceptualization. There's a deep knowing, and you can kind of penetrate into the essence of who they are, but only if it comes, that ability comes from your essence and the essence is one with you and the other. And then comes the recognition of the other as one with who you are in your essence, because you emanate from the same source.

So you're not one out here, but you're one down there. When I visited Ram Dass, the spiritual teacher who has now passed away, he lived on Maui. On his car, I saw a bumper sticker which said, I'd rather be here now.

So as you go back into your regular daily life, hopefully the retreat does not come to an end, but remains with you and within you. The essence of the retreat is not the physical location, but a state of consciousness, transcendent state of consciousness. Your task is to live, one could say, in both worlds or both dimensions at the same time.

Occasionally you may lose yourself in the worldly horizontal dimension, the doing realm, the thinking realm. And usually when that happens, you will notice dysfunctional, unpleasant inner states arising very quickly, anxiety, fear, anger, irritation, resentment, trouble. And if you're in that state and are disconnected again from the transcendent, the being dimension, the other dimension, then that's the unconscious state.

And if there is no trouble, you will create it. That's what humans do. Troublemakers.

Both on an individual level and collectively. If you want to learn a lot, troublemaking

collectively and watch the news. As much as possible, have the main focus of your attention in your daily life in the present moment.

The rest of your attention, so that's the main focus, here's this. The rest of your attention is where you want to go to. Whatever task you're engaged in has a certain purpose.

The purpose is you want to finish the task and it has achieved its purpose. And that's here. And that's in your peripheral, the peripheral vision of your consciousness.

That's where you want to get to. And this is what you're doing in order to get there. And your main attention is not where you want to get.

And in the meantime, you're just doing it in order to get there. You can see how that's already creates an inner stress. I'm here, but I want to be there.

That's the normal way of living is the main part of people's attention is there. But in the meantime, they are here, where they don't really want to be. They'd rather be there.

As shown in famous stickers on bumper stickers on cars, which say something like, I'd rather be fishing. When I visited Ram Dass, the spiritual teacher who has now passed away, he lived on Maui. And on his car, I saw a bumper sticker, which said, I'd rather be here now.

That's a good teaching on a bumper sticker. So your attention is, and this is a reversal almost of how humans normally usually live. It's the opposite.

That is in itself already a shift in consciousness. And then of course, you're also aware of the past, the certain things that may have a relevance in the present. That's fine.

So peripherally, past and future, usually future is more important because you're moving towards that. And here's the central vision of present moment. In the present moment, you're either actively doing something or you are more passively perceiving something.

You're there as an observer or you're just there, not actively doing, but simply perceiving. That could be when you travel back from here already, you might be sitting in a car. If you're driving, you're doing something.

That's particularly important to be present. Or you might be sitting on a plane and that's a good opportunity for being the, you go into the witnessing mode. There's nothing particular to do unless you get out your laptop and start doing.

It's fine. And sometimes situations arise that are problematic. That's quite normal in life.

They are challenging rather than problematic. And then you face the challenge. You look at it, so to speak, not necessarily visually, but you give it attention that this is a challenge.

Instead of unconscious reactivity, the challenge is your flight is canceled. It's not one of the greatest challenges a human can have, but some people react as if it were. And when any challenge arises, is there anything I can do to respond to this situation?

Or is that something where I simply have to say, well, for the time being, for the time being I accept the way it is because right now there's nothing I can do. I heard, for example, at some airports, they're so busy, not sufficiently staffed people. When the plane lands, they're still trapped on the plane for two or three hours.

It has happened in Toronto and other places. That's a good opportunity for surrender. Some people can't do that.

They start screaming and shouting. Doesn't have no particular purpose, but they can't help it. It happens to them.

So always the question is, is this an opportunity for surrender or is action called for? And that is some practice to get used to until it becomes second nature to have your attention in the present moment rather than elsewhere. And it usually implies you are aware of your surroundings.

That's inseparable from being in the present through your senses. A more alert human being than a normal human being, but an alertness in which there is no tension. Often alertness in a human is associated with being tense, but there's an alertness without tension, but it's not enough to be just aware of your sense perceptions.

That's a good thing. It also can help you to avoid dangerous situations that otherwise you just stumble into and you don't know how you got there. You're more alert of your surroundings.

You see how animals in that sense are very alert because if they are not, they get eaten by other animals. So many animals have this incredible alertness, not the same as the human alertness, but it is an alert awareness of their surroundings that many humans don't have. They walk in the street and they're not really there in their minds, thinking about all kinds of things except where they are, and so they're not here.

Whereas the bird sitting on a branch or the deer that's stepping out of the forest and there's a field and the deer stops for a moment and the ears, they're very huge ears, they go, and it can hear probably a hundred times better than the human, or a bird on a branch sitting, it goes like this, and then suddenly it goes. And of course, there's no decision-making involved when a bird suddenly flies off. It did not think, I'm now going to fly off this branch.

And I'm going to go over there, it just happens. There's a flow to life. There's no mind, there is a consciousness there, but there's no conceptualization at all.

But when an animal rests, an animal also rests completely. It is completely at rest, not thinking about my life. I have to figure something out.

What's the purpose of it all? Every human being, every life form emanates also a certain energy frequency. So even by the emanation, your emanation, you would become a teacher.

One of the terms that's frequently used in A Causing Miracle is the Christian term, salvation, used especially by Jesus in his teachings, salvation. Salvation can also be called the way, especially the way in which it is used in A Causing Miracle, but also in the way Jesus uses it. You could use the term liberation.

You could use the term enlightenment, realization. And the Course says that salvation asks very little of you. What is it that it asks of you?

It says, salvation is undoing. Salvation can be seen as nothing more than the escape from concepts. So you can see that why in some other spirit traditions you would say liberation, because the escape from concepts is also the liberation from the prison of conceptual thinking.

When you're identified with it, when conceptual thinking supplies you with your sense of self, then you are trapped in a conceptual prison. And that is ego, that is unconsciousness, and people don't even know it, that they are trapped in it. So the spiritual realization is through letting go of the prison of concepts so that you no longer inhabit the conceptual reality, which is what most people do, where every perception that you have is filtered through your conceptualization.

When you look on something, you immediately have an interpretation for it, you have a label for it, you have a self-reference towards it, I like it, I don't like it, et cetera. So there's already, you cannot see without concepts. So inhabiting a conceptual reality, so you have a prison that you have for other human beings because you conceptualize them, and for yourself because your self image is an edifice.

Made of concepts. And salvation is the escape from concepts. And this little part ends with these three lines.

Those who would let illusions be lifted from their minds are this world's saviors. And again, it links in to the word salvation. When you let go of the prison of concepts, when you awaken in the terminology of the cause in miracles, you become a savior of the world.

Because by embodying that state of consciousness, you help others become free also. Even just by being, not necessarily by formal teaching, although you might do some teaching too. And when you embody that state of consciousness in the terminology of the cause in miracles, you become a, as it's called, you become a teacher of God.

That's the term frequently used in the cause. Even though you might not necessarily teach as such, but by embodying this, the awakened state of consciousness, you cannot not teach. Might not even be through words.

It could be through your non-reactivity, through the way in which you relate to other human beings, and so on. And everything you do is a teaching, the way in which you behave. Even your very emanation, because every human being, every life form, emanates also a certain energy frequency.

So even by the emanation, your emanation, you would become a teacher. And then some of you also, of course, will use words to teach. So you will, perhaps even in a formal sense, you might teach groups, give talks, write books, who knows.

But anybody who awakens, even if you're not fully awakened, even if you're awakening to who you are beyond concepts, you're already a teacher of God according to the cause. Identity. All humans are very interested in identity.

Who am I? It's a very important question for humans. First, the primordial needs of a human being are, of course, food and shelter.

And for a young child, some love, loving attention. But soon after that, the next very, very important thing comes up is identity. Who am I?

A sense of self develops. And that begins in early childhood. In early childhood, the first thing a child learns is there's a sound that the parents pronounce.

And at some point, the child learns, that's me. John, Mary, Mary, Mary, Mary. Ah, it's me, I'm John, I'm Mary.

Wow, this is the first step. What arises is the beginning of a conceptual identity, a conceptual sense of self. And so the sound of your name is the beginning of that because that name is a thought form that can also be expressed vocal through the vocal cords, but it is a thought form.

And that's the beginning of it all. That's me, I am John. And then John looks at the body and there's my body.

And sometimes for a brief period of time, a child talks about him or herself in the third person as John is hungry, or Mary is. And then gradually it merges with John. It's no longer he or him, it's now I.

And then I, as the child learns to speak, the most important word becomes the word I. And again, that's another step in developing a conceptual identity, I. Another concept in the mind, I.

But you begin to identify with the concept. I is most people's favorite word. In some

languages it's used more than in others because in some languages the first person is already built into the verb.

But in English or German, I don't know how it is in fact, I is used a lot. So here we have the beginning of a conception. Now the next step is John or Mary.

They have contact with objects. Objects, they play with objects, toys. And then the parent gives the toy.

And now the next step is the child learns that this is mine, my, my toy, mine. And so another interesting thing develops. Identity is the beginning of seeking identity in external objects.

Seeking identity in external objects. And once this has happened, this toy assumes enormous importance in the child's mind because it's not just an object or a toy, it's mine. And you can see how important it is when somebody tries to take away, another child takes away the toy.

And at that moment, dukkha, suffering, enormous suffering arises because it's mine. You've taken something away from my identity. It's not because five minutes later the child would have lost interest in it anyway.

But here's the identification with it. And the identity, the growing identity of the child feels diminished if somebody takes away this toy. It's like somebody tearing the piece out of you.

It's so painful. And some children scream if you take something away from them that they had identified with. Oh, I have terrible suffering.

And that's the beginning of it all. And then further things happen, of course. The child grows up and more and more begins to identify with other things.

Identity is not yet complete. It's never complete, but identity seeks more to identify with because otherwise, who am I? So the next very obvious thing is, of course, the body, the physical body, my body.

And then the child grows. The body gets stronger, grows. And then the body, you compare the body mentally to other bodies and see, is my body better or not as good as other bodies?

Or can my body do more than other bodies? Another favorite thing for a child is the child can jump. I can jump this high.

Can you? You can't do that, but I can do that. I can jump higher than you.

Oh, identity has grown a bit more. I can jump higher than most other children. Or, and

then gradually the child gets older.

Then parents, who are my parents, your parents. I remember when I was, my parents were not very well off. It was in the fifties.

The next thing, what car does your dad have? My dad didn't have any car. It was a terrible problem for my identity, felt diminished because I couldn't say what car.

Others said, well, at that time, there were only about three or four possible cars you could buy. One was a VW Beetle. One was Opel.

And the other one was a Mercedes. And there was only one type. That's all.

So that determined the value of your parents. So what, I was afraid of the question, what car does your dad drive? He's going to get a Mercedes soon, I said.

And that's okay. He's going, any day now, he's going to get it. He never did, but that's okay.

And identity, and then, it becomes more and more complex. Your identity seeks other things to add to itself. It seeks, yes, body.

Of course, it's a very primordial one. Social class, what your parents, this is a little bit connected with what I said about car. Your parents have a nice house or not.

Or what social class do you belong to? In some countries, that is still important. In other countries, not so much.

And so, and gradually, other things arise. Identification with things. Identification with things which become concepts in the mind.

We need to talk briefly about body because it's such an important identification for many people. Obviously, people identify with their physical body. And it is a source of great suffering for many people.

And for others, it's a source of pride. It's a source of pride if your body is either stronger or better looking than other bodies, then you have pride. You feel your identity is enhanced.

Look at my body. You don't say it, but you show your body off. Or you're ashamed.

You don't know, my body is ugly. I was so unhappy. I'm so unhappy with my body.

And that also is a conceptual identity, but a negative one. So, whatever becomes part of your conceptual identity, not everything is good. There will be other things added to your identity that are very painful.

For example, the body. If it's too thin, too fat, too this or too that, I was very unhappy with my body. It was never as good looking at most other people's bodies.

So, for many years, it was a source of suffering to me. What do you put on your body? Clothes, so that becomes an extension of your body.

So, what clothes you wear become part of your identity, as everybody knows when you see advertisements for designer wear and so on. They are not selling clothes. They are selling identity, a piece.

They're basically saying, if you buy this, you will have added something very positive to your sense of identity, to who you are. Buy this because it will make you bigger in your own eyes and in the eyes of others. So, and then you have Prada or whatever it's called, which apparently is what the devil wears.

There was a movie called, The Devil Wears Prada. And you have a little son. Are they looking at it?

Yes. But what is it really? It's more added to a conceptual identity of who you are.

Or if you're not good with body, you can have other things. You can have your social background. Let's say, maybe you have ancestors that were famous or maybe you have ancestors going back.

You're maybe an aristocrat. Well, they don't exist anymore here, I'm sure. But in some places, you can say you have an ancestry, very distinguished, and you can think about that and talk about it and you display it in the way you behave.

And this is the home of my ancestors. There, there it is. Oh, oh.

Enhance, you feel more than others. So the ego seeks more. It fears to be less.

It seeks more. And then other things become part of identity that are painful because you compare yourself to others, conceptual identity, and then others have more than you or are better at this than you or have higher status than you. And that's very painful.

So this, what I'm talking about is the ego, the human ego, the egoic identity. And what the human ego is, a conceptual sense of self, conceptual sense of self that you carry around with you and that you call it I. When you say I, the word I, you refer to this conceptual sense of self.

But what has happened through the gradual evolution of thinking is that now humans tend to overthink. There is a lot of not only unnecessary thinking that generates unnecessary, and in many cases, non-existent problems, such as when you lie awake at night in bed and start worrying. It generates a lot of unnecessary unhappiness.

So people don't realize that a significant part of the unhappiness in their lives is actually generated by unnecessary, negative, often destructive mind activity, and they don't even know it. But mindfulness is, first of all, discovering the simple fact that there is a voice in your head that continuously comments on your life or on what's happening around you. It's, there's the self-talk in there.

Everybody knows what the self-talk is in there. You talk to yourself. Sometimes you talk to yourself in the first person, I.

Some people talk to themselves in the second person, you. So you can get annoyed with yourself, and then you say, you shouldn't have done that. And then you have another thought that says, yes, but I couldn't help it.

And you might even get a third voice come in, and whatever it says to this, why can't I get out of my self-talk? That's self-talk too. But it's an amazing, the first thing, what I call the first awakening, spiritual awakening, is something very basic and something very simple.

It's a discovery that there is a voice in your head that always talks to you, mostly silently. If it talks out aloud, then you're continuously, and there's nobody around, then you are considered insane. But, and that's only if it's loud, but most people have that inside their heads, and they are not considered insane.

It is considered normal. But there's not such a big difference between the two. And sometimes when you listen to, there might be a man walking in the street, muttering, oh, this white man, he's talking.

And you say, oh, he's really insane. But it might be that you are doing the same, but it's just not out aloud, it's in your head. Why didn't I, I should have said that.

Why didn't I say that? Next time he does it, I'm not exactly know what I'm going to reply. And it goes on and on.

Or you lie awake at night and start worrying. You wake up and, oh my God, what's going to happen? What if that doesn't work?

I mean, that goes wrong. And what if he does that, and oh, and then you go into, you get drawn, one thought leads to another thought and another thought, oh my God. And then the body, the body cannot distinguish between an actual reality, an event that's happening in the real life and what your mind is saying.

So when you have fearful thoughts, the body reacts to every fearful thought, but the, and that's an emotion. The body reacts with an emotion, the emotion you feel in your body. The body cannot distinguish between an actual event and a thought.

So when you think fearful thoughts, the emotions you feel are the emotions that are saying, I am in danger. There is an actual danger here. So you feel the emotion of fear, anxiety.

You might, you might, you feel agitated. And it's not, it's not only not pleasant, if you indulge in that kind of useless, dysfunctional, destructive thinking year after year, after year, it has its effect on the body. And it decreases the ability of the body to have the energy to fight disease.

Even mainstream medicine is discovering the connection between your state of mind and your state of health. And so gradually we are seeing in the past, they denied it completely. They only looked at your body and not only at the, they not, they not didn't just look at the totality of the body, even within the body, they just looked at one particular symptom.

What's wrong with that particular organ? And you have, of course, in mainstream medicine, you have specialists. I'm a specialist for the liver and specialist for this and this and that, not only not taking into account the totality of the body, but more importantly, not taking into account the totality of the person, which includes the physical body and the mind.

So it's vitally important to discover first of all, that there is a voice in your head that indulges in self-talk most of the time. And for many people, interestingly enough, that self-talk for many people is not always negative, but for many people, it is more negative than positive. A good event that happened yesterday, a nice, you might have gone to a nice reunion or you went out into nature and you witnessed a beautiful sunset.

Okay, you can remember it today and think that was a beautiful sunset or we had a nice talk yesterday, but you can't do that much thinking about a nice event. But the mind, when there's something negative that happens yesterday, somebody offended you or didn't give you the attention that you needed, that you wanted from him, then you can start thinking of how, oh my God, what he did, he's really, next time he just said, I'm going to say that, or he's really shouldn't, why doesn't he, you can go on for a long time, dwelling on something negative much longer than dwelling on something positive.

It is so seemingly a negative event is much more food for useless mind activity than a positive event. And this is why for many people, a significant percentage of their mind activity is negative. For some people, it is almost 100% negative, but it is unlikely that these people would get a job in this company.

And I mean that because your predominant state of consciousness, your predominant mental emotional state, there's a certain correlation between who you associate with, where you find yourself, and even what kind of things happen to you. There is a correlation which is not always immediately recognizable, but there is a correlation

between once a person's predominant mental emotional state and who they are with, who their friends are, where they work, and even what happens to them. So if you are in a very negative state a long time, you tend to attract also negative events, but you can only have to find that out for yourself, not saying, believe me.

I know it from my own life because when I first discovered this, I was still very young, I discovered that there is a correlation between my mind activity and what happens to me. I found a book that somebody, several books that somebody left with us when I was 17. And there, for the first time, I read about a person's mind, and I suddenly realized my mind was predominantly negative because I was a very unhappy child.

And so my childhood was not pleasant. And so the initial conditioning of my life was that my mind was continuously commenting and saying how bad my life was. And whenever something bad happened to me, I had a phrase that would occur again in my mind.

Of course, bad things always happen to you, don't they? They're bound to happen to you. It always happens to you.

So I was talking to myself and saying that bad things would always happen to me, and they did. So you can discover first that the spiritual awakening is to discover that there is continuous mind activity. And for some people, it's a discovery that a significant part of their mind activity is negative.

But the vital thing is to discover that there is this continuous talk in my head, which is considered the normal human state. And of course, you cannot abolish thinking. Of course, there will be thinking.

But the question is, is there an awareness behind the thinking? If you can become aware that you are indulging or caught up in that useless mind activity, and you suddenly become aware of perhaps certain repetitive thoughts that tend to reoccur in your mind again and again. You might see it in others, too, more easily in others.

When you go for your Thanksgiving dinner, I think is it next week, you will meet your family members or relatives. And some of you may realize you already know what they are going to say this year, because it's the same thing they said last year and five years and 10 years ago. And if they have negative judgments about you or somebody else, then it's the same thing you will hear again next week when you go to them.

So it's easier to see how others are caught up in repetitive thought forms, not as easy to see it in oneself. This is why there's a saying that self-knowledge is the most difficult knowledge. It's easier to see others.

But if you can discover, even in the midst, perhaps, in the moment of a certain thought appearing in your mind, realizing, oh, that thought is, I've had this thought for years. It comes again and again and again. And so there is an observing presence.

From there you get, and that observing presence isn't a thought. It's just the ability to realize that there is a voice in your head and that there are thoughts. And you realize that some of those thoughts are negative.

And many of those thoughts actually are not only unnecessary but make your life very difficult, such as worry. So most people live with what I call a cluttered mind. A cluttered mind means they are completely unaware that there's a continuous stream of mental commentary.

They'd go, and wherever they meet somebody, and immediately certain judgments form. And everything they feel, they need to immediately adopt a position towards it. Immediately say, I'm against it.

I dislike it. Immediately adapt a mental position and being identified with one's mental position, which is a thought. So if you discover within yourself that a lot of the time you're in a state of lack, of insufficiency, of not enough, and you feel that the answer to, the remedy is to be active in this world and to achieve and do as much as possible, then you'll probably find that ultimately that is not the answer to your state of lack.

In order to transcend, to go beyond your state of lack, of neediness, of not enough, spiritual practice and spiritual realization is necessary. Focus on the realization of being. It's only there that you can go beyond that state of lack, which is ego.

Go within and discover who or what you are beyond the person.

[Speaker 10] (3:38:29 - 3:38:29)

Hello.

[Speaker 5] (3:38:31 - 3:39:44)

I want to ask, I work with people and I notice, I work with people and talk about lifestyle change quite a lot and how it will relate to health. And I notice in myself, as well as in those people that I work with, that sometimes in the face of really clear experience that making a certain health choice will make them better, and in sometimes serious situations, like say they've got diabetes or something, and I just want to make this distinct from things that we know that are addictions like smoking. So I'm not talking about that, because that's an addiction and that's got a different force.

But sometimes people, for example, they'll go on a gluten-free diet, say, and they'll be much better for three months and then they'll come back and they've started to lose that momentum, lose motivation and they're drifting back into the diet that doesn't suit so well. What is that force? What is that in us, in me too, where I know that, for example, if I go to bed earlier, I'll feel better in the next day, but something in me sort of says, no, I don't want to go to bed earlier.

[Speaker 9] (3:39:44 - 3:39:48)

No. What is that?

[Speaker 1] (3:39:49 - 3:48:07)

Yes. So there is a, that's the, these are forms of conditioning that is inertia and a certain momentum in certain ways in which people live that have been there for many, many years. They could also almost be seen as energy streams inside you and they have a certain momentum.

And some of these are sluggish energies, the inertia, the pull of gravity, gravitational force of deep seated habits that are associated with the person. It's part of conditioning, mental, emotional conditioning. So then the motivation goes away again.

And sometimes it's only in a crisis situation that people are able to break out of it. And sometimes not even then. If they really realize it's a crisis situation, then sometimes that can be the trigger that pushes people out of that, gravity, the gravitational pull of deep seated conditioned habits.

So there's also a reluctance because these things are associated with the egoic sense of identity. There's also reluctance sometimes to abandon these habits because it's almost as if you were abandoning a part of yourself and people don't want to die. The ego doesn't want to die.

So often the ego is stuck in unhealthy habits, but it's become so much of their sense of self that they can't do anything about it and they don't want to. So all you can do is explain what it is that they are doing and what, there's only that much that you can do for somebody else. You cannot force them to evolve.

You can only provide the triggers for their evolution. So, and there are humans who don't want to evolve. They're not ready yet.

It's like an apple that's on the tree and it might be close to getting ripe, but it doesn't, or it might be, it doesn't want to fall. It wants to cling. Or let's say another example.

The caterpillar says, no, I don't want to become a butterfly. It's so, it's, I know who I am and I'm comfortable with who I am. Why do you want me to become a butterfly?

I don't want to fly around in the air. It's, I belong here. And then it munches, this is where I belong.

And no matter how much you talk to the caterpillar, you have to wait until finally the caterpillars, when it gets close to the transformation or metamorphosis, then the caterpillar experiences life becoming quite unpleasant. He cannot be a caterpillar anymore and he can't even crawl anymore and something is very wrong suddenly. And

it's only when life becomes totally unbearable for the caterpillar, then finally he gives in and says, okay, I can't stand this anymore.

I'd rather be a butterfly. And so humans are a bit like that. And some are ready, some need more suffering before they are ready.

That's the unfortunate truth. And not all, not necessarily physical suffering. It can also be self-generated mental and emotional suffering.

Some people are not ready to give up their self-generated mental emotional suffering. They're just not ready. They may come to you and say, help me, help me.

But when it comes to the moment where they could be free, as happened to me years ago when I was still working with individual people, I was pointing out to a lady who came who had a terrible irritation with her husband. For years, the very presence of her husband caused intense irritation and everything her husband said and did, everything, the way he moved, the way he sat, the way he ate his food. I can't stand him.

And so I explained or attempted to explain these in the early stages of, before any books were written, the early stages of the teachings when I sometimes surprised myself when I gave answers, things I didn't know beforehand. They just came. And so I explained to her the mechanism behind the suffering and the possibility of, of course, she could leave him or she could discover that this is self-generated suffering and she could be free of that.

And then suddenly she began to see it and she began to see the possibility of letting go of all that self-generated suffering. And then she suddenly said, if I let go of it, what have I got left? So she was so identified with her suffering, it was like not only a close friend, the suffering was an essential part of, had become over the years, an essential part of her sense of identity, of her sense of self.

She did not want to let go. And soon after, she didn't want to come and see me anymore. So, but I do know that some of the things I said to her, later I put in the power of now.

So she's in there somewhere. And hopefully she lived long enough so that she could read the book and perhaps saw herself in there. And then perhaps at that stage, perhaps she was ready.

We don't know. We just have to accept some people are not yet ready, but do all you can, not to force them to change, but to provide that to them, that triggers has to come from within them. The readiness to let go or to change has to come from within them.

So how you do it will vary from person to person. Use your intuition, go to the place of not knowing so that the intuitive, you can say helpful things that come from that deeper level that might make a difference to them. What that is, I cannot tell you because you

can only know that you in that situation with that person.

So go to the place of not knowing when you are with people, not continuously, but be there sometimes. And then it's possible that what they need that can trigger an awakening, you might say to them or do to them, well, do, what would you do? Like be the Zen master and hit them sometimes, but you don't want to do that.

But life does that if they don't change. Thanks. This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive.

To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

[Speaker 8] (3:48:40 - 3:49:29)

In my life, I've always felt like a little bit of an outsider or the weird one. And there haven't been really people that I can talk to the way how I see the world. Like neither in school or later at work or in family and friends.

And like people in early life were fighting a lot and I always try to handle things differently. And now I'm at a point in my life where I wonder if I will ever find people or like in near me that I can be connected with.

[Speaker 1] (3:49:29 - 3:49:35)

Right. Right, I understand you completely. Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah.

[Speaker 9] (3:49:40 - 3:49:40)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (3:49:41 - 3:53:57)

Yeah. Yeah. There are probably quite a few people here you can connect with.

Yes. But of course, after our event here, all these people here become dispersed again throughout the world. You can, through the miracles of modern technology, which is not all bad, you can perhaps keep in touch with some of them.

And quite a few of you, I'm sure, will keep in touch with each other. The sense of being an outsider is also something that I have had throughout my life. And the sense of not belonging here, watching my parents being engaged in continuous conflict, not because they were bad people.

They did what they did and they loved me as best they could. And they did what they did as a reflection of their state of consciousness at that time, which was a normal state of

consciousness, egoic state of consciousness. But I sometimes felt, how did I get here?

Somehow, I didn't, there must have been a mistake. I think it's often outsiders being feeling an outsider on the one hand seems a terrible limitation that you can't participate as much. On the other hand, it's a great opportunity because some of the most creative people in the world have been outsiders.

They did not fit in. Misfits is the English word, misfits. Now, the friendships I had when I was a child, and that's another interesting thing.

I had a friend, one of my friends was severely physically disabled. And nobody else wanted to be friends with him because of that. And he was probably my closest friend.

And the other one was so weird that nobody wanted to talk to him. But he became my friend, so they were outsiders too. And, but the interesting fact here as you know, I couldn't believe it when they told me that there are people here from 70 countries.

It seems almost unbelievable, but it's true, I saw the list, 70 countries. And you may find, I'm sure you will find quite often you can feel a bond or you have more in common with many of the people who are here than you have with your own people in your own country at home who are not going through any spiritual awakening, who are still totally conditioned, 100% conditioned by their culture. So you feel a connectedness here with other humans that transcends culture and conditioning and all this silly political stuff.

It transcends that, and this is a wonderful thing. So to some extent, you can now connect with people even if you don't always see them physically, where you might live. I don't know whether you live in a big city or a small village.

[Speaker 8] (3:53:58 - 3:54:00)

A small city.

[Speaker 1] (3:54:00 - 3:54:01)

Small city.

[Speaker 8] (3:54:01 - 3:54:02)

Small city, yeah.

[Speaker 1] (3:54:02 - 3:54:03)

Yeah, what city?

[Speaker 8] (3:54:04 - 3:54:05)

Innsbruck in Austria.

[Speaker 1] (3:54:05 - 3:54:06)

Ah, yes.

[Speaker 8] (3:54:06 - 3:54:06)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (3:54:07 - 3:54:12)

Nice, very nice. I don't know how many people in Innsbruck are.

[Speaker 8] (3:54:13 - 3:54:14)

120,000.

[Speaker 1] (3:54:15 - 4:29:19)

And how many of those are awakening? We don't know. We don't know.

We don't know, of course. But this helps, I believe, being here and feeling you are not alone, you are connected. So this should be a help for the rest.

You just have to accept that this is how it is. And no matter how hard you try to fit in on the normal level, you probably won't, nor do you have to. So I know there are many people here who feel that and be happy with it, but don't make it into some kind of superiority because the ego can always creep in.

Before you know it, there's always a backdoor and then the ego is back in. So you could go from feeling bad about being an outsider to suddenly feeling, okay, I'm an outsider because I'm superior. So you have to be careful, don't go there.

So that's just how it is. If you, you probably would not be here if you had not felt like an outsider for many years. So it worked.

Well, this line is so long, I'm going to be here for at least another two hours. That's a thought, it's future, not now. There's no two hours now.

The body gains in strength because you made life difficult for your body. Don't go so far as to make life so difficult for your body that it collapses completely. That's another story.

You find the middle way, the middle way in everything. So, but again, there was a famous orator in ancient Greece, what is called Demosthenes, I don't remember the name. He had a speech defect.

He could not talk well as a young man. And in Greece, to be a great speaker was one of

the most highly regarded things, to be an orator. And he wanted to go beyond his speech defect.

And they say he, in order to get beyond it, he put little pebbles in his mouth and started delivering speeches to the ocean, the sea. And he was there with pebbles and was shouting and talking to the ocean, to the sea for several years. And in the end, the speech defect disappeared and he became one of the greatest orators in ancient Greece.

And again, there was a demand for it. So if the obstacle hadn't been there, there was a philosopher, probably it wasn't Nietzsche, who said, everything important happens in spite of. Everything important happens in spite of, don't add anything, in spite of something, whatever.

In other words, something was holding it back and then it had to, the energy was. So when you face tribulation in this life, then there's an opportunity for generating more consciousness when you encounter life's difficulties. There's an opportunity for developing more consciousness.

And as you rise in consciousness, the transcendent dimension of awakened consciousness comes in, you begin to transcend these very problems that before seemed unsurmountable. You transcend them or you live with them and they are no longer that important. So you can transcend them internally.

Let's say you have a body that is disabled in one way or another. And the problem then, as you awaken spiritually, sometimes it happens that the body gets healed. And at other times, it happens that the transcendent consciousness arises and the disability of the body is no longer a source of suffering for you.

But it was a source of suffering for probably for quite a long time until a very deep surrender happened. And in this deep surrender, you transcended this source of suffering. And then you still have the same body and yet you're no longer psychologically suffering because you have transcended so many things in this life.

They can be, you can overcome an obstacle or you can transcend an obstacle. If you overcome an obstacle, when external things, you do external things in order to remove the obstacle, to get beyond it. If that is not possible, then internally you transcend.

So it no longer, the obstacle, the so-called obstacle is still there, but it doesn't matter anymore to you. It is no longer so. In fact, you may be grateful for it.

I describe in, I believe in the New Earth, when I was a student, I learned something from observing the famous scientist, Stephen Hawking, who happened to be at the same college as me in England. And every time at lunchtime, I would see him next to the table that I was at with friends. He was not famous at the time.

It was a long time ago. He was in a wheelchair, unable to move his arms already, unable to put food in his mouth, unable to speak except make croaking sounds. Later he had a machine that he could use for communication.

At that time, he just could make croakings. He was already a professor. And at first I didn't know who he was.

I asked him, who is this person? He was being fed by his, his graduate students would feed him food and he would sit there and go, oh, what a horrible fate. If you are unhappy, think of a fate like that, to be buried with a body like that.

I can't imagine anything worse. And then a great lesson was when I saw him once or twice, especially a first occasion, I opened the door for him, and he came in at the same time, he came in with his wheelchair. I opened the door and I looked into his eyes and he looked up at me.

And then I saw he was not suffering anymore. There was not a, there wasn't a psychological suffering entity. There was just an acceptance.

So although he may not have gone deep into spiritual awakening, there was an enhanced ability to use his mind. I believe he had some spiritual, he had some spiritual awakening, but he used his mind a lot in a, his mind was still active. If he had reacted against his condition, he would not have been, had achieved anything.

His ability to think creatively would have diminished. But he, through his acceptance, he was in touch with that deep power out of which intelligence arises. And so he was free of, there was not a suffering personality there.

He would have been totally justified in being very unhappy and miserable. So that, again, is an example of transcendence, transcending something that before was a seemingly impossible obstacle. I believe that the entire, all this is contained in the story of, even, which can be appreciated, even if you're not a Christian, perhaps you can appreciate it more, actually, if you're not a Christian, that there's a deep truth in, that is hidden in the image of Jesus on the cross.

It's an image that's very strange. I think if somebody from an outer planet, an alien from another planet came here and they saw that humans are worshiping a man nailed to a cross, they might think, what is that all about? And if you look more deeply, there's a teaching in there, whether you regard it as a historical fact or a deep mythological truth, it's up to you, but there is a deep teaching there that the cross is a torture instrument.

And this man, who I would regard, perhaps, the archetypal human, is suffering. He is nailed to the cross. He is in deep suffering.

There's a torture instrument. The cross then leads to death and then is resurrection. And

then the cross itself, you often see it without the suffering human, and it's a symbol of the divine.

The torture instrument is also a symbol of the divine. And that is contained in the story of the torture instrument and the symbol of the divine. The cross is both.

And then there's a very deep truth embedded in there that perhaps humans would not have been able to understand if one had explained it conceptually, but they can see that this archetypal human surrenders to the suffering, brings about the rebirth and the transcendent state. And so torture instrument and the symbol of the divine are merging to one. That's a very deep, very deep teaching.

So when things happen in your life, you face it and you look at it and you become, the alertness is required when you're faced with a difficult person or situation. You become alert so that you don't react out of the conditioned mind. Even little things, when people could get irritated.

Airports these days. Airports these days are wonderful places for spiritual practice. Yes.

They've always been places for spiritual practice, but much more so now, because there's many, this is a small scale thing, but if you don't practice with small scale, you will not practice with big things. Relatively small things. Yes, your flight is canceled again.

Nobody can give you any information and the luggage is lost long ago. And there you are. You can either react out of the conditioned mind or you can say, this is what is.

That's what is. And if you have been irritated, and you can use any situation, it's been irritated or angry. I said, I recommend this spiritual practice and you do it like this.

How would I experience this situation if I didn't add any thought to it? No, you can't answer that unless you actually do it. So how would I experience this irritating moment and these awful people who are working for the airline and they're completely uninterested in their job anymore and so on and so on and so on.

How would I experience this moment if I didn't add any thought to it? Well, I'm just standing here in this line. Any thought would be, for example, well, this line is so long, I'm going to be here for at least another two hours.

That's a thought. It's future, not now. There's no two hours now.

It's just, how would I experience this moment if I didn't add any thought to it? Okay, let's try it. We might as well.

Nothing else to do. So there you are. And here you are.

Okay, I'm not adding any thought to it. I'm not, in other words, I'm not interpreting it either favorably or unfavorably. I'm not trying to convince myself this is really good.

That's another thought and it would be not really true in that here. It just don't add any, and there you are. And you look around and here we come back to sensory perception.

That's the first thing you notice is, hmm, oh. Lights, there are lights, there's people everywhere. Or movement of people standing.

But you don't even call it that. You just, artificial lights, lamps, all right. And you're breathing.

Oh, yes, yes, I'm breathing, breathing. Breathing. And if you become aware that you're breathing, it's part of this moment.

When you don't add thought to it, you may suddenly become aware that you're actually breathing. And then when you become aware that you're breathing, you might also sense that there is an aliveness that pervades your entire body as you stand there. I am trying to understand why a person would attract others who ultimately betray them.

Assuming that we create our relationships consciously or unconsciously, why is there the experience of betrayal? Assuming also that I know and love myself profoundly, what is to be learned from being betrayed? The question sounds a little abstract, but the questioner is not here.

I assume that the questioner feels betrayed. By someone. And since the questioner is a woman, perhaps she feels betrayed by a man.

Perhaps, maybe it's by a woman. Now, of course, betray already is a word that is quite heavy. He betrayed me.

She betrayed me. There's already a huge amount of heaviness and story in that. If you put it slightly differently, it loses some of its heaviness.

And putting it slightly differently could sound like this. He is a human being and he manifested behavior that corresponded to his level of consciousness at that particular time when he did it. Perhaps at other times when I met him, he seemed to be at a better, higher level of consciousness, but then he fell back to a more unconscious state and then his behavior manifested that.

Where's the betrayal? It suddenly disappeared. So that makes it easier on you to deal with it than to impose a huge narrative or judgment on another person and involve you in this dreadful act of which you become a part, the act of betrayal.

Yes, of course you suffered. We all suffer and we all encounter humans who make us suffer because many humans, most of them are unconscious and they're not always at

the same level. That's an interesting fact that humans can be at enormously varying levels of consciousness according to the situation they find themselves in.

There are some humans who have a potential for committing a crime, but circumstances never put them in a position where that potential becomes actualized. And then it can happen that other humans encounter a situation that is very challenging and brings out all the worst accumulations within them that come up to the surface and suddenly they turn into these monsters. And before you might have known a completely different person, a completely different level of consciousness.

So humans get challenged or encounter situations that bring out certain aspects of their unconsciousness between in sexual encounters, because it's not unlikely that the betrayal has something to do with the man going off with another woman, not unlikely. Now, that is an area that that kind of attraction that can make people very quickly, very unconscious. There are expressions for that, but I won't say.

So, yes, that's the unfortunate thing with human beings. They're not fully enlightened. So, and then of course you say, I trusted him.

He promised me when we got married that he would be faithful. And I trusted him. And I'm sure when he promised it, he meant it.

I don't think when he promised to be faithful, he meant, well, I'm not really going to do that. When he promised to be faithful, he meant it. But then a few years passed, and then one day he had a few drinks, and then he looked at that woman there and he was gone.

Completely unconscious. And again, in Jesus' words, forgive them for they know not what they do. Now, to forgive them is only something that you do for yourself because you free yourself of the burden of having to live with a narrative or a story of betrayal and be part of that.

And then part of your sense of identity, this is very painful, but seductive, part of your egoic, your ego identity, then is I am the one who has been betrayed. And that's a dreadful burden to carry in your sense of self. So if you believe in that story that your mind has created, the act of betrayal, he betrayed me, so you're setting up for yourself an enormous amount of suffering because that story will become part of your sense of self.

And if that's the case, then even it will influence and color the way from now on in which you relate to other, men or women or whatever it is, can easily color that. So you have to be very careful and see what you're doing to yourself by creating these stories. On the conventional level, they are true.

You can say, he betrayed me. That's conventional way of using language, but it's not the

real truth. You might have heard of Byron Katie, the spiritual teacher.

She always questions whatever thoughts the mind produces. And that's a wonderful thing because otherwise you might feel tempted to believe in every thought that comes into your head. He betrayed me.

And of course, Byron Katie would ask, do you know that for sure? How do you know that? Yeah, of course I know for sure.

And then eventually, if it works, the person is meant to disidentify from the thought that the mind has created and become free of being trapped by this thought, which really means consciousness is trapped by this thought that the mind has created and you are trapped in it. So be careful with the stories that your mind creates. And sometimes if you rephrase, as I just did for you, rephrase the story, it suddenly does not cling to you anymore.

And it no longer becomes part of your painful identity or sense of self because you want to be free of that. So, and of course then you, unfortunately you have to forgive him. Sorry, you have to, that is part of it when you realize, yeah, he was unconscious, you have to, forgiveness comes and that's fine.

It doesn't mean you want to start all over again or maybe you will, but probably not. Because unless a shift has happened in him, the same kind of thing might happen to him again. Next time he has a drink and sees a woman.

So careful with, very careful with stories that the mind creates and then become part of your sense of self. The feeling, first of all, needs to be acknowledged and accepted. You can't start with letting go.

So we have to start with acknowledging it and accepting that it's there because it's part of what is, the is-ness of the present moment, whether it's an external thing or an inner thing, it is what is. And to deny or to argue with what is creates suffering. So you acknowledge, you accept that it's there.

Then how much time you need to be with it depends, varies from person to person and what kind of a feeling it is and so on. And then the question arises, what is the link between that feeling and your thought processes? The person needs to find out whether the thought processes keep that feeling alive continuously, whether they renew by playing out, for example, a past scenario in their minds, by reviving memories from the past, by dwelling on certain narratives that are painful, repeating them in their minds, that gives renewed energy to the feeling.

So the first, the most important thing is to be aware of both levels. What's the level of my thinking? How does that contribute to the perpetuation of what I feel?

And so you also then acknowledge that, oh, these are the habitual thought patterns that go through my mind in relation to the feelings. And then you would begin to realize that the letting go, the most important step in letting go of feelings is to cut the link between your thinking and what you're feeling. How do you do that?

You do it by being aware of your thinking and realizing that that thinking is pain. It feeds the old feeling and the narrative, whatever it is, is a painful narrative. And you realize that you've been keeping it alive for some years.

And when there's enough awareness, you realize that it has no purpose except to make you unhappy and to perpetuate that feeling. However, it has, you need, and this is how you can help, or any counselor or therapist or spiritual teacher can help the other person by observing the feeling and seeing how the mind, the mental narrative, has both the mental narrative and the feeling seem to have a life of their own. And if they have been in there for a long time, they don't want to go.

What they want is they want you to be identified with them. They don't want you to be conscious of them. So this is really the mind aspect of the pain body and the emotional.

The pain body is predominantly an emotion, but there is a mental aspect that the pain body needs to rise up into your mind in order to feed on certain types of thinking, in this case, the old narrative. So you also need enough awareness to know that this thing does not want to go because there's a momentum behind thought patterns that have been active in your mind for a long time. So there's a momentum behind it.

So you need to be acutely aware of the process of how it creates further pain. And when you look through it and see that's actually what it does, then you've recognized you cannot be deceived anymore by completely believing in it every time it happens. In other words, you see that you create your own pain ultimately.

When you see that, that's the beginning of the end. And then you can reach a stage when the pain is no longer, the feeling is no longer fueled by thinking. Then you arrive at a stage where you realize I don't need the feeling anymore.

In fact, you don't need to let go because then when you do not revive it continuously, it subsides by itself. So you don't need to actually say, I must let go. It lets go of you rather than you need to let go.

It's because you're no longer giving it energy. You're no longer feeding it. So that's the process.

So you need to let go is a bit like saying you need to forgive. That's another one like that. You need to really need to forgive.

Okay, I'll try. I'll really, I have you forgiven your parents. Yeah, I think I have.

The forgiveness again is in a similar way happens naturally when you look, when first of all, you realize that no human being can act beyond their level of consciousness at that time when they acted. So if you haven't forgiven your parents and yet then you can see they behaved the way they did because they could have done otherwise. My father, for example, I loved him dearly.

Well, especially after I became conscious. And before I became conscious, I had a love hate relationship with him. And I found him very obnoxious, but there was love there too, emotional love.

But then when I was free, I could love him unconditionally. And then I could see that pattern in him that produced so much, gave me so much pain, his uncontrollable anger. Most of, mostly fortunately not directed towards me, but directed towards my mother.

But the anger that was directed by my father towards my mother hurt me probably more than it hurt my mother as a little, as a child. And his anger was so explosive. It could flare up at any moment.

So you were always walking on eggshells. And when I was seven, eight, I already knew, my mother seemingly never learned it. I already knew what comment that she made would immediately produce the anger.

I knew that when I was seven, she never learned it. And so I was ready. I was listening to my mother saying, oh no, she's saying that.

And so there was, I had a dream when I was seven or eight, I was asleep and I had this dream. And in the dream, there was a bag under my bed. And in that bag were the body parts of my dad.

I had cut him up and had to put all his body parts and had hidden it under the bed. So I was, I didn't, the actual cutting up wasn't in the dream, that had already happened somewhere else.

[Speaker 9] (4:29:20 - 4:29:22)

You were just cleaning up?

[Speaker 1] (4:29:22 - 4:31:20)

Yeah, so I was pushing him under my bed. And then still in the dream, at that moment, I heard the front door opening and my dad was coming in and I ran towards him and gave him a hug. Okay, so that shows the conflicting feelings.

And then later I realized, I realized where that anger came from. I don't need to go into this. Of course, it goes back to childhood, how he was treated in his family.

The seventh child, the youngest child, nobody wanted him anymore. The mother was tired. He wasn't given much attention, not treated well by his female, his sisters and so on.

Long story, don't need to go into that. It came all from there. It originated from there.

Anger towards his mother and so on and so on. And later I realized he could not help himself. He did not have the awareness.

He was taken over by this anger. And the moment I realized that he, that was, he acted according to his level of consciousness at the time, I didn't need to forgive anymore because there was nothing to forgive anymore. I had, and that's a beautiful thing.

So again, similar to letting go of feelings, when enough awareness comes in, the feeling let's go, let's go of you and all becomes transmuted into something, an energy field that is good. And so forgiveness, again, cannot really be practiced in the same way that letting go can't really be practiced. It just happens.

And then that's how it is.

[Speaker 2] (4:31:38 - 4:31:43)

The memory of what happened to you is more than just a memory.

[Speaker 1] (4:31:44 - 4:34:03)

There is self-identification with the memory. In other words, it's not perceived as just something that happened to you, but it becomes part of who you perceive to be. Now, almost everybody has in one way or another been a victim of other people, but in some cases, much, much more so than in others.

Some element of having been victim is probably present in everybody's life. In other words, you are surrounded by unconscious humans and then unconscious humans will inflict suffering on themselves and others. That's just how it is when you're alive on this planet.

Childhood, particularly, is a place where many children experience abuse, either minor forms of abuse, emotional abuse, or they live in a very toxic family environment. And then, of course, there are other children who experience much more serious forms of abuse and really suffer and have these experiences. Care and carry with them the memory, both mental and emotional memory, of what happened to them.

In some cases, the memory is repressed because the child, the emotions may be repressed. The child could not deal with them and they had to repress them. And then later, the possibility of remembering arises and then you remember what happened to you.

And how do you do, is the question, what do you do with what happened to you, what was done to you? How do you deal with what was done to you by other humans, whether it happened in childhood or whether it happened later in life, whether it was a relatively minor thing or whether it was a very serious form of abuse?

[Speaker 2] (4:34:04 - 4:34:06)

How do you deal with that?

[Speaker 1] (4:34:11 - 4:41:48)

Now, the ego, the human ego is always looking for something to add to its sense of identity. It's looking for a stronger sense of identity because it always feels, I'm not enough. So it's trying to add something that it can identify with, so add to its sense of self.

And very often happens that the memory of having been abused is used by the ego and is added to the ego's sense of self. So that means you not only remember what happened to you, the memory of what happened to you, which is a bundle of thoughts and emotion that go with it, the memory of what happened to you is more than just a memory. There is self-identification with the memory.

In other words, it's not perceived as just something that happened to you, but it becomes part of who you perceive to be. So I am a victim of that. It's not that this was done to me, but I am a victim of.

So it's the transition from memory to self. That is the victim identity. The ego does that because victim identity is a very powerful form of identity, a very powerful form of ego.

And particularly in cases where the ego is always, does not find sufficient things that it can identify with in this world, because the most common form of identification, for example, is with the way you look. You look better than others. So you can identify with that.

If you look worse than others, of course, that could become part of your victim identity because you've been treated unfairly by life and life has made you look worse than others. That could become part of victim identity. Although that's not actually abuse, but it could also be incorporated into victim identity.

However, so normally what people identify with or what ego identifies with is appearance, which is physical appearance of the body, what external looks, even what you put on the body is then regarded as part of the body. So clothes become something you identify with because they're on the body. So firstly, if it's being part of you, possessions, common thing, what I own, I own this car, you don't.

Therefore, I feel a bit stronger in my sense of self because I have a Lamborghini and you only have a VW or bicycle. So I have a stronger identity compared to others. House, any form of possession.

Then we have social function in this world, position that you have, social position in this world you identify with that you feel gives you superiority. With every ego identification, the most important thing is superiority, a sense of superiority. The ego seeks that.

It cannot tolerate inferiority. So superiority, whether it's possessions, looks or appearance, achievement in this world, social position, oh yes, knowledge. Some people who are intellectual or highly educated, you can identify with that and feel superior to many other humans who know much less than you.

So you have identified with knowledge, identified with, you can identify with your ancestors in some countries, in the West, not so much anymore, but in some countries still, it used to be like that in the West, but in some countries still, your ancestry is extremely important, like who your parents were and your grandparents and so on, you go back several generations. So you can have that, you identify, and again, superiority is always implied. Now, it's not many humans find it easy to find things in this world that they can derive a sense of superiority from, well, children already start doing that.

They have to look for something. I can jump higher than you, look at me, that's good. That's the developing ego, gives you a bit of superiority or whatever it may be.

So many humans don't find a lot in this world that does give them a sense of superiority. They don't have a lot of possessions or no possessions. They're not particularly highly educated, don't really know that much.

They're not great looking. So what else? The ego is looking for something.

Now, it could be things like resentment, so that's a great one. Grievances towards other humans, that's a big one. So the ego can have anger towards other humans or groups of humans.

He says, well, of course, so the ego can get in there, identify with those thoughts and gives you a sense of superiority. You can sometimes, I don't know if you've all met, people who are kind of considered half crazy who are walking the streets and you have people, you see them often in big cities, particularly, they're shouting, they're shouting at everybody. They're very angry and they're shouting at everybody.

You, you, you, and you can see, it's a rudimentary form of superiority by being angry at others. It's implied, ultimately, you are superior to those humans that you're angry at. So even if you have nothing, you can get, the ego can make you angry about other people and you start shouting at them and you feel suddenly superior to everybody, all these awful people out there.

And that brings us already in the direction of victim identity. Victim identity, again, you remember what was done to you and the memory becomes incorporated, as I said, into your sense of self that becomes me, the victim of those people.

[Speaker 2] (4:41:49 - 4:41:51)

That's me, I am the victim.

[Speaker 1] (4:41:52 - 4:48:05)

So you become, in your own perception, a victim of this or that other people. This enhances your ego because by being a victim, you feel superior to others, not only to those who inflicted suffering on you, whether real or imagined, but you also feel yourself superior to anybody else who is not as much a victim as you are. It's an unconscious process.

So if you can talk about your victimhood, anybody who is less of a victim than you is inferior. And so the superiority, it's a moral one, one could say, because if unjust things were done to you, then by being a victim of unjust deeds, perpetrated by other humans, you automatically become morally superior, not only to those humans who inflicted that on you, but also to other humans who are not victims or cannot claim, have not as much claim on victimhood as you have. So you are morally superior to them.

It's a delusion, it's every egoic identity is a form of delusion. So ultimately, it's a delusion that the stronger the ego is, the more deluded you become about who you are. And that you can also have collective victimhood as very common these days.

You can, your group of people who undoubtedly has, people you identify with, whatever it may be, gender or race or a social class that was oppressed, whatever it may be, and certainly these things have happened. People, social groups have been victimized, so to speak, in the past, suffering inflicted by humans or other groups of humans, certainly happened. And to remember that is fine, to recognize it for what it is.

It's like similar to a memory of an individual person suffering abuse, injustice, and so on. And now you, if it's collective, it's a very similar process. You remember what was being done.

The question is, is it just a memory? And do you recognize what was behind it? What other, or is it more than a memory?

Is it something that becomes in doubt with a sense of self, selfhood? Then you have a collective victim identity that is also very powerful. And this is to say that that's an illusion, is not to say that these abuses did not happen.

The illusion is what are you doing to yourself by deriving your sense of identity from this

thing that happened in the past? The memory is fine. We need to remember these things, fine.

But do I derive my sense of who I am from being a victim, either on an individual level or on a collective level? That is an enormous limitation on my life because I'm immediately, the implication, when a significant part of your identity is that of a victim, the implication is that you remain a victim. There isn't much you can do because they've made you into a victim.

You've made yourself into a victim. What can you do now? You're obviously morally superior to everybody who is less of a victim than you, but you condemn yourself almost to powerlessness.

When you, any kind of victim identity, you want to remain powerless because to say that you could transcend what was done to you, you can overcome the effects of it. You can go beyond it. You have the power to go beyond the abuse that was done to you, which every human has that power.

You can never discover that power if you are trapped in a victim identity. So the power to transcend, to go beyond what was done to you, not to be held back by what was done to you on an individual level or collectively, the power to go beyond it is you do not have this power as long as you remain trapped in a victim identity because the ego does not want to let go of being a victim. Once something has been incorporated into the ego, the ego does not want to let go.

It becomes part of your, it is precious to you. Is there another question that has not dissolved?

[Speaker 7] (4:48:17 - 4:49:04)

It only has partly dissolved. Hello, Eckhart. Moin, moin.

My question deals with parents. With practicing presence, felt love for them after many years, not feeling love and feeling guilty for that. But I still have huge problems to meet them.

When I meet them, if they are in the same room, even if I try to be aware of my breath and my inner body, after a while, I have huge pain body attacks. And...

[Speaker 1] (4:49:04 - 4:49:07)

Is that triggered by something they say or?

[Speaker 7] (4:49:07 - 4:49:27)

I can't even say that. Sometimes it's the way I managed to go through the meeting quite

fine and my mother leaves the room and I break down. And yeah, I don't know what it is.

[Speaker 1] (4:49:29 - 4:49:31)

German parents can be difficult.

[Speaker 3] (4:49:33 - 4:49:34)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (4:49:36 - 6:05:58)

I know. American parents too. So on one level, there's already an acceptance of them on a mental level, the acceptance of who they are, the acceptance of their limitations, they behave the way they behave.

Is the pain body is still there inside you, of course, and the pain body reacts. It may also be that the mental level, the mental acceptance is not yet complete either to see that they act the way they act, speak the way they speak, not because of who they are, but because of their past conditioning, which is their mental emotional conditioning is speaking through them. They can't help that.

If there's not enough presence, everybody is in controlled by their mental emotional conditioning. They can't help it. They are afflicted by that disease.

Which is identification with unconscious conditioning. I'm not the only one who calls that disease. Even in the ancient teachings of Zen, they sometimes call it the disease of the mind.

And there are some Zen teachers who have said they are here to cure that mental illness. I've said, that's what Zen is about. It's curing that mental illness.

So you need to, on the mental level, as you sit with them, you need to know that continuously that what you are observing is not who they are. You're observing a form of mental conditioning. Underneath that, there is the being.

And you may sometimes get a glimpse of it. My mother was very much identified also with her mind. And occasionally I looked into her eyes and suddenly there was a light shining through when she stopped talking for a little while.

In other words, the mind catching a breath after talking for 10 minutes incessantly. And then for a moment I could see, oh, there's their being. Her being was shining through.

And I have one or two photos where her being shines through. And then of course it gets obscured again. And then you get the same, get the suspicions, the complaints, the accusations, all the stuff associated with unconscious thinking.

So on the mental level, you need to know that, be present enough so that you don't forget that what you're observing is not who they are, but you're observing the past in them, the conditioning. And then comes the emotions that you feel. Of course, there's your past, the past, the living past in you from your childhood, all the things they did or failed to do because they couldn't help it.

There wasn't enough presence to change it. So that's something for you to find acceptance as you accept them, you accept what you feel at that moment. Whether you can even label it, we don't know.

Is it sadness? Is it anger? Is it heaviness or a mixture of all of that?

A feeling of wanting to run away? A contraction, whatever it is, that's all there. You don't need to even analyze it.

You just need to feel the entire energy field of that. And it doesn't feel pleasant. And it's the past in you.

So there you're observing the past in them acting out and you experience the past in you. And so what do you do with two pasts? You have the past out there and the past in here.

Only presence can dissolve the past. So you need to access the power of presence in yourself. And how do you do that?

A quick way in a situation like this is the acceptance of whatever arises inside or outside at this moment. You accept this is what you feel. This is what they do or say.

There's the acceptance of the inner and the outer. Because it is already happening. You have to accept or you suffer.

In a way, if you don't accept, you suffer more. If you don't want to feel what you feel, that's more suffering because you're resisting. Acceptance does something that I could describe as, let's say, here's the emotional field and it doesn't feel good.

And acceptance means just to say, okay, that is, I can feel that. I'm verbalizing, acceptance doesn't even require after a little while, you don't need words anymore. You can just see what is, be with it.

And at that moment, a little bit of space opens up around that emotion. A little bit of space. That space comes from your acceptance.

The acceptance gives it space. And that's already a tiny bit of freedom. You've given it a little bit of space inside yourself when you say, yes, this is what is.

And that's a beauty. You have given both them space externally to be, and you've given

yourself space internally. And then as you notice that actually, it feels already a little bit better than before because there's space around the emotion.

And then you go into it more deeply and you accept even more, continue to accept. And that space grows a little bit around it. And then you encounter the strange phenomenon of an emotion that is not pleasant existing in a spacious field, so to speak, that's around it.

And then you realize that who you are is you are that field. And you can allow the emotion to be in that field. And you can allow your parents to be there and say what they say and do what they do.

They're repeating the past. Space comes in. So acceptance brings space.

And space is the transcendence of conditioning. Space is the transcendence of the past, the transcendence, transcendence of the personality and the person. And it's freedom, space.

That's the practice. And so the best place to practice is with your parents. There are many other places where you can practice, but the ultimate mastery you will achieve when you can practice with your parents, that's the graduation.

You graduate. It's the PhD in presence with. Don't jump into it too much.

Don't, if you say, okay, I'm going to spend a week with our parents now, it's too much, too much. You should give yourself short time periods at first. Say, I'm going to come for coffee and cake.

That's what they like to do. At least my mother did. I'll come for coffee and cake and I'll stay for an hour.

Or you know, if you can, I don't know how that works practically, but. And then you practice, you give yourself one hour to practice. And you know, it's only an hour.

I have to be present for an hour. And it's your spiritual practice. So the, as you know, I've written the quote in a book, Ram Dass said, if you think you're so enlightened, spend two weeks with your parents, two weeks.

The ultimate test. So happy practice. Life does not cease from challenging you.

And that doesn't change. Even if you awaken spiritually, you will get other challenges, different kinds of challenges. The only difference is as you awaken spiritually, the way in which you respond to the challenges changes.

And that is all important. How you confront the challenges of life, how you react to or respond to the challenges of life determines how you experience your life. How you

experience your life ultimately is not determined by what happens to you, because most people think that that's the case, but how you experience your life or what you call your life is ultimately not determined by what happens to you.

It is determined by how you respond to what happens to you and how you respond to what happens to you determines what happens in the so-called future. How you respond now. Some people, whenever they are challenged by life, they behave as if there was something very wrong with their life, that things are not supposed to go wrong or be challenging.

This is not supposed to happen. And this works on both a small scale and large scale. And you might've met people, and perhaps you were one of those people in the past, people who are continuously complaining about things.

They're continuously not in alignment, continuously out of alignment with whatever is going on around them, situations and people and places and events. Either something is there that shouldn't be there, something is happening right now that should not be happening or something is not happening that should be happening or I should be somewhere else, but I'm here. And that's a huge problem.

I'm trying very hard to get there, but I'm here. Now, this sounds a little weird when I say it like this, but the sad fact is that many people, people live like that for most of their life. They are not aligned with what they are doing right now.

Yes, they are doing it, but they are not fully in the doing because they'd rather be somewhere else. They would rather be already at the end of this particular activity. And when you're very much in that mindset, that means your life is stressful continuously.

Stressful means there's a mental projection of where you need to be or should be, but you're here. So you're engaged in this activity, but there's a, you have mental, you have certain thoughts that tell you either you already want to be at the end of what you're doing or although you are doing this, you really should also be doing that and that and that, but you're doing this, a dreadful way to live. Normal, by the way, it's called normal.

And you see it when you watch the movies, everybody's like that in the movies. So it must be normal. They're all like, and people love to see the dysfunctional way in which people live, reflected on TV and in the movies, they reflected their own dysfunction and that's a confirmation that, okay, I'm actually okay because everybody's unhappy.

Everybody is living in this way, in this state of almost continuous dissatisfaction except for brief moments, sometimes to do with having a good meal or sex, could do it for a while. This doesn't last very long. Or you get what you wanted.

You get what you wanted. The thing that you said, oh, that's what will make me happy. And then you get it.

And for a moment you feel, ah, and you feel this happiness arising. And why do you think you feel this happiness? Because you got what you wanted.

But if you look more deeply, you will realize that you do not really feel happy because you got what you wanted. You feel happy because for a very short time period, the mind structure that was always unhappy with the is-ness of things, there's something is missing here. I need that.

I need to get rid of that. That mind structure subsides. And for a moment you don't want anything except what is here now.

And that suddenly you feel more alive. You feel, ah. And now then perhaps you begin to understand why the Buddha talked about the greatest obstacle to spiritual awakening being continuous.

Well, he called it, and in the translations, it's called desire. But a better translation of what the Buddha was talking about is a more vital term is wanting. The continuous wanting, wanting this, wanting that, wanting the neediness, the wanting.

And that is the mind structure that operates in humans that prevents them from experiencing the deeper dimension of reality, which we could call the timeless dimension, the timeless dimension of consciousness. Remember, we talked about time a few minutes ago. We talked about time.

And yes, a few minutes ago. And we talked about the express train that you can't get off. We talked about the fire that is consuming you.

That is time. That is true. But the good news is that there is in every human a deeper dimension of consciousness.

In many humans, it's only a potential, a latent potential, like a seed. In others, the seed has already began to sprout. There is the possibility in humans of accessing and living from the deeper dimension of consciousness.

And accessing that deeper dimension of consciousness is what we could call spiritual awakening, where you realize that in addition to being a person a personality or a person who lives in this world of time, of past and future, in addition to being this person, there is more to you. There are other dimensions to who you are, or more specifically, there is a deeper dimension to who you are than the merely historical person. And that's why we are here tonight, because I want this not just to be a conceptual talk, although of course we're using words, but the aim is for you to experience at first hand, even if it's only a glimpse, or to deepen, for many of you, it'll be just a deepening because you already are sensing what it is that I'm talking about.

You say, I think I know what he's talking about. You're already sensing within yourself

what it is that I'm talking about when I speak of a deeper dimension of who you are, a deeper sense of identity of who you are. But basically for the really important things, it's preferable to be in the state of not knowing, which is a non-conceptual awareness.

Sometimes presence is compared to listening, and that is an analogy one can use, and Jesus used to describe it to people so they can experience it, who have no idea what you're talking about. So when you are trying to teach it to your mother or your children or your dad or your grandparents or whatever, or your uncle or aunt to say, what's all that nonsense that you can say, when you, if you're listening, if you're trying to catch the very slight noise, what stage would you be in inside if you were very intent listening, trying to catch the slightest noise that's arising, what inner state would you be in? And then let's try it.

You can practice with your children. It's a game. It's a wonderful game.

Can we listen to the slightest? What noises can you hear? Let's say you're out in nature and there's very subtle noises.

What noises can you hear? And then they go, okay, but you have to get still. Otherwise you won't know.

So you get still and then you go, okay, listen very carefully. Okay, and then they go, of course they're not thinking then. You can't think and listen very carefully.

Ah, and then they might hear noise. Oh, I can hear that. Okay, anything else?

They listen again. Oh, now I can hear that. Okay.

And so that you're putting this person or that's a child you're doing it with, without them knowing it, you are actually putting them into a different state of consciousness simply by asking them to listen very carefully because you cannot carefully listen and think at the same time. Presence needs to be taken. Consciousness needs to be reclaimed from the thinking function.

And it's all because all that consciousness is required to go into the auditory perception. So consciousness is reclaimed from thinking and then flows into auditory perception. And so you experience that you have a choice of where you want your attention to be.

You don't have to always have your attention absorbed continuously by the stream of thinking. Most people don't know that. They are identified with a stream of thinking.

They don't know that they can reclaim their consciousness from where it is usually lodged in thinking. And that's a wonderful freedom. But this is the beginning of it is to show somebody, listen, as I mentioned the other day, Jesus used the example of the master is coming home at night and you have to be awake to know when he's coming

because he may be very quiet.

That's a parable used by Jesus. Why does he say that? Some people misinterpret it and think he's talking about the end of the world.

Why would he talk about, why do you have to be quiet when the end of the world, it comes whether you're quiet or not. So you're listening. It's a different state of consciousness.

You could do the same with a visual perception. Look very clearly. What is it that you can see?

Let's say, so you're out in nature. What is it that you can see over there? What's that in the distance?

What could that be? And then you're asking that person to enter a different state of consciousness, to stop thinking and putting all attention into visual perception. And they would go, and until they find an interpretation and know what it is they're looking at, they are not thinking.

So to look at something unusual, it's very helpful because when you can't interpret it, there's no thought yet. So if you see a UFO, then you would, for a while you would go. It's why it might stop your mind for a while until you say, oh, now I know what it is.

It's a UFO, which is of course a contradiction in terms because UFO means it's unidentified, so you don't know what it is. But very often the mind, by finding a word for something, seems that now you know. This is how a lot of mental knowledge operates.

You find a word for it. It's, oh, okay. The child asked the parent, how do the birds find their way when they travel thousands of miles from the Northern Hemisphere to the Southern Hemisphere, and then they find their way back in the next year to the same nesting grounds, thousands of miles away, and they, how do they do that, dad?

Can you tell me how that happens, says the child, and the dad says, oh, yes, it's instinct. Oh, okay. Okay.

Write it down, instinct. Now I know what it is. So a lot of our knowledge is just covering up our ignorance with words.

Entire PhDs are like that. And there's a refusal to recognize that at the heart of life or the universe, there is a deep mystery that we cannot conceptually understand. But because people have these huge egos, they cannot admit, especially if you're a scientist, you can't admit to yourself that there is a deep mystery and there's a huge amount of things that you do not understand.

And they can't get themselves to say that, so they have to pretend that they know. It's

just words or little scribbles on a piece of paper. So to continue to be open to the mystery of life is vital so that you stay connected to the mystery.

If you pretend to know, you cut yourself off from the mystery because the mystery is also the source of all life. So to deny the mystery is a dreadful thing to do to yourself but to remain open to the mystery and to remain comfortable with not knowing most things. You just know, of course, things that you need to operate in your daily life.

That's fine. You dial a phone number, you know that. That works.

You know how to use your iPhone or your BlackBerry and all the other devices and many other things you can do. But basically for the really important things, it's preferable to be in the state of not knowing, which is a non-conceptual awareness, especially in relation to other human beings. I don't even want to understand you.

I allow you to be who you are. And I know that in your essence, you are one with my essence. We are more than connected.

And that is enough for me to, when I meet somebody, that's enough. I don't need to know their story to know them. There is a different, there are two kinds of knowing.

One, the one that most people are familiar with is conceptual knowing, you know, through mental concepts. What many people are not familiar with is direct knowing that operates without any concepts. So when I walk in the forest, which I love to do, I can apply conceptual knowledge to what I see by interpreting the trees, what they are called, by looking at various phenomena in the forest.

For example, in the Northwest Pacific, you have things like trunks, a tree, old trees that have fallen and are beginning to decay. And out of the trunk of the old tree, a new tree, a seed of a tree has gone into that decay trunk. And it's called a nurse log.

So you have a huge log. And out of that log, a new tree, totally new tree grows. The old log is nursing the new tree.

So they call it the nurse log. I haven't seen those things in Europe. I don't know if they exist.

But so I can look at that and say, ah, that's a nurse log. And I can look at other things and the birds and so on. I can also, it's one level of knowing the forest, but it's not very deep.

It's conceptual. There is another way when I do not interpret what I see at all. And I simply contemplate the trees, everything without naming mentally.

From the point of view of conceptual knowledge, it now looks as if I had abandoned all knowledge because if I don't have any, if I'm not naming it in my mind, what do I know?

Nothing from a conceptual viewpoint. And yet I am relating to the aliveness of the forest and of every being in it much more deeply than I could through the conceptual level of knowing.

And if I'm confined, when I go for a walk in the forest, if I'm confined to only conceptual knowledge, or if I'm totally elsewhere, thinking about something totally different, what's going to happen next week, or my problematic life situation, I'm totally absent. But even if I'm in the forest and looking, but only knowing it through concepts, as many people do, birdwatchers, they love to interpret. And then they write, this is such and such a bird.

That is fine, there is a place for that kind of knowledge. But if you are trapped on that, you're missing something much more important. You are missing the deeper knowing that is non-conceptual that can only be there when you stop naming.

And that means you're open to the mystery of the forest. You're no longer pretending because even if you call it a nurse log, what do you really know? And even if you look more deeply, you still don't know what the life is.

No scientist knows what life is. They only know how life manifests. But nobody has found the life is the mystery.

Nobody knows what consciousness is. Scientists don't even mention the word consciousness. I'm told, I'm not sure, in the latest book by Stephen Hawkins, who's quite a good thinker, the word consciousness, it's about the universe, the history of the universe or whatever it is.

I can't remember the title. The word consciousness is not used once. The greatest mystery of life, the fact that there is consciousness, which is able to perceive the universe, he doesn't mention it because the scientist doesn't know what to do with it.

It is, so let's stay connected to the mystery and then realize that there is a very deep knowing. Let's go back to the forest. When I go through the forest, that is my preference without naming continuously, but simply perceiving the totality and the various things.

Sometimes I perceive just one thing, a blade of grass, a branch, one particular tree, or the nurse logs, or the different kinds of fern, moss. In the Northwest Pacific, apparently there are several hundred different types of moss and that's to do with conceptual knowledge. But just looking at it, just seeing, and then the totality of the forest, you take that in too.

And you can then notice it is an energy field. It is alive. It is pervaded by something.

It is alive. And you can sense that. And this is a way of knowing the forest that is non-conceptual.

And you then know it. And that knowing is no longer separate from knowing yourself because as you know the forest, you are very deeply connected with the awareness within yourself. And somehow they are not separate.

And as you walk through the forest, the forest, as I like to put it, because that's how I experience it, the forest becomes conscious of itself because it's not separate from you. You are connected to everything. You are not separate from the totality.

So suddenly as you, the person with a name and a birth date has transcended its personal self and becomes a field of awareness through which the forest becomes aware of its own sacredness and beauty and aliveness. And you go, welcome to our live meditation. We are not going to do a technique-based meditation here, but a more natural, spontaneous meditation.

So allow me to just talk you into, so to speak, the meditative state of consciousness. The two ingredients of our meditation session here are the words and the spaces between the words. Yes, there's also the visual.

You see the image on the screen, but mostly it's the words that you pay attention to and there's the silent spaces. And usually you would always just be waiting for the next thing the speaker says, but here to enter the meditative state of consciousness, you become aware of the silent spaces too. You just notice them right now.

And you may notice that when you notice the silent spaces, for that moment, your mind also becomes silent. In other words, there is a brief cessation of thinking without loss of consciousness, like now. That is the beginning of the meditative state.

And it may come as a surprise to some of you that although you probably think continuously, every moment, almost every moment of your waking life, it doesn't have to be like that. You can invite into your life these still or silent spaces. In fact, it's absolutely vital essential for any human to have some access to that inner stillness because that inner stillness is a source of great power and aliveness.

And it's also a place where you can sense the deeper feeling of being you. The word I is used a lot. It's probably one of the most frequently used words in the language, I, I, I.

And usually it refers to yourself as a, let's say, historical person, somebody, a person with a history. The history of you makes you into who you are as a person, your past. And then it includes, the I refers also, of course, to your current circumstances, whatever you identify with, whatever you derive your sense of self from, whether it's possessions, or you can derive your sense of self from your possessions.

You can also derive your sense of self from your lack of possessions, which could be interpreted as either that you are worse off than other people, and you have a sense of identity there made up of certain, certain thoughts, or it could be interpreted, the lack of

possessions could be interpreted as I am more spiritual than all those people who have these possessions, which, again, it's a sense of identity based on a little story in your mind.

And usually the word I refers to that mental entity that consists of things that you, over a period of time throughout your life, have identified with mostly, and those things become a sense of who you are, successes, failures, relationships, possessions, status in society, things that you, other people did to you, you did to other people. All those things become mental stories, and they give you a sense of self, and this is what usually the word I refers to. And most people don't realize that there can be a deeper meaning to I, a deeper sense of identity than one that consists of your personal history.

And meditation, in a wider sense, or the meditative state, is here to help you realize that there's more to you than your personal history, or the story in your mind about who you are, which may be predominantly great. That may be a fiction, but I'm better than most people. It may be predominantly negative.

I'm a victim of everybody else. Or it may be a mixed bag for most people. It's probably a mixed bag of good and bad.

But if you never go beyond that sense of self, that's a very limited existence, but that kind of limited existence is normal. Whenever you watch movies and so on, it's usually about people who lead that kind of limited existence, although there are some movies occasionally where you see a glimpse of something else. That's the spiritual dimension.

That's going deeper within, as we're doing now. So when we come to that, you may remember I said, be aware of the silent spaces, even though they may be short. And as you become aware of the silent spaces, your mind becomes still, just for that moment, like this moment.

Your mind becomes still means, of course, there is a cessation, a stopping, of thought. But the voice in the head, as I sometimes call it, suddenly stops speaking. There's no longer any mental commentary about what's going on here or now.

And there's no longer a mental projection into some future moment like, what am I going to have for dinner or lunch? Tomorrow. So what's left of you when there is that brief cessation of mind activity, but you have not gone to sleep.

You are as alert as you were before in fact, you are more alert than when you were engaged in thinking. And suddenly you go. And for a moment, what's left of you is that alert presence.

And the historical person has kind of temporarily disappeared. That's quite interesting. And without having any story in your mind to tell you who you are, you nevertheless get a very strong sense of beingness or presence.

You can sense that there is a presence. And of course, that presence is perceiving through that presence is the background to your sense perceptions. Right now, you hear the voice.

You see the image on the screen, but no particular commentary on it. It's actually possible to be aware of the present moment, the now, and to be aware of the now is the state of presence. Now there are two levels to being aware of the now.

On one level, you're aware of what's happening in the now, outside or inside of you, whatever is going on around you or whatever arises in your field of perception and whatever arises inside you, a feeling or an emotion, even be aware of the occasional thought that may arise. But to be aware of the now is really more than that. There's another deeper level.

And this is what I'm referring to when I'm saying being aware of the now. Yes, you are aware of what's going on in the now, but you can also be aware of the now itself. This is very hard to talk about because obviously the now itself, you can't see it or hear it, taste it or smell it or touch it.

And obviously it's not a thought. Thinking now, now is not being aware of now, now, now, now. So to be aware of the now as something that is deeper than what appears in the now that's of course the state of presence.

And this paradoxical thing is when you're aware of the now, you're not really aware of anything because what we call the now is a field of presence, a space. So to be aware of the now is as elusive as being aware of the space outside of you. Usually you're not aware of the space in the room that you're sitting in.

You're aware of what's in the room, but you're not usually aware of the space. In the same way, you may be aware of what goes on inside you, in your mind, mental, emotional formations, one thought and another thought. But can you be aware of a deeper level within you that is the equivalent of the space in the room that you're sitting in?

And the equivalent of the furniture in your room is your thoughts, the content. And of course, the essence of this room is not the furniture. The essence of this room is the space in this room.

And the essence of you is not the furniture in your mind, which means the content of your mind. Although most people mistake the content of their mind for who they are, you have ideas in your head of who you are, and you derive your sense of self from the ideas in your head about who you are. But of course, that's not essentially who you are in the same way that the furniture in the room is not essentially the room.

So there's a space in you, so to speak, that is essentially who you are. And the furniture

comes and goes, it's interchangeable. You can, when you don't know that space, which is another way of speaking of the now itself, is that inner space in which things appear.

If you can be aware of that, in addition to being aware of what comes into the space, what is in the space, as sense perceptions, thoughts, and emotions, which make up your so-called life. If you can be aware of the space in addition to the things that appear in the space, then that is enlightened living, conscious, then you are conscious, you are present. So presence is being aware of that deeper dimension so that you don't delude yourself and believe that the content of your mind, because even sense perceptions, ultimately, you experience as the content of your mind.

So you don't delude yourself into believing that the content of your mind is all there is. To you, and the things happening around you, that's all there is, that's your life. Whereas it's only your life situation.

Whatever's going on in your life is your life situation. You remember, I sometimes speak about that. Is that all there is?

It's a very impoverished existence when all there is to you in your perception that is your life situation. Whatever's going on right now, with whatever's going on in your living situation, your work situation, your relationship situation, your financial situation. And at any one time of your life, at least one of these areas is probably going to be problematic.

If you don't have a problem with finances, you may have a problem with people, a relationship. If you don't have a problem with your relationships, you have some problem at work, you have a problem with health, things that rarely is your life without so-called problems, another word for which is challenges. So to look for an end to the challenges so that you can finally take a breath and say, ah, I have arrived.

And thinking that by somehow sorting out your life situation, you're going to arrive at a point where you can take that breath and say, I finally arrived. It's not going to happen. You never finally arrive as far as your life situation is concerned because it's in the nature of life to give you challenges.

So is that pessimistic or negative? When I say you're never going to arrive, of course, not on that level, not on the level of the content of your life situation, the content of your mind. But you can arrive and you can take that breath and say, ah, that's it.

I finally made it. You can do that by accessing, by realizing the deeper dimension in you of whatever you want to call it, whether you call it the now itself, whether you call it being aware of awareness itself, being aware of your beingness, the presence behind everything, being aware of yourself as the presence, not as what happens in the field of presence, but as the presence itself, a self-awareness of presence.

That is having arrived. And that is when you can take that breath and breathe out, ah,

that's, I made it, so to speak. So you have arrived already because on the level of content of your life situation, you're never going to make it.

There will continue to be challenges, although there are periods when you have little plateaus, when you say, oh, life is great at the moment. I'm okay financially. I'm okay.

My work situation, relationships are fine. Family is fine. I have a nice place to live and the weather is good.

But is it going to last? Not for too long. And really, if we even want to use the word happiness, let's call it true happiness.

It's a delusion to believe that true happiness is going to come to you when certain things are sorted out or attained in your life situation. Yes, I'm not denying that it is comfortable and pleasant to achieve things, but any achievement is already an end point. So you achieve, you'd create this great thing.

And there it is. And everybody says, oh, you're great. And then what?

Okay. And for a while, that might give you satisfaction. And then it doesn't anymore.

Or people don't think it's that great anymore. So happiness, true happiness, arises from the deeper, the realization of that deeper dimension in yourself. That's the source of satisfaction, true satisfaction.

And to arrive at it, you don't need more time. In fact, as far as the realization of that dimension is concerned, time is the hindrance. That sense of psychological time prevents you from realizing that, prevents you from finding true happiness, contentment, not sleepy contentment, alive contentment.

It is peaceful. Another word for it is inner peace. But there's a dynamic quality to that inner peace.

So really, that's the only way to become a truly peaceful human being and to bring peace into this world is to access that dimension in yourself. But what that really means is to be truly yourself. To be who you are beyond the content of your mind, the unconditioned consciousness.

Then you become intelligent in the true sense. Or rather, the one underlying intelligence that pervades the universe can then flow through you and express itself even as the creation of some new form, whatever that may be. And the master raised his finger and said, enters in from there, from here.

Every point is, these things cannot be explained. You spoil them if you explain them. I just explained it, unfortunately.

Do you remember the story I recounted in a, I believe in a new earth, the story of a Zen master who is on a pilgrimage? That's the ancient word for hike. He's on a- He's on a- is on a pilgrimage somewhere with a disciple.

And so they're walking in silence, of course, except of course, a disciple hasn't quite arrived yet at the realization that Zen aims at. So the disciple is walking, but obviously thinking while he's walking. Finally, they sit down somewhere for a little picnic, a break, and then disciple says to the master, master, I've been thinking, I don't quite, still don't get it.

I've been here for five years and I still don't get what is the essence of what you teach? What is that essence? I just can't get it.

I've been trying to figure it out, but I can't. And the master said, can you hear the sound of that mountain stream, that little, and the disciple said, what mountain stream? I don't hear anything.

The master said, listen carefully. And so the disciple goes, and then in a very far distance, the disciple hears the sound of water of a little mountain stream, very distant. And then the disciple says, yeah, I can hear it now, master.

And the master says, that is the, that is the, something like, that is the portal into Zen, or that is, there is the beginning of Zen. That's it, that's it. And for a moment, I don't know how long the disciple actually gets it.

Wow. Wow. And he gets it because his mind stops and awareness remains.

And why did that happen? Because all his consciousness, conscious attention was required for the sensory, in this case, auditory perception. There wasn't enough left to be, so to speak, to be consumed by thinking.

So there was a cessation of thinking and the arising of presence. The master very cleverly arranged it in that way, rather than saying, stop thinking, which wouldn't work. So there wasn't the master, the disciple got it.

In some versions, there's a continuation of the story. So they finished their picnic, they walk on, and an hour later, by then the disciple has fallen back into a stream of useless thinking, of course. And the disciple says, I have another question, master.

What would you have said if I hadn't been able to hear that mountain stream? What would you have said then? Okay.

Slight correction in how I told the story before I finish it. When the disciple originally says, yes, I can hear the mountain stream. Yes, I can hear it.

The master says, enter Zen from there, or from here. Enter Zen from there, enter Zen

from here. In other words, that's the entry point into Zen, this one.

And then hours later, when the disciple had been thinking again, they're walking again, what would you have said if I had said to you, I can't hear the mountain stream, what would you have said then? The mind is so weird, it never stops ruminations. And the master raised his finger and said, enter Zen from there, from here.

Every point is, these things cannot be explained, you spoil them if you explain them. I've just explained it, unfortunately. The mind, it doesn't stop.

So you have the mind, such a wonderful tool, such a wonderful instrument for creation. The ability to think, that's inseparable from the arising of language, ability to use language. And thinking is a kind of inner talk.

And it grew and grew, and gradually it took over. And so humans lost their connectedness with being, which before the arising of thinking was unconscious, but they felt that deep, they did not live in a state of, in a problem making state of anxiety, or if there was fear, it was short-lived because there was immediate danger. But there was no anxiety or fear generated by the thinking process, because there was no thinking process.

There was no identities that were before the time that Narcissus saw his image in the pool of water and became obsessed with it. And then, that I talked about yesterday, the first selfie, the world's first selfie, me, it's me. And then people began to have a relationship with themselves.

I hate myself, I love myself. Sometimes I hate myself, and sometimes I love myself.

[Speaker 9] (6:05:58 - 6:05:58)

Hmm.

[Speaker 1] (6:06:01 - 6:42:05)

Loving yourself is certainly preferable to hating yourself. I would recommend it, but it's not the last step. It's an intermediate step.

Beyond loving yourself is no longer having a relationship with yourself. I'm ending the relationship with myself. I'm ending the relationship with myself.

Goodbye. This is it. So this, after loving yourself, the next step is simply being yourself.

Oh, then you know that you don't hate yourself, you don't, you can't really say, I love myself, because the moment you say, I love myself, you have created a duality. I and myself. So who is that self that you either love or hate, and who are you?

Now, at first, this space of pure awareness seems to be nothing. And in a way, it is nothing in the sense that it is not a thing, that it is not an object of consciousness, because everything else is an object of consciousness. Every sense perception becomes an object of consciousness in your mind.

Every thought is an object of, in other words, you could say, it is a form that consciousness temporarily takes. It incarnates into a form, and that form is a thought, or it could be a sense perception. And so that is the incarnation of consciousness into form.

When you come, sometimes Buddhists argue, how many more incarnations do I need before I no longer need to incarnate? You can do it right here and now. Don't incarnate into thoughts.

That's the end of incarnation, which means don't identify with the rising thoughts. Be the awareness behind the thoughts, which is what you are. And so at first, it seems like, let's say, what we call it, stillness.

By the way, I wrote a little book that some of you might not know. It's called Stillness Speaks, which is a little paradox, of course. Stillness Speaks, it's a book for meditative reading.

You just read a few lines and you kind of become still. That's what it's for, but anyway. So the stillness is one way of putting it, but that's not, it's just a term, of course.

Stillness is the inner equivalent of silence in the outer world. Silence in the outer world is the absence of noise. Stillness in the inner realm is the absence of thought.

And so in the absence of thought, what remains is you do not fall asleep. In ordinary existence, when thinking stops, you very quickly fall asleep. So the only way that humans who are not awakened or awakening can experience the cessation of thinking is when they move from the wakeful state into sleep.

Then there comes a moment of you cannot remember your problems anymore because you're so tired. Five minutes before you were thinking about your problems would be the problems for your identity. And now you get very tired.

You can't remember your problems anymore. And thinking comes, but you're not totally asleep yet. And it feels so good.

You're moving towards sleep, and it feels so good. And temporarily, briefly, you're free of yourself. And then you move into the unconsciousness of sleep.

Now, most humans, without knowing it, are looking for becoming free of themselves, of themselves. And then again, they look in the wrong places. Some humans find temporary relief from themselves by taking certain substances.

And again, for some humans, it can be a good thing to have, especially those who are totally mind-possessed, that can give them a glimpse of something that's beyond their mind. It may temporarily stop their mind, but don't become dependent on anything. But, and I don't recommend it.

Now, you don't need it. But if you take such, humans, they love that smoking, these dried leaves, they were illegal for many years for some reason, but now you can smoke them. Well, no, I don't know about here, but.

So you, it temporarily calms the mind. It's like your mind becomes a bit, I tried it once when we were visiting Amsterdam. And it kind of dulls your mind a bit.

That's how I experienced it. But I can see what it does to people whose mind is very active. They go, temporarily, they become free of themselves, the mind made self.

And they've become, oh, happy, so happy. I can't stop laughing. That's how happy I am.

I'm free of myself. So the way I put it is, with this, yes, you are becoming free of yourself, but you're falling below thinking. You're going to a state prior to the rising of the ego.

You're falling below thinking. Yes, you are free of the mind that tortures you every day, but you're falling below thinking. This is not where the awakening path, otherwise we would call it the sleepy path or something like that.

The awakening path is the ability grows in you to rise above thinking. That's what it is. You are actually, you are conscious without thought.

And that is very, that is the simplicity of it. And then you find, at first, it's just an absence of thought, in the same way that externally silence is an absence of noise. This is the absence of inner noise.

And then at first, okay, and then you stay with it, and it comes back again at the end. Once you get a glimpse of that state of pure awareness, you may want to invite it into your life more often. And because then, from the point of view of time, one could say that it deepens this power that manifests through you, grows stronger.

Not that the power itself grows stronger, but it manifests into this dimension where there's time, it manifests more fully through you, so to speak. So the power, presence, power, as I sometimes call it, grows in you. That is the power of life itself.

That is the pure, pure intelligence, you could call it, pure consciousness, the very primordial thing that is behind everything. It is, that is, sometimes I'm, are you, am I talking about God here? Am I saying that this, the consciousness itself is God?

Well, yes and no. The analogy I like to use that is maybe helpful is the sun. The sun emanates light into here.

It gives, it's the life on a physical level. The light of the sun is the life-giving thing here that enables life to be, and the sun pours out light continuously, energy, and there's the sun. Now, this light, of course, is still connected to this, is connected to the sun.

It's not separate from the sun. It emanates from the sun, but it's not the sun. It's, so it is and it isn't the sun, because the sun itself is a vast and inconceivable form of energy.

This is only an analogy. So what I mean then is God is the source from which consciousness emanates into this dimension. This is the closest, as far as I'm concerned, it's the closest, and in words, to explain that which cannot really be explained.

It's the medium, nothing in excess. The challenges of life, it's important then to see that there is no end to it. So on that level, you want, life won't leave you alone, but on a deeper level, once you accept that challenges will come, you don't have to become negative when they do come.

You can actually, oh, there's another one. And then it's often through intense challenges, the bigger ones, they drive you deeper. It's, now the interesting thing is, it's not the great things that happen to you that make you more conscious.

It's, in many cases, the so-called bad things that happen to you if you deal with them correctly and come to a place of acceptance that make you more conscious. So there's an ancient saying, I believe it comes from Sufism, but I'm not sure, that says, when the ego weeps for what it has lost, the spirit rejoices for what it has found. And so many times, you may find that in your life, you lose something, death, loss of security, loss of income, loss of health, loss of long-term relationship, both these kinds of, when the ego weeps, because the ego weeps, it's terrible, but then something suddenly arises of something that had been part of your sense of self has been removed.

It leaves a hole, an empty space, such as when somebody close to you dies, you lose your livelihood, your home. It leaves an empty space, which is painful from the point of view of a personality. And when you, it is potentially also able to drive you deeper into the, who you truly are beyond form, the unconditioned.

And then you experience suddenly, how can I feel so peaceful, suddenly, if something bad has happened, and yet suddenly you feel a sense of liberation. It doesn't happen to everybody who experiences loss, but potentially, that is always there. So next time a challenge comes, and it won't be long, then say, oh, there's another one.

And then you go with it. You look at it. Is there anything I can do to change the situation?

First, when you look at it, first, the first is always to accept the present moment as it arises. Now, sometimes whatever arises in the present moment requires you to take action. And then you look at it.

Now, this looking is an important part of it, to look at a situation. It's not necessarily visual looking. It means to give attention to a particular situation that has arisen or is arising in the present moment.

And then in this, this thing that I call looking is you give it attention. In that moment, it could only be a few seconds or a minute or two, you give it attention. And that is a very important thing.

It's not, at that point, you don't think. If your thinking comes in too soon, you might come to very wrong conclusions about what action you need to take because that action will be conditioned by your mind, the old stuff. You bring in the old and try to deal with the present moment by bringing in old conditioning.

So you will act according to your conditioning. But if you can give something attention, this giving attention, you face it. You don't, you've let go of the inner resentment, and this is the most important thing.

You've realized it is in the nature of life to give you challenges. And when they come, there's no resentment. You just see, ah, there it is, another one.

Okay, now, even as you say there's another one, you don't say, oh, no, another one. There's another one, okay. And then you look at it, and by looking, I mean to be in that state of consciousness in which there's an alertness, but not yet thinking.

You don't immediately, unless it's a situation that requires immediate action, which is called an emergency situation, in which case you'll do whatever you do anyway. Often emergency situations cut your mind out completely, and something else takes over, and you take action. And sometimes people do heroic things, and afterwards, when they are praised by others, they say, I don't know, I just did it.

And then others, it can happen that they become paralyzed in the face of an emergency. They cannot get out of their mind. And their mind doesn't have time to deal with it.

It can't do, it's suddenly the whole engine in the head gets stuck. What do I do now? And then it's too late.

It's happened already, and you're dead, or whatever it is. And you didn't jump out of the way soon enough. And there the train was coming towards you.

What do I do now? The train is coming. So in emergency situations, you cannot think.

If you think, you're stuck. And so many people experience actually that the mind gets out of the way, and something else, presence suddenly does. And this happens to people who engage in dangerous activities and love it.

Climbing up a steep wall, mountain wall, driving dangerous cars fast, motorbikes, or

whatever they do. Anything, any dangerous activity forces you into the present moment. You don't need that.

And it could, of course, dangerous activity means it is dangerous. Don't get addicted to just one activity to take you into the present moment, then because then every weekend you'd have to climb up this wall. So, and in the meantime, of course, you're still not present.

So if it's not an absolute emergency situation, but a challenge, then it's important. So that means you have a little bit of time to deal with it. Don't immediately go into thinking about it.

So give it attention, face it, and now this giving of attention, which I sometimes call looking, but it's not, it might involve looking, or it might not, is this clarity of consciousness with which you look at something as an entire situation and don't immediately come to a conclusion as to what action you need to take. So you go, it's that facing it and looking that connects you to a deeper level and challenge. And in other words, you become still, alert and still.

And then after a few seconds or a minute or two, it is likely that a thought comes in that tells you what the right action is. So that's not an emergency, it's just a challenge. Or it might be that you still don't know what to do, or it may be that you have to become still again after a while and look at it again.

And then you may come to the realization that there's nothing you can do, at least for now. There are certain situations that are problematic, and yet for now, there isn't really much you can do. And then you leave it alone.

You accept this is what is, the acceptance of what is. So, it happens very often when people are not able to really have that clarity of perception, a look into it. Often people take action when it would be better to leave it alone.

Many situations, it depends, of course, on what it is. Many situations are made far worse by taking unnecessary, superfluous, or excessive action. Balance in everything.

There's a balance that you need to find. But the most important thing, challenges, accept them, even welcome them when they arise because they're a great opportunity, especially the little ones. You might not welcome the big challenges, but they are great too.

Don't resent the challenges. Get rid of the belief or transcend the belief that you should not be challenged by life, that these problems should not occur. Think about the movies, how boring a movie is.

And not only the audience would go to sleep if nothing ever goes wrong in a movie, the

characters would go to sleep too. And in the end, they're all asleep. And I use asleep, not necessarily as actually asleep.

You would, in the absence of challenges, you would, your level of consciousness would decrease. So if you discover within yourself that a lot of the time you're in a state of lack, of insufficiency, of not enough, and you feel that the answer to, the remedy is to be active in this world and achieve and do as much as possible, then you'll probably find that ultimately that is not the answer to your state of lack. In order to transcend, to go beyond your state of lack, of neediness, of not enough, spiritual practice and spiritual realization is necessary.

Focus on the realization of being. It's only there that you can go beyond that state of lack, which is ego. Go within and discover who or what you are beyond the person.

When I say give attention, there's an element of appreciation of everything, of the little things. And you begin to realize that your entire life consists mainly of little things. We are always going from here to there, looking around, handling things.

That is sometimes called gratitude. As you might have noticed, it always takes a while before I start to speak. I often say it's good to start with a moment of stillness and it is, but the main reason is that I don't know what to say.

And that could be a very uncomfortable place or situation to be in. Some people have nightmares like that. You're on stage, curtain opens and suddenly you're facing the audience and you've forgotten your lines, but I don't have any lines.

So here's the secret. It's becoming comfortable with the state of not knowing. Otherwise it would be awful.

What can I say now? Would be terrible. And of course that is a kind of trust which I suggested the other day as a better word for faith, trust.

And that's incredibly important to become comfortable with not knowing. But what do you do when you become comfortable with not knowing? You enter the state of non-conceptual knowing, but you have to be uncomfortable with not knowing anything on a conceptual level, thinking in other words.

So another way of putting it is to say that when I come on here and then I sit, I don't think because that's the state of not knowing. And in the gaps between sentences or words, I also don't think rather than there's no next sentence or word being prepared. It just comes and that's for you.

I'm saying that because that also is a state of consciousness that you can enter and you're doing it to some extent when you don't label things, when you step back from thought, and become comfortable with just being present. And all these questions of

things like self-esteem, which apparently is a problem for many people, either they have low self-esteem or they have exaggerated self-esteem or it fluctuates. And books written about how you can improve your self-esteem and probably workshops.

I don't know what they teach you. Maybe it's good, maybe not. But the simple thing is that in that state of no thought, but alert presence, all these questions about self-esteem resolve themselves into nothingness because you're no longer looking for some perceived value in a conceptual sense of self, the personality.

And you can sense the power that is within you that has nothing to do with a person. And that's where your self-esteem comes from. And it's not comparative.

In the normal state of consciousness, self-esteem is always comparative. How do I rate myself relative to this person and that person and that? And on what level, external appearance, strength, knowledge, beauty, possessions, status.

And of course there's always, you're always inferior to some in one or two or three areas and you may be superior to some in another one or two areas, but that's the power of stillness. That's another way of putting it. The power of inner stillness, that is the true seed of self-esteem.

And you can't really call it self-esteem anymore, but you realize the infinite value that you not possess, but are, because that is the essence that underlies the entire universe. It is the light of the world. And you don't compare yourself to others anymore.

You feel neither inferior nor superior. The ego is always either inferior or superior. So you might be surprised if I tell you even, I'm a small guy, even if I'm standing next to a big muscular guy towering above me with a big ego, I'm not thinking of anybody in particular at the moment, but it has happened in the past.

I don't feel inferior, just nor do I feel superior. I'm spirit, you might have a big body and muscles, but I'm the spiritual guy. That would, of course, it's the ego talking.

And this is a very interesting strategy of the ego. The spiritual ego can come in and without you knowing it, you still have a conceptual sense of self, but it's not spiritual. That's a trap that some spiritual teachers fall into too.

And you know it when they make certain pronouncements. We touched on this before, and that is they explain that they are superior to any other teacher, for example, either any other teacher alive now, or I've seen one or two spiritual teachers or read about them who actually claimed that they are superior to any spiritual teacher that ever lived or ever will live. Well, that should cover it.

Here or any other galaxy. So the most important practice on your journey, spiritual journey into the present moment, the journey without distance, is to become

comfortable with not knowing, which means to become comfortable with not thinking. You don't need to demand that there should be long periods when you're not thinking, just moments when you're simply looking, listening, perceiving, or being, and you don't know anything in that moment.

Not conceptually, but you access the source of all knowledge of all knowing. And that is a way for the ego to gradually become weaker, just gradually subside, no longer runs your life, which is what is the ego, the unobserved mind. It may still come in here and there, it probably will.

[Speaker 2] (6:42:10 - 6:42:11)

That's fine.

[Speaker 1] (6:42:21 - 6:54:27)

So part of this is, of course, to give more attention to the present moment, because the more you think, the more future you generate, and the more attention you give to the present moment, the less thinking, because to be really present, you don't think about it, you just are with it, give it attention. I recommend the little things of life to be more attentive to all the little things that make up every hour of every day, every minute, every hour, and give them more attention, walking steps, one step at a time, objects that you're handling, all the time you're handling objects in your life, you're always touching something, putting something here and there. Is everything that you handle just a means to an end, or are you able to just appreciate the simple presence of even of a so-called inanimate object, contemplation also of all the lovely things that make up your environment, part of your environment.

For example, if I were sitting here alone, let's say I'm waiting for everybody to arrive, I might be sitting here looking, of course, at the flower, sense of stillness, and then there's a glass table here, and then there's a glass of water here, and there's a clock and a bell and tissues, and they all reflect the light in different ways. There's a little bit of a rainbow effect in the glass of water here, and then the lights are reflected on the bells, almost like a mirror, and there's the clock ticking away. It's a beautiful scene.

Sometimes you go to an art gallery, well, not so much with modern art, but a very favorite thing would be still life artists, and it took a while in art before they discovered, the artists in the history of art, before they discovered the seemingly insignificant things and started to give attention to those. Before that happened, they were very much interested in the huge things, the saints or the kings or the huge battle scenes or the big, they had to, they painted those things or the important people or some dramatic thing, the volcanic eruption or whatever, a fire. And then at some point, they started to discover the beauty and the incredible sense of the quality that is in the little things.

They started painting, for example, simple people. The Dutch artists, perhaps, perhaps I'm not that knowledgeable about artists, but the famous Dutch paintings show, they don't, it's not so much big, important people, they show simple people, a woman in the kitchen, baking bread, people, simple people, sitting around the table, eating a very simple meal, and there's a light, incredible light effects that comes, light comes through the window, and there's an incredible sense of presence and aliveness in the painting.

And this is a scene that in normal life, you would never have, unless you're really very conscious, nobody would have stopped and said, oh, isn't that amazing? These people are sitting around a table, eating a simple meal, and there's light coming through the window. Nobody would have done that.

Perhaps after these, more of these artists depicted relatively, seemingly insignificant things, perhaps it motivated some people to give more attention to that, but even now, it's still, people very much overlook that, and you overlook, then, a large part of your life, you don't give it attention. When I say give attention, there's an element of appreciation of everything, of the little things, and you begin to realize that your entire life consists mainly of little things. Even if you are VIP, it still consists mainly, you're always sitting somewhere, standing somewhere, looking around, handling things, going from here to there, either on a bus, or your private jet, and this giving attention, that is sometimes called gratitude.

That's kind of part of it, this appreciation, but I don't necessarily use the word gratitude too often, because it implies that you say to somebody, oh, thank you, but there's a simple appreciation of the is-ness of things, of their presence, so you no longer regard, almost continuously, your entire environment as a means to an end, and what's the end? You need to get to some future moment, where suddenly, everything is going to be better than now, and so you're always on your way, it's a stepping stone to the next moment, and every object that you handle is only, has only utilitarian value, but has no value in itself, is never appreciated for its beingness, and then you do the same to human beings, they're only regarded, what can they do for me now? How do they fit into my schemes, into my plans?

Because there's a future orientation continuously, which is the mind, because there is no future, it's created by the mind. And it becomes extremely enjoyable to be, just to be contemplating the little things that surround you, then you, there is something, yes, there is an element of gratitude that comes with it, this appreciation, it's an element, or you appreciate the sense-perceived world, this is an aspect of reality, it's not the deepest aspect of reality, but it is the surface of the ocean, and it's beautiful. And that also means, it's not just when you are quietly contemplating, it's also when you're going from A to B to perform some action, you're going to buy something, going to the, whatever it is, post office, appreciate the journey, and every step of the journey, and look around so that the 10 minutes of going to the shop, or driving to the shop, or taking

a bicycle to the shop, isn't completely wasted, and reduced to means to an end, then you can actually, that every moment is significant, and ultimately it's only ever the one moment, and then this waiting game comes to an end, waiting for the big break, that's an expression, I don't know what break, what breaks, but waiting for whatever it is, of course you have a goal, you may have a goal in life, and you're moving towards it, but in the meantime, this is now, and yes, you know you're moving towards it, it becomes very enjoyable to be wherever you are, when you have this ability to contemplate the little things, both when you're passively contemplating, or even when you are moving, in being engaged with things, I started off with the talking about coming on stage, and not knowing what to say, I'll tell you about dreams that I sometimes have, two types of dreams, because dreams can come from different levels, there are deep dreams, and there are surface dreams, in deep dreams, I sit in front of an audience like this, and it's basically very much like this, and I speak and wonderful things coming out of my mouth, and I don't know where they come from, and the teaching arises, and I can sense, and sometimes I know towards the end that it's a dream, and then in the dream, I think, oh, it would be nice to remember what I just said, but usually I don't, it is almost like in the deepest dreams, in some astral dimension, the teaching is actually happening, and then occasionally I have a surface dream, in which I enter a building to give a talk, and then things happen, for example, I can't find the entrance to the stage, and when I finally find it, then the audience is very restless, and they're moving about, and they're not even paying attention to me, and then other things go wrong, and so these dreams come from a disconnected, when the mind is disconnected, they arise, and when the mind is connected with source,

[Speaker 2] (6:54:27 - 6:54:30)

then this is what happens.

[Speaker 1] (6:54:56 - 9:19:47)

Welcome to our meditation, people all over the planet, at the same time now opening up to the spaciousness inside, in a space, that which is prior to thoughts, prior to emotions, prior to sense perceptions, always there, can be called stillness, presence, inner space, you just have to pay attention to it, and that attention already is it, attention to awareness, or awareness of awareness, in other words, you become conscious right now, of the fact that you are conscious, you can actually sense consciousness that you are beyond the person, completely non-conceptual, nothing to do with thinking, it's that which transcends the person, and that which transcends the world, without awareness of that, the world and the person are troublesome, and without awareness of that, the world will inspire fear, because it's not all that stable, continuous flux, especially at this time, even if we are not affected directly by upheavals that are happening, or have recently happened in different parts of the world, Japan, earthquake, tsunami, nuclear reactors, North Africa, upheavals, Middle East, even if we are not directly affected, we

can get a heightened sense, just knowing that this is going on, we can get a heightened sense of the fact that the world is not all that safe, some people would say it's not safe anymore, it never was safe, of course, it never is safe, it cannot be, and it's not meant to be safe, it's the world of form, continuously changing, so whether it's your personal life, if you're clinging for security, there's nothing wrong with arranging your life so that externally you have a certain degree of security to the extent to which it is possible, but if you're looking to beyond the practical, if you're looking to the world of form, whether it is the structures around you, whether it's in your personal life, through relationship, or through your job, or through your life insurance, whether you look to that for a sense of inner peace, what is sometimes called peace of mind, or whether you look to the collective structures of your economy, social structures, whether you look to that for a sense of security, it cannot provide you with that for too long, so it's finding something within where a true sense of safety arises that has nothing to do with the externals of your life, personal or collective. Then if some kind of disaster comes, and of course, inevitably, some kind of disaster will come, because this body is going to die, that's a big disaster, sooner or later, and of course, other disasters may happen or may not happen, or small, small ways in which things around you dissolve, doesn't have to be a big disaster, it's often those collective disasters that can bring about a leap in awareness in many people who are personally affected by that. If that is your destiny, that's fine. It may not be your destiny to be affected by some collective disaster.

I am sitting here in California at the moment, probably on a fault line, so there is no absolute security that this chair that I'm sitting on and the floor the chair's on is still going to be here in 20 minutes' time before we finish. It probably will be, we can't be sure, or even that this body will still be alive in 20 minutes' time. Probably, we can't be sure.

Now it's for many people, it's the challenge of major or minor disaster in their lives that can push them into awakening. Without disaster, and I'm using this term now in a very wide sense, meaning any kind of dissolution of form around you, without that, consciousness would not even evolve. So although on one level, it is true to say that disaster, it is tragic, yes.

It's terrible, yes. True. On another level, that also is part of a much larger context, and that larger context is the evolution of consciousness here.

Consciousness, of course, is the formless essence within you. Not a personal possession. So somehow the fluctuation of forms is part of the way in which consciousness evolves here in this dimension and comes into this dimension more fully.

The dimension of time. The timeless coming into the dimension of time. There's a paradox here, but that's how it is.

The timeless within you coming into your personal life of time. That which is beyond the

person, shining through the person. And that is security.

Because you can then sense beyond any conceptual explanations or beliefs, you can sense that which is timeless in you, which means eternal, which means indestructible, beyond death. It's not that consciousness, don't believe mainstream culture which tells you that consciousness is an epiphenomenon or a byproduct of brain activity. The brain is born out of consciousness, not the other way around.

There's a modicum of consciousness even in this chair or wherever you look, even inanimate, all around you. All the forms around you are consciousness having taken on a temporary form. Life, another word for it.

So there's life and there are forms of life. You move in that between the two. That's the balancing act, the dance of life between who you are in your essence, which you can sense at this very moment if this has any meaning to you.

You can sense at this very moment that which is beyond the person in you, which is just the light of consciousness. And you're also aware of you're still a person, the form. But the security, sense of security can never come from the forms.

That's always an illusory security if it's there. And illusory security is always threatened by an underlying fear. True security, true peace of mind, to use that expression, although it's not the mind.

And we do not need for disaster to happen in our lives to find that. And perhaps if we find that without a disaster, or because we've already had our disasters and it has taken us there, perhaps we don't need to experience further external disaster. But if we do, it'll just be a deepening.

It will result in a deepening. Please know that the words that are being spoken here are only moving on the surface. Underneath the words which you hear, which become concepts in your mind, underneath that is that to which the words point.

That which is beyond concepts, beyond words, the underlying deeper sense of beingness, which is consciousness itself. So as you sit here, as we sit here, as I sit here, I can sense that it's a little silly to quantify it, but I could say as I speak here, and this can also be true for you as you listen, 80% of my consciousness or maybe 90% is just an aware presence. And the remaining 20 or 10% is the mind formulating thoughts which become words.

But the mind that is formulating thoughts is inspired by that which is beyond thoughts. It's just giving expression, always very limited, to that which cannot be spoken, but can be sensed here and now. Some traditions may call it the higher self or whatever.

It doesn't, as long as higher doesn't mean that you, that concept could mislead you into

thinking that it's floating up there. I'm looking for my higher self. So you're already looking somewhere else.

Maybe if your inner self would be a better, deeper self. Essential self, or don't call it a self at all as the Buddhists do, the no self, the empty space. Or call it the fullness.

The main thing is not to get attached to any concept, but just use it as a pointer. What's important is not the concept as an explanation, but that to which it points. That's why we're here.

And the strangest thoughts that always went through my mind when I was on my bicycle cycling in nature, and then I sometimes would get off my bike and just sit there, look around. And always I had this thought in my head which said, this will always be here. I already mentioned perceiving without labeling as a practice, a large sense perception.

Nature, especially natural things, and they're everywhere here. Nature is extremely helpful, especially in this, the world that we live in. For sanity, even not just here, where you go back into your everyday life, sanity can easily be found in nature if you go.

Because you can divide the world into the human-made world and the natural world. And some people live almost exclusively in the human-made world, especially if you live in a big city. But there is always, there's this vision that when I was a child, I was not happy a lot of the time when I was a child because of dysfunctional family background.

They couldn't help it. They were just in the grip of their ego. But when I was given a bicycle, I was able to leave the city and cycle to the outskirts where there was some nature.

And not magnificent nature, just ordinary trees and some fields and trees. And there I experienced my moments of happiness and relief in nature. And already there, I knew the difference between the human-made world that was a world of unhappiness for me, and the natural world, which was the world where I experienced a sense of freedom.

And the strangest thoughts that always went through my mind when I was on my bicycle cycling in nature, and then I sometimes would get off my bike and just sit there, look around. And always I had this thought in my head which said, this will always be here. This will always be here.

And I was only 10, 11, 12 years old, that this will always be here. This will always be here. Somehow, and I didn't even fully understand what this meant.

I could feel, but I realized later, this is nature and this is the man. And the human-made world is not actually going to last. The natural world is relative to the human-made world, is almost eternal.

And the planet has unbelievable ability for regeneration, which we may talk about some other time. So the humans will not destroy. They should do all they can to refrain from causing harm to the planet, obviously.

But even if they go totally insane and they don't manage, they will not be able to destroy. I will talk about it some other time. You don't need to believe me now.

So the practice then is another, tomorrow I will talk about relating to other humans here, which is another kind of practice, a bit more difficult than relating to nature. Because humans are difficult. And especially don't, as you go to sleep, make sure that the last thing that you are aware of before entering sleep, make sure that the last thing is not your device.

Or the TV is still running. A good practice is you lie in bed on your back and place attention into the body, the inner energy field of your body. So you feel the body, many times written, spoken about it as an important practice, inner body awareness.

What you're aware of is not the physical body, it's that which animates the physical body. And so it takes your attention away from thinking. It's a very easy, quick way of stopping your mind without exerting some willpower and saying, stop, stop, stop, that won't work anyway.

But there's attention into your body, abdomen, hands, feet, feel them from within. We'll do some practice tomorrow, perhaps, or you might do it with Kim also. Feel the liveness that pervades the physical body.

And from there, you gradually go to sleep. And it's a beautiful, completely different way of entering sleep. And if you wake at night with certain thoughts, fearful thoughts, or many people, I say, waking at night, oh, what's going to happen?

Nothing, this is the present moment and there's nothing happening. Yeah, but what's going, when I get back home, it's my life is just, it's all shambles, where am I, oh my God, where am I going to, there's nothing, there is no crisis now, this is the present moment, the present moment, and you're in bed, it's warm and comfortable. So go into the body, take attention away from that, and you can feel.

If you feel the inner body, there's no attention left for thinking, and it's usual, so whenever you have a sleepless night, you begin to be plagued by thoughts, direct your energy first, you start with the abdomen, breathe into it, for example, it rises, and you feel that as you breathe in, follow the attention with your breath, and the abdomen rises and falls, rises and falls, and then you feel the energy spreading out from there, or you can start with your hands until you get a sense of global aliveness pervading the body. Beautiful. And when you wake up, just one last thing, when you wake up and these thoughts begin to tell you how critical your life is, and fear, and then you say, okay, I'm

going to go into the body, and then the thought that will arise most likely is no, I can't do it now.

No, this is not the time, I can't do it, I can't, I can't. Are you going to believe that thought or not? Because don't believe every thought that comes into your head.

So, and if the thought is I can't, yes, I can, look, I'm doing it. So don't get persuaded by a thought that tells you, no, you can't do it now. It's such an extraordinary, an extraordinary adventure, the consciousness, the awakening of higher consciousness in you.

It's just so amazing. And to be, and to then to experience, to become free of the personality so that you no longer feel you're trapped in it. Of course, you still have a history, it's fine.

You have a personal history, you have a life situation, everybody has a life situation, which is to do with relationships, it's to do with your work situation, your financial situation, your home situation, your health situation, all these things make up your life situation. Now, it's very rare that all these things are going absolutely fine for you. My health, wonderful.

My relationships, absolutely perfect. My work, career, great. Finances, great.

Every possessions, home, wonderful home. Children, all healthy and intelligent and great. Everything is great.

But it doesn't happen very often. And if it does, it doesn't last that long. You just have to wait a little.

And then somewhere things could break down here and there. You get challenged. Something happens that doesn't, isn't supposed to happen, says the mind.

You get challenged by life all the time. And that's good. That's how it's meant to be.

And you realize the world can't make you happy. Occasionally, you might think, oh yes, it can because I've just fallen in love with the most amazing, amazing person who is going to make me happy for the rest of my life. Oh dear.

That's a big thing to put on the person. A huge expectation. He or she is going to make me happy.

I know it. Okay. So it gives you a high, say that's finally life.

I don't need all that spiritual stuff anymore. I found the ideal partner. And then you wait a little after the wedding.

And very soon, sooner or later, usually sooner, you discover there are aspects to your partner's personality that you didn't know existed. Something must have gone dreadfully wrong. Did I marry the wrong person?

My God. All that happens is, of course, you experience the egoic, the particularly unconscious aspects of that personality, which every person has. Of course, some to a much greater degree than others, but every person has certain aspects that you experience that you will find irritating or unpleasant or upsetting.

In that sense, you will always marry the wrong person. If you're expecting them to make you happy, you're definitely going to marry the wrong person. So the real thing is the realization that the world, whether it's people or situations or achievements, the world does not have the capacity to make you happy because happiness arises from a deeper place within you, which is inseparable from the essence of who you are.

And I don't even use the word happiness to describe it because it's deeper than that. Happiness sounds a little superficial to me. Happiness sounds like, ah, so happy.

And then the next day you go, oh, no, it's like, oh, something good happens. And then, but there's something deeper. Let's be, I call it in one of the books, beyond happiness and unhappiness, this piece.

Happiness and unhappiness exist in the polarities of this world. Something good happens, of course you, yes, you're happy. Something bad happens.

If you're not connected with who you are in the essence of your being, something bad, so-called bad happens, a challenge in relationships, in work situation, financial situation, health situation, wherever, something happens can make you really, can be devastating, make you really, totally miserable. When you're connected with who you are beyond the personality, you will still experience a certain down when something bad happens. You'll experience an oh, but it doesn't go very deep, that oh, there's a depth to who you are that is not touched by the fluctuations in this dimension, and that is the peace, as Jesus called it, the peace that passes all understanding.

There is a depth to an essence that is ultimately untouched, but it's not in the sense that you're cut off from anything, but a core, a space in you that is timeless, and from there arises what is sometimes called inner peace. And then you can still experience fluctuations on the surface of your being, but there's a depth that's not affected by it. So you can cry and weep if a loved one dies.

Of course you're not, you will cry and weep. It will be sad, and yet you can sense a depth to you, and in that depth, you realize that which is beyond death. It's the essence of who you are, which is consciousness, and the person who passed away, the essence of that person is consciousness.

So reading this is an invitation, really, to join him in that state of consciousness, of that alert stillness or presence. And not only as you read or listen, when I read it to you, it may also help you to, as you go about your life, to pay more attention to the seemingly insignificant, the little things. You may find this yourself when you, as you become present, and you walk around, there's an acknowledgement of that extraordinariness of life, even in its seemingly most insignificant manifestations.

And in fact, you become more interested in those things than in the big things. Often Krishnamurti would wake up in the night, early hours of the morning or night, like four o'clock, 4.30, and suddenly would go into intense presence, and he would perceive whatever was there to be perceived in the intense alertness. And he could be for an hour without any thought, just totally still.

Here's a description of what happens when he's woken up by the cry of a bird in the middle of the night. It was long before dawn when the sharp cry of a bird woke up the night for an instant, and the light of that cry faded away. The light of that cry.

Oh, by the way, he never uses the word I once in the whole notebook. He sometimes says one instead of I, one felt hot, or sometimes he says you, you felt hot when he means I. It was long before dawn when the sharp cry of a bird woke up the night for an instant, and the light of that cry faded away.

And the trees remained dark, motionless, melting into the air. It was a soft, quiet night, endlessly alive. It was awake.

There was movement. There was a deep stirring with utter silence. Even the village next door, with its many dogs always barking, was quiet.

It was a strange stillness, terribly potent, destructively alive. It was so alive and still that you were afraid to move, so your body froze into immobility, and the brain, which had awakened with that sharp cry of the bird, had become still with heightened sensitivity. It was a brilliant night with the stars in a cloudless sky.

They seemed so close, and the Southern Cross was just over the trees, sparkling in the warm air. That was obviously in India somewhere. So reading this is an invitation, really, to join him in that state of consciousness, of that alert stillness or presence.

And not only as you read or listen, when I read it to you, it may also help you to, as you go about your life, to pay more attention to the seemingly insignificant, the little things, the miracle that's hiding in everything. A brief description here of the inner state that is the prerequisite for perceiving things in that always fresh, new way. What was necessary was a very sensitive, alert brain, he called it brain, you could say mind, you could say consciousness.

What was necessary was a very sensitive, alert brain which had stopped entirely,

willingly, and easily its chatter. It had become very quiet, the brain, the mind. It had become very quiet, seeing and listening without interpreting, without classifying.

It was quiet, and there was no entity or necessity to make it quiet. The brain was very still and very alive. That immensity filled the night, and there was bliss.

And sometimes he perceived, not only describes his state of consciousness, it is as if his state of consciousness, he also experienced it as being outside. And then he uses the term when he suddenly says, the room suddenly was filled with, or the entire landscape suddenly became filled with, and he sometimes calls it the immensity, or he calls it the otherness, or he calls it the sacredness. This brief description here is probably in Switzerland.

In the morning, walking in the woods above the stream, with the sun on every tree, again it was there, that immensity, so unexpected, so still, that one walked through it, marveling. A single leaf was dancing rhythmically, and the rest of the abundant leaves were still. It was there, that love that's not within the scope of man's longing and measure.

It was there, and thought could blow it away, and a feeling could push it away. It was there, never to be conquered, never to be caught. And then he has second thoughts, he talks about the word to feel.

The word to feel is misleading. It's more than emotion, it's more than a sentiment, than an experience, than touch or smell. Though that word is apt to be misleading, it must be used to communicate, and especially so when we are talking of essence.

So he is struggling to find the right words to communicate that experience, and the word comes to him to feel, and then says, well, it's not quite right, but we have to use it. And so, and now here in this, suddenly the word essence comes to him, which he doesn't pick up again. It's here a couple of times, and then never uses it again.

But I love that, and I use that myself occasionally. He talks of the feel of essence is not through the brain, nor through some fancy. It's not experienceable as a shock above all.

It's not the word. You cannot experience it. To experience, there must be an experiencer, the observer.

Experiencing without the experiencer is quite another matter. It is in this state, in quotation marks, in which there's no experiencer, no observer, that there is that feeling, quotation marks. It is not intuition, which the observer interprets or follows blindly or with reason.

It is not the desire, longing transformed into intuition or the voice of God evoked by politicians and religious social reformers. To feel demands the austerity of clarity in

which there's no confusion and conflict. The feeling of essence is the negation of thought.

We are becoming comfortable with stillness. When there's nothing much happening, what's left is the stillness or the space that's always there underneath and around what's happening, but usually obscured by what's happening. And what's happening includes, of course, the stream of thinking, not just external events.

And the arising of feelings, emotions. What's happening then is things arising, sense perceptions, all kinds of thoughts. And then the sense perceptions are perceived through the screen of thoughts.

It's normal. And mostly, these two, the external arising of sense perceptions, visual, auditory, and so on, things happening out there and things happening within, the continuous arising and subsiding of the stream of thinking and the emotions that often go with it, that together is what's happening. And what is usually considered, what you may usually consider to be your life, my life, is what's happening in my life, good or bad.

And of course, the good or the bad is already part of the arising of thinking that judges the external event as good or bad. I like, I dislike. And then you perceive the external through your likes and dislikes.

I want, I fear. And then thought forms, and then you perceive the external through your wants and fears. And all that becomes your life.

People don't realize that mechanism, the underlying structure of what they call my life. And so that is what absorbs most people's attention completely. Their thinking, emotions, and external things happening, demanding attention, they come together.

So is that all there is? Or is there another dimension to your so-called your life, my life? Is there another dimension to my life that is transcendent to what's happening?

What's arising? Well, you could say there's God, but for most people, God is another thought form. I believe in God, another thought form arising.

So we are here to find not some belief, but to go deeper where we can actually realize at first hand a dimension that is deeper than what's happening, what you call your life, that frees you from the limitations of your life because, you may have noticed, your life is full of limitations. Even if you're rich and famous, it has its full of limitations. Doesn't matter young or old.

The older you get, the more you realize, yes, there is a limitation of my lifespan. When you're younger, there are other limitations. And no matter where you go and what you encounter, you encounter new limitations.

Doesn't mean you shouldn't go out and try things. That's fine. It's all part of this dimension of the physical realm.

But a life that consists only of forms that arise, things that are happening in my mind or outside, an identity that is built out of those forms that arise is always limited and limiting. You're trapped in a self, a little self, and even the biggest self of the big ego, those out there who look big and powerful, they are trapped in the limitations of their self. And sooner or later, they realize it.

Well, some people, very late, just a few moments before they die. Very limited, trapped in a self. And so there's no ultimate satisfaction, no matter what you add to the self.

Doesn't mean you shouldn't add anything. But what every human being really is looking for is something very deep, an essence. Everybody's ultimately looking for themselves, something that is not subject to decay, loss, death.

And that, of course, is already there in you at this moment. Where is it? If you pay attention to the spaces between the words as you listen here, rather than just be interested in the words, because the words are what's happening, the words that you hear become thoughts in your mind.

It's what's happening. If you're only listening to the words, you encounter the limitations again. And the limitation here of these words is, what's he talking about?

He's not saying enough. He's not giving the initial answer. He's giving you information.

That's right. So if you only listen to the words, then there's no real depth to you being here, listening. There's only a surface phenomenon of sounds that are being perceived, become decoded by the brain and become thoughts.

But if you can listen or be aware of the spaces between the words, then something opens up that is deeper than what is happening here. So you have the surface event of what's happening here. We call it our live meditation is happening.

That's interesting. No, it isn't. It's not about interesting.

Because interesting is about what's going to happen next. Or look, oh, that's, sorry, this is not interesting. It's deeper than interesting.

So if you can be aware of the spaces between the words, something arises there that has nothing to do with what's happening. And that cannot be named easily. What it is that arises when you listen, are aware of the space.

Here, it's the space between words. It could also be called the space in which these words are being perceived. There must be a consciousness in which these words are being perceived.

And that is a dimension deeper than the world of fluctuating forms. And that is deeper than what you call my life. And that's why I call this life itself.

And what you usually call your life is your life situation with its limitations. And there's only one way to transcend the limitations so that you are not trapped in a little self, mind-made self, with its fears and desires and likes and dislikes. For the rest of your life, know nothing else but interacting with the world through your fears, desires, likes, and dislikes.

That's a very limited way of being here. But although a new consciousness is arising, and this is why we're here, this is still the fate of most humans on the planet. They have not encountered yet the transcendent dimension to their lives, which is who they are in their essence.

Transcendent, we call it transcendent because it transcends the world of form, physical forms or thought forms. And at this moment, if your mind is trying to figure out what that means, you become frustrated. Or you make it into some philosophy.

That's not it. Becoming aware of the spaces in your life. And we start here and now by becoming aware of the spaces between the thoughts, the words.

What is that? Nothing. Okay, from the point of view of the sense-perceived world and the world of thought, it is nothing because that space has no form.

It's just between the words there is an emptiness, but it's more than that. Any word we attach to it is not going to be right. It limits it again.

It is what the ancient Chinese scripture, Tao Te Ching, talks about. The Tao that can be named is not it. If you can name it, you've already reduced it.

So we're here to experience what that is with a few little hints, just to, the mind likes to just understand a little bit. So we can, we're here to give pointers, to say, okay, what is this? How do we, how are we able to realize this, not just as we sit here, but in everyday life?

First, we need to see the extreme importance of encountering that dimension in yourself, to have it in your life, so that your life becomes deeper than the things of your life. There's something not right, something is missing. It is not complete.

I am not complete. And then it formulates further thoughts on the basis of that original erroneous assumption. First of all, you have nature here, magnificent nature.

So you will be walking, you will be looking, you will be breathing and smelling, and you will be listening to the sounds, perhaps even touching the sand. There's plenty of it, a tree. So you use your senses, all your senses are there, and you, as you go about in

between sessions, you interact with nature.

And that's a great opportunity for allowing nature to help you to become still and present, rather than giving in to the hypnotism of the mind with every thought wanting to draw your attention to it and saying, this is so important, I must think about this. And then you've disappeared. There's all that nature around you, but you are no longer there.

The sacredness of nature suddenly is no longer there for you because your consciousness has been absorbed again by the mind stream, very easy to happen. And most likely it will happen many times in the next few days here until the moment comes when you say, oops, this is what's going on. And then you have a choice of bringing your attention back to sense perceptions, alertness returns.

And you can, when you become familiar with the falling back into identification with the mind, and you might find that it says something that it's not happy with something, or something isn't quite enough, or there's something missing. I have that feeling, there's something. And then very quickly the mind interprets that feeling as ah, yes, that's what's wrong here.

Now I know. If you are familiar with the human mind, you may be, then you know one of the underlying patterns is that it continuously seems to say something not right, something is missing, it is not complete. I am not complete.

Something is needed here, something needs to be added to this moment, to this situation. And then it formulates further thoughts on the basis of that original erroneous assumption. Once you recognize that pattern, then you can, it is easier not to get drawn into it, at least not for too long.

So watch your mind as it becomes active, and then you have a choice of either allowing yourself to be drawn into proliferating mind streams, or you might even want to get away from here. It's quite a common phenomenon on retreats. A certain percentage of people after the second day, or even the first day, get me out of here.

Or you start looking up the flight information. Or you call a friend, oh, there's something not right here. I'll tell you about it.

So the opportunity is here for you to allow nature to bring you into that still awareness so that you can contemplate, experience, all that wonderful nature around you without undue interference by thinking. What is there to think about when you go for a walk on the beach here? Nothing.

You can only fully experience it when you become still, and then you perceive through the stillness rather than through conceptualized thought, which interprets everything you see. Oh, this is that, and that's that, and that's that. And I like, I don't like.

Mm, mm, mm, mm, mm, mm, mm. So that's, you use nature and come to your senses as the expression goes. You come to your senses, but that implies that there is an awareness there that makes clear, unobstructed sensory perception possible.

And then you, you're amazed how, at the sacredness of that space through which you move here. And sacredness is not something that I could explain to you or to your mind, because the human mind says, just a second, sacredness, what does that mean? You haven't explained that term.

And that would be extremely hard, impossible to explain. It's a term that is no longer much in use these days. Sacredness, that's a, holiness, even as the Germanic-based word, sacredness, the Latin-based word, is the same meaning.

But you can sense it. The moment your attention rises and you go, and there you see the branch of the tree moving slightly. And there you see a bird flying across and the waves.

And suddenly there's a totality of that experience. The main thing for our meditation tonight is becoming still, or rather noticing that the stillness is already in you, waiting to be discovered. So our session today probably is going to be a kind of transmission of stillness.

For the transmission to be received, it requires you to have access to a little bit of stillness inside you. And that little bit of stillness can receive the transmission, recognize itself, in the transmission, and then know itself more fully. If you can hear the ticking of the clock, that's of course, that signifies time.

And underneath and in between the ticking of the clock is the stillness, which signifies the timeless, timeless consciousness. That timeless consciousness is the essence of who you are. So as we sit here together, if it works for you, it means that the person is receding and presence is arising.

And there's a shift suddenly in identity. Your sense of self is no longer derived from the silly person. Every person is more or less silly with his judgments and all the mind stuff and the expectations and the shoulds and the shouldn'ts and the complaints and the regrets and the constant focus on future or past.

And it's resentments and grievances and anxieties and problems. God. God.

And there is another dimension of consciousness in you. That's far deeper than the person. The person is a surface movement of that consciousness, fleeting, insubstantial.

The ripples on the surface. And as the presence arises in you, you feel suddenly your connectedness with enormous power, energy, intelligence. And you're rooted in that.

It is who you are ultimately. And that's always there. And that is where fear ends.

Fear can only exist on the surface where the person lives. And the natural condition of the surface entity is fear, often disguised as other things. And the absence of fear really means that for the first time you can actually feel the deep trust.

Absence of fear means trust. So you can feel a deep trust in life. You are connected with, you are one with something vast.

And through you, it emanates into this world. And either directly without your mind, like here, now, this is an emanation of presence, but also it can flow into your mind and use your mind and inspire your thoughts and words. And actions.

Presence is felt or sensed with your entire body. Every cell of the body is alive with that presence. Can you be in that state of alert presence continuously?

Well, probably not, but it can be there in the background of your life, even while you are active, doing things, speaking, thinking, and yet you sense that spacious stillness in the background, in between two thoughts, and perhaps even while you're thinking. Then thinking happens in the foreground and that spacious, aware presence is in the background. This, for example, is happening here now when I speak.

The mind is being used and that's the foreground and there is in the background this wonderful, vast, spacious stillness. Even though you may be able to enter the presence here, you may still find in certain situations you lose it completely, that's okay. Afterwards, you realize you had lost it while you lose the presence, you don't know you're losing the presence, it just happens.

A reaction takes over. The habitual mind pattern takes over. The habitual mental-emotional reaction.

And some people have very deeply entrenched patterns in their mental-emotional field. And those patterns are an aspect of what the East calls karma. And some people carry quite a heavy burden of karma.

Usually, karma is interpreted as the things that happen to you in your life, the situation you're born into, parents, things that happen to you, the country, the energy field in which you grow up, all the relationships and so on and so on. That is an aspect of karma, but more fundamentally, karma is not what happens to you, but more fundamentally, karma is how you react to what happens to you, how you deal with situations and people and challenges. You can magnify the difficulties and the challenges through reactivity, so you have heavy karma.

Or you may have so-called good karma, in which case the conditioning of your mind is relatively okay, it will have its limitations. There may be some presence already. But the only thing that really transmutes karma is the arising of presence and it will transmute even deeply entrenched karmic patterns, reactions that you don't seem to be able to get

rid of.

It happened again and again. But it may take time for the timeless to burn up karma may take a little bit of time, not as much time as it took for karma for those patterns to form thousands and thousands of years. And there's no reason why.

Those dysfunctional patterns that make your life difficult cannot be transmuted or burned up through presence in this lifetime. But you have to want presence, you have to choose presence. You have to want to be free.

You have to want peace within yourself and not think something is more important out there than the inner peace within me. And so the Course in Miracles says, I quote now, I want the peace of God. To say these words means nothing.

But to mean these words means everything. Nobody can mean these words and not be healed. End of quote.

And those of you who have deeply entrenched heavy karmic patterns will be forced to go deeper into presence. Presence needs to be more acute to burn up those patterns. So you're forced to go deeper into greater alertness.

Otherwise the patterns will not become transmuted. Some harmless patterns may always remain. Every human has a certain form.

There may be certain habit patterns that do not cause any problems. And they may well survive in the light of presence. Destructive patterns, destructive of yourself and others, problem making patterns, deeply negative patterns cannot survive in the light of presence.

But you need to choose presence as much as possible. And I'm saying this to you because there is enough presence in you to be able to choose presence. Without any presence, you cannot choose it.

So ultimately it is presence that chooses presence. For some reason, it has just come into my mind, perhaps because somebody desperately needs the answer to this. And it's connected to what we've been saying.

You are now, compared to years ago, you are now definitely more conscious than you were before. And it could be that in the past, when you were not conscious, you did things that you now recognize as not right, or you inflicted suffering on another being or other beings, and you can now see it. At the time, you didn't know what you were doing because you are not conscious enough to act differently.

Now, the fact that a person feels guilty means he or she can see something now that he or she could not see then. If you were still in the same consciousness, then you wouldn't

be able to see that that was wrong. You'd say, you did the right thing by whatever, killing that person.

I did the right thing. But now you see, you have awakened, and then you can see a lot of your past as dysfunctional, unconscious action, inflicting suffering on yourself and others. Virtually every unconscious human inflicts suffering, both on themselves, without knowing it, and others.

They create their own misery, and they make others miserable. That's what unconscious humans do. And some to a greater degree than others.

So guilt can come up as you awaken and suddenly see how unconscious you were. That can bring up guilt and say, because the guilt says, I did that. The guilt uses the word I, but what does that mean?

What does it mean when you say I? What is that I? Who is I?

Is I the conditioning of your mental emotional conditioning or does I have a deeper meaning? Is who is I? When you think that your mental emotional conditioning is I, then you are deluded.

Your mental contortional conditioning is not I. It is the mental emotional conditioning in you. It is a false identity.

There is no real I there. The only true I is the I am. It's you, the essence of who you are is consciousness.

That is the I. I am that I am. That's even how God describes himself in probably one of the most profoundest lines in the Bible.

Somebody asked God, who are you? Or what's your name? I am that I am.

Because your deepest I am is the I am of the universe. It's not personal. Your deepest identity is the identity of God and of the universe.

This is the I am. That's the only true I. So when you confuse the unconsciousness of your past, which was only conditioning, which was a reflection of where humanity is at its present evolutionary stage, you reflected where humanity is in its present evolutionary stage.

That's all. You were a reflection of the evolving, or the unevolved, as yet unevolved human consciousness. That's all.

There is no I in there. It's not that I did that. The unconsciousness, human unconsciousness did that.

If you construct an I out of a human unconsciousness that you represented, that is an ego attempt to manufacture another mind-made identity for yourself because the ego loves to have a conceptual identity. The ego is conceptual identity in the head. That's me, I.

So, and the ego doesn't mind even if it's a very unhappy conceptual identity. It prefers that to having no conceptual identity because that's its end. So the ego will cling to the guilt and associate unconscious action in the past with identity, my identity.

And that's how the ego can survive for years. And it can torture you for years saying, I did that. And it's a terrible feeling that you did, that you can now see it as so wrong.

That was so wrong, but it's ultimately a delusion. Find the true I and then that will free you of that. And then you will naturally forgive yourself without needing to take an action and say, I must forgive myself.

That doesn't really work. In the same way that it does, this can also be applied to other humans. You can also do that to other humans, what you do to yourself when you see what they did.

And you can manufacture an identity out of their unconscious action also, and then say, this is who they are. This is who he is, who she is. It's not, it's unconsciousness playing itself out, human unconsciousness.

There is no ultimate identity there, but the mind likes to manufacture a conceptual identity, not only for yourself, but also for others. So the mind loves to get in there and say, these are those evil ones. And sometimes you do it to a whole group of people.

Those millions of this particular group of people, no matter what they are, they are, this is what they are and this is what they did. And this, that is who they are. No, it's human unconsciousness, that's all.

So very careful, the same process. And then you cannot forgive them because you've made an identity for them out of their unconsciousness and say that's, they are their unconsciousness. And then forgiveness will be very hard.

Okay, I have to try to forgive because I'm supposed to do that. I have to forgive them for what they did. They did such terrible things, but I have to forgive them.

Okay, I forgive you. Ah, it's not easy. It's easy.

That's. The real forgiveness happens when it's just, you realize that ultimately there's nothing to forgive and that's true forgiveness. There's nothing to forgive.

And forgiveness happens naturally in this way. Not as a conscious thing that you do, but a thing that happens by itself. It falls away.

The false identity that you inflicted on yourself or another human being or a group of human beings, that false conceptual identity falls away. And that is an essential part of being here as a conscious human being. A conscious human being does not have resentments anymore because what could you resent?

It's only if you manufacture a pseudo-identity that there's resentment. So all those things just, they fall away. And there's the flowering of consciousness.

All guidance, all true guidance, and all true knowing comes from the one, the source, presence then guides you. And you don't need, on some people's spiritual journey, for example, certain substances, you mentioned plant-based, you took on your spiritual journey. If it's done respectfully with reverence, then that can be a helpful thing temporarily, but ultimately you have to transcend that also so that you go directly.

But it can help show people what is possible and bring about a little spaciousness in their minds and temporarily put them in touch with a deeper dimension. But ultimately that is something also to be transcended and it's not right for everybody at all. If you're drawn to it, then it's right for you.

If you get too attached to it, it's no longer right. If it's something that you use on your journey, it's fine. And then you transcend that and presence then becomes your guide.

You don't need any external guide anymore. You just go directly to presence because any guide that you go to, that again is connected to the previous question, any guide that you go to, where do they get? If the knowledge or the wisdom that they transmit to you, where do they get it from?

Is it because they are more knowledgeable or are they more deeply connected to the one consciousness than you are? So ultimately all guidance, all true guidance and all true knowing comes from the one, the source is emanation from the source of all life. Consciousness itself is an emanation from the one source of life that is transcendent, that does not exist in space or time.

Like the sun, the sun emanates the light. The light is still connected to the sun. It's whether the sun, the light is in some way is still part of the sun.

Consciousness is emanates from the one transcendent source of all life, which has no location in space or time. It is transcendent. If God means anything, then that is what God means.

It's the transcendent source of all life that shines into this world, into this dimension as consciousness. So the consciousness in you is a ray of coming from source, so to speak. Like, so the consciousness you can sense in yourself emanates from God.

I don't use that word very often, so I have to do it with my hands. It emanates from the

source of all life, like light emanates from the sun. This is why in some traditions, people speak of God realization.

And in some traditions, they even say things like, when they connect with a deep eye, they make statements like the mystics of Sufism, for example, they make statements like, when they have that connection, they say, I am God, I am God. And Sufis dance and so on. Well, they dance, not necessarily because they've already realized, but they may dance in order to shut off their minds.

And sometimes it works. They say, I am God. Of course, that's not favorably received by others.

And usually you get stones thrown at you if you say you're God, particularly in Islam, but even in Christianity used to be the case. If you said, I'm God, I mean, you wouldn't survive for very long in the Middle Ages. And it's true and it's not true that you are God.

Yes, of course, you're an inseparable part of the one in that sense, of course, you are God. But in the same way that as could a ray of sunlight say, I am the sun, yes and no. Of course it is an emanation of the sun, but compared to the ray of sunlight, the sun is inconceivably vast.

And so God or the source, you cannot even speak of you. There's no statement that you can make of God because one transcends everything, all polarities, everything. So you can't really say anything about it, but you can sense its emanation in you as you.

And in that sense, you are part of God, the divine. You are the consciousness that emanates from the source. And consciousness really, that's the realization.

And you don't, then after a while, you don't need anything as an intermediary to go there directly. So that is again partly connected to the previous question, whether it's a spirit guide or plant-based substances or whatever it may be. There may be a time and a place for it on a person's spiritual journey, but ultimately you transcend that and find that deep connectedness within you with the source.

And that becomes your guide and that is the unconditioned intelligence. So when you, again, thank you for your question. I'll just add, to know yourself as consciousness is the most amazing liberation of, it's not the liberation of the person, it's the liberation from the person because the person was a misperception of who you are, a false identity, a misperception of who you are.

The universe, this is our dimension here. The universe wants to become conscious and it expands. The consciousness of the universe grows, expands.

So there's gradually, you could say the light of the source gradually comes into this dimension more. So there's a growth of consciousness throughout the entire universe.

And I'm sure it's on millions of planets, billions of planets.

Consciousness is growing in different forms, incarnating. So the consciousness, the most amazing thing about the universe is not the fact that there are billions of suns, stars, suns, in our galaxy alone, but there are billions of galaxies. Each galaxy is an entire world consisting of billions of stars.

It's completely inconceivable. And the vast spaces in between, completely inconceivable to the human mind. You know the speed of light.

It's in kilometers. It's a 300,000 per second, 300,000 kilometers per second. So the light, the reflected light from the moon takes about one second to reach us.

The light from the sun takes eight minutes to reach us. From here to the center of our galaxy, if I remember correctly, where there's a black hole, from where we are to the center of our Milky Way galaxy, light takes about 30,000 years. And that's only in our galaxy.

I believe the next neighboring galaxy is about 2 million light years or something like that. It's unlikely that we will travel there in a physical body in the near future, but there's something even more mysterious than that. And more miraculous than that.

The greatest mystery is not the vastness of it all or the multiplicity of star systems, but the greatest miracle is something that the universe is conscious. The universe is conscious. Why, how do I know that?

I know that because I'm conscious. You know that because you are conscious. You are the universe.

You are an inseparable part of the universe. You are an expression of the consciousness of the universe, the consciousness that underlies the physical manifestations that arise as it become more and more complex, the life forms that arise. There's one consciousness underneath it all that expresses itself and that you are that.

You are the consciousness of the universe. And that's the amazing mystery. The greatest mystery of the universe is it's conscious because you are conscious.

That's how you know it. And you can't argue with that because you cannot argue. And everything could be an illusion, but what is absolutely certain and beyond any doubt is that you are conscious.

Obviously, because you're here and you're perceiving. You may be dreaming. Maybe you're dreaming up this room and this man sitting on a chair.

That's possible, but it still means there's a consciousness. Otherwise the dream would not appear. It appears in the space of this consciousness.

So the one thing that's beyond any doubt in you is that you are conscious. I mean, even that is not absolutely correctly expressed because when I use language, duality creeps in. If I say you are conscious, that already creates a duality of you and conscious.

You are as if conscious were an attribute to who you are. But to put it more accurately, you are consciousness. The essence of who you are is consciousness.

And that is beyond doubt. Now, consciousness is invisible. Even the mental manifestation of consciousness as thought is invisible.

In fact, you are almost completely invisible, you as a human being. What you see is only the surface appearance of the physical body. Every thought exists, even thinking, which is a manifestation of consciousness, exists in an invisible realm.

You can open up, the surgeon can open up your brain. Hopefully he won't. He could open up your brain and look for a thought, a memory.

Your brain is, you have countless memories. Go back to your childhood. See the teacher you had at 10 years of age, either the one you liked or the one you didn't like.

Go there. See the teacher and you're sitting in the classroom, and there's the teacher. And then you're walking home and you're arriving, you're opening the front door, you're 10 years old, and you're walking into your living room.

Now, when I say this now, your memory can go there. And actually, yeah, you remember many, many details. You didn't even know it.

But where, what is that memory? Where was it stored? Was it, were there atoms and molecules that contain the image of your living room and your teacher you had when you were 10 years old?

Can a, could a surgeon ever find the memory of the living room in your head when you were 10 years old by using a powerful microscope? There's that thought, and there's that. We don't even know what a thought is.

We don't know how it lives in you. And scientists say everything is matter, that entire consciousness is a byproduct of matter, is a byproduct of the chemistry of the brain. And yet, when they look at the chemistry of the brain, they can't find a single thought, let alone the memory of your teacher, plus a million other memories.

How do they live in you? As atoms and molecules, or as chemical substances in a kind of soup in the brain? It's all invisible.

It does not exist in the material realm. And although there is a connection between consciousness and the physical brain, there's a connection, but it is a connection in the same way there's a connection between a radio receiver and the music that it plays, or a

television. And so it's a medium through which consciousness can express itself in this world, but it's not produced, matter does not produce consciousness as much as possible.

Have the main focus of your attention in your daily life in the present moment. The rest of your attention, so that's the main focus, here's this. The rest of your attention is where you want to go to.

Whatever task you're engaged in has a certain purpose. The purpose is you want to finish the task, and it has achieved its purpose. And that's here.

And that's in your peripheral, the peripheral vision of your consciousness. That's where you want to get to. And this is what you're doing in order to get there.

And your main attention is not where you want to get. And in the meantime, you're just doing it in order to get there. You can see how that's already creates an inner stress.

I'm here, but I want to be there. That's a normal way of living, is the main part of people's attention is there, but in the meantime, they are here, where they don't really want to be. They'd rather be there, as shown in famous stickers on bumper stickers on cars, which say something like, I'd rather be fishing.

And when I visited Ram Dass, the spiritual teacher who has now passed away, he lived on Maui, on his car I saw a bumper sticker which said, I'd rather be here now. That's a good teaching on a bumper sticker. And so your attention is, and this is a reversal almost of how humans normally usually live, it's the opposite.

And that is in itself already a shift in consciousness. And then of course, you're also aware of the past, the certain things that may have relevance in the present. That's fine.

So peripherally, past and future, usually future is more important because you're moving towards that. And here's the central vision of present moment. In the present moment, you're either actively doing something, or you are more passively perceiving something.

You're there as an observer, or you're just there, not actively doing, but simply perceiving. That could be when you travel back from here already, you might be sitting in a car. If you're driving, you're doing something.

That's particularly important to be present. Or you might be sitting on a plane, and that's a good opportunity for being the, you're going to the witnessing mode. There's nothing in particular to do unless you get out your laptop and start doing.

That's fine. And sometimes situations arise that are problematic. That's quite normal in life.

They are challenging rather than problematic. And then you face the challenge. You look

at it, so to speak, not necessarily visually, but you give it attention that this is a challenge.

Instead of unconscious reactivity, the challenge is your flight is canceled. Oh, it's not one of the greatest challenges a human can have, but some people react as if it were. And when any challenge arises, is there anything I can do to respond to this situation?

Or is that something where I simply have to say, well, for the time being, I accept the way it is because right now there's nothing I can do. I heard, for example, at some airports, they're so busy, not sufficiently staffed people. When the plane lands, they're still trapped on the plane for two or three hours.

It has happened in Toronto and other places. That's a good opportunity to surrender. Some people can't do that.

They start screaming and shouting. Doesn't have no particular purpose, but they can't help it. It happens to them.

So always the question was, is this an opportunity for surrender or is action called for? That is some practice to get used to until it becomes second nature to have your attention in the present moment rather than elsewhere. And it usually implies you are aware of your surroundings.

That's inseparable from being in the present through your senses. A more alert human being than a normal human being, but an alertness in which there is no tension, often alertness in a human is associated with being tense, but there's an alertness without tension, but it's not enough to be just aware of your sense perceptions. That's a good thing.

It also can help you to avoid dangerous situations that otherwise you just stumble into and you don't know how you got there. You're more alert of your surroundings. You see how animals in that sense are very alert because if they are not, they get eaten by other animals.

So many animals have this incredible alertness, not the same as the human alertness, but it is an alert awareness of their surroundings that many humans don't have. They walk in the street. They're not really there in their minds thinking about all kinds of things except where they are.

And so they're not here. Whereas the bird sitting on a branch or the deer that's stepping out of the forest and there's a field and the deer stops for a moment and the ears, they're very huge ears, they go. And it can hear probably a hundred times better than the human.

Or a bird on a branch sitting and it goes like this. And then suddenly it goes. And of

course there's no decision-making involved when a bird suddenly flies off.

It did not think, I'm now going to fly off this branch and I'm going to go over there. It just happens. There's a flow to life.

There's no mind. There is a consciousness there, but there's no conceptualization at all. But when an animal rests, an animal also rests completely.

It is completely at rest, not thinking about my life. I have to figure something out. What's the purpose of it all?

This is why it can be very healing to live with an animal. Yes, it can be quite a bit of work too, but it can be very healing to live with an animal and to have an animal presence in the house, dog, cat, usually. This unproblematic existence, except when the dog or cat are neurotic, which can happen, but there are reasons for that.

You're usually connected to their early life, just like human childhood, when things go wrong in childhood, it leaves traces. So if, but usually dogs and cats' normal status, unless they're hungry or want to go for a walk, they can be rooted in being and joyful. The cat purrs, the dog's tail wags, and it's a joy just to see it.

You're not denying what you feel, but you're adding a dimension to it, the external dimension. And then nature has a very healing effect. If you truly give attention to nature, what about your practice of giving attention to the present moment?

Now, if you give attention to the present moment, you first, you become aware of whatever it is that you feel within. And then you need to be aware of within and without, that's part of the present moment, so that your attention is not completely absorbed by whatever it is that you feel, because there's also the vastness of the outside world. And so presence, to be present means to be present within and without, in both worlds.

So you acknowledge whatever it is you feel inside you at this moment, be also very vigilant to see whether there are any associated thoughts with that feeling. Is there, are there certain thoughts that go through your head that reflect what it is that you feel? For example, if you feel depressed, do you have thoughts that are telling you that life is, after all, not worth living, or whatever the thoughts are saying, that people are, people suck, life sucks, I suck, we all suck, I don't want to be here, that kind of thought.

So you need to observe, be aware on both, as far as the inside is concerned, be aware both on the level of the emotions and feelings and on the level of mind activity, what kind of thoughts, and so it requires vigilance so that you don't indulge without knowing it in unconscious thinking, and you can't separate the unconscious thinking and the feelings, so only you can know. I don't even know whether you can answer this question now because you have to find out in the moment of it happening what kind of mind activity accompanies those unpleasant feelings, and to see whether this mind activity

actually feeds the unpleasantness that you feel, or the suffering that you feel, that's a very important thing. What role does your mind play in all this?

Very important. Is your mind feeding it? Because this is, you have a big pain body there, which is not in itself a bad thing because the pain body becomes a strong motivating force for you to awaken.

I also had a very heavy pain body. That's why I had to awaken, couldn't stand it anymore, and you at this point too, can't stand it anymore. That's good.

So be very careful so that you examine your thinking. Am I feeding the feeling? And if you are, that means there's enough awareness for you to realize it.

Then you let go of the thoughts. And one way you can do it by, you remember I just mentioned, be present within and without. You can use, for example, your sense perceptions, directing attention to your sense perceptions that takes attention away from thinking.

And then you experience, the next step would be, you still feel the unpleasantness, but you're also observing sensory perception around you. There's the sky, there's the flower, my hand, the hand. And you don't have to, I'm labeling it now, but you don't have to label it.

It's better not to label it, just to perceive it fully. Come to your senses, look around. There's an entire world there.

And your suffering ends here, where your skin is. What you, the suffering that you experience is inside you. Just one step next to you, there's no suffering.

Isn't that strange? So the table isn't suffering, I'm suffering. And this inch on the chair here is not suffering.

It's just inside my, this bag of skin, I am the suffering entity, that's me. And then if you don't know that, then you identify with that feeling. And then you look at this, then you call, and you still have the conditioned thinking that reflects the suffering and say, oh, it's all pointless.

The trees are pointless, the sky is pointless. What's the point of it all? I don't see any beauty in this.

And this flower is going to die soon, of course. It all, everything dies soon. So what's the point in even living?

When there's a dog, he doesn't look that healthy. Whatever it is, then you would just look at the world around you through the feelings. So to be present, you have to not label and just look.

And take in auditory, visual perception, breathing. So, and then, of course, and then you, if you give more attention to your surroundings, especially when you're in nature, but nature is everywhere. Even if you're in the middle of Seattle, there's a sky.

Well, it's usually at this time of year, it'll be gray, but that's fine too. There's sunlight filtering through the sky and you have lots of trees. Lots of trees.

The evergreen state, Washington, as it says on your license plate. So that's good, you have that. And that takes your attention away from, you're not denying what you feel, but you're adding a dimension to it, the external dimension.

And then nature has a very healing effect if you truly give attention to nature. And you're no longer fueling the suffering that you feel inside you. It's, of course, it doesn't go away immediately or a miracle could happen and it does, but usually not.

It's just the beginning of it gradually dissolving or becoming transmuted. Now, looking back retrospectively, what, if you even know the answer to this, what kind of mind activity accompanies the suffering that you feel in your body? What are the typical thoughts that go with that?

[Speaker 3] (9:19:48 - 9:20:05)

I guess it kind of depends on the situation. Obviously, it comes in kind of phases, but a lot of it is just kind of generalized self-loathing, I guess. I don't know if that's the right term, but.

[Speaker 1] (9:20:05 - 9:20:55)

Watch out for what kind of thoughts. It might even be helpful to write them down if they're repetitive thoughts. See what kind of repetitive thoughts you can catch because they can obscure your awareness so quickly, especially old thoughts that come again and again and again, they become part of your fictitious identity of the self, the egoic self.

So you carry with you then the burden of an unhappy self. I remember that, I had that too, carrying the burden of an unhappy self. That is, and that is what motivates you to awaken.

But there's already been a diminishment of your depression.

[Speaker 3] (9:20:56 - 9:20:57)

Absolutely, yeah.

[Speaker 1] (9:20:57 - 9:24:03)

So that's a good sign. That means presence is arising and it is gradually dissolving this pain body in you. But your work is not to renew the pain body through unconscious thinking.

So you need to be really alert and watch your mind so that you don't create more suffering by unconscious mind activity. And if you no longer feed the pain body, because that's, now the pain body, of course, also feeds through drama in relationships. It has the two ways of feeding.

In your case, perhaps more through your mind, but I don't know, could be also enacting and reenacting drama, emotional drama in relationships with a partner, family members, or whoever it may be, usually people you're close to or work with. But the closer, the better. The intimate partners are the best ways for the pain body to renew itself through.

So don't add to the pain body. It wants to feed, it wants your unconsciousness, but don't give it to the pain body. You're not feeding it with your mind anymore and you're not feeding it by being drawn into insane drama in relationships.

So you're watching it. There it is. It may not be pleasant, but it's not that bad.

Your presence is infinitely more powerful and it doesn't even fight the pain body. It just, by shining the light of awareness on it, it gradually dissipates, or a better way of putting it, it gets transmuted because the energy is not lost. There is enormous life energy in it, but it's trapped.

It's trapped energy, so it's felt as negative. When that's freed, it becomes part of presence. It is fuel for presence.

The pain body is fuel for presence. That's amazing. So you have plenty of fuel for presence.

That's the good news. What you sense in yourself as consciousness, the presence, emanates from the source of all life, which we can call God. So you are an emanation of God.

[Speaker 2] (9:24:07 - 9:24:16)

Go back to the source, conscious connection with source.

[Speaker 1] (9:24:19 - 9:32:24)

So the consciousness that pervades this universe, that is this universe, it becomes focalized through this particular form. This consciousness that you can know in yourself consciously as a presence, and you are that presence. You don't have it.

You don't have consciousness. You are consciousness. And even to say, I am conscious is

not quite correct.

I am consciousness is more correct. So you are consciousness. Now, if the brain just is a transformer of consciousness, a receiver of consciousness, a channel of consciousness, where does this consciousness come from?

Where does it emanate from? And the consciousness does not exist in this dimension. That's important, very important to realize.

This dimension is the physical dimension. The physical dimension is where your physical body is and the physical objects of the senses. Then underneath the physical begins already that which is not part of the physical dimension.

And that already begins with your thoughts. Even your thoughts are not part of this physical dimension anymore. They live in another, they exist in another dimension.

And this is, you're going below the surface of, this is the surface world of physical things, your end, your physical body. You go by being aware of your thoughts already not part of the physical dimension. They are already exist in a deeper dimension.

How do we know that? Because you cannot find a thought in the physical realm. A surgeon could open your brain looking for your thoughts.

He would not be able to find a single thought because nobody knows what a thought is and where thought lives. Where does it live in you? Does every atom represent a thought?

Do some molecules represent the memory of what happened to you on that day when you were 10 years old and millions of other memories? Where do they live? All languages, I know apart from English, I know two other languages.

Well, they're getting a little rusty, but somewhere those two languages that I know they live somewhere, but where? Where do they live? At the moment, I'm not conscious of them.

If somebody had to say something in German or Spanish, suddenly something would come. I could say it, but where? Does this whole thing live?

If thought is, and then it's come emotionally again. Emotion, you cannot find. Emotion has certain, it correlates with certain physical processes just as thought does.

You can imagine something and then the body reacts to it. You imagine you're drinking lemon juice right now. Immediately saliva will start accumulating in your mouth because your body thinks it's real.

And if you get angry, your stomach lining, the inside will become red and many other

things will happen in your body as you become angry. So, but the anger itself does not exist in the physical realm. It affects the physical, but it's in itself.

And then you go further down and into the unseen. So in other words, consciousness is not of this dimension. Consciousness represents another dimension, the transcendent dimension.

So this, the consciousness that you are emanates from another dimension and comes then into this. And an awakening happens. My suggestion to you is to consider the possibility.

This is my intuitive. Realization, I don't want to convince you that it is correct, but it is my intuitive realization. The consciousness emanates from the source of all life, which of course does not exist here.

It is, but it doesn't exist. Consciousness is the emanation of God in the same way that light is the emanation of the sun. Consciousness is the emanation of God into this dimension.

And it seems that gradually the light of consciousness flows, increases in this dimension, gradually. You can see it in yourself, how gradually you grow in consciousness. You seem to grow in consciousness and you are only a microcosm of the macrocosm.

Whatever happens in you can tell you a lot about the universe. If you could understand yourself, you could, you understand the universe. So consciousness comes into this dimension more and more.

Consciousness itself is timeless. And then it enters this dimension where there's time and there you experience it as an intensification of consciousness. You become more conscious.

A human can become more conscious. The entire planet gradually is becoming more conscious. If you go back millions and millions and millions of years, the life on the planet was less conscious than it is now.

Even animal life and plant life was less developed, less differentiated, less complex. Gradually, the world is being created still. The creation of the world is still happening.

The entire process, we have no idea why this is happening, what the purpose of it is. You cannot understand it conceptually. It's such a vast, vast process.

But all you need to know is what you sense in yourself as consciousness, the presence, emanates from the source of all life, which we can call God. So you are an emanation of God. And this is why sometimes this realization is called God realization.

God in you, God as you. Then the question arises, does that mean that you are God?

[Speaker 2] (9:32:28 - 9:32:43)

Well, yes and no. I wouldn't go so far because the ray of sunlight is an intrinsic part of the sun, undoubtedly.

[Speaker 1] (9:32:44 - 9:33:43)

But if the ray of sunlight could speak and the ray of sunlight said, I am the sun. Well, in one sense, yes. In another sense, no.

The sun is, the power of the sun is so infinite. How can a ray of sunlight compare itself? And yet it is one with the sun.

So there's a little paradox here. The essence of who you are is eternally connected to the essence of all life. You are an emanation of the one appearing as many.

That's wonderful to realize that. See, who you truly are, your home is there.

[Speaker 2] (9:33:43 - 9:33:45)

You are that.

[Speaker 1] (9:33:50 - 9:35:07)

And the sense of being a disconnected fragment in this universe, in a hostile universe, that disappears, that is a delusion. The delusion of the ego is that you are a disconnected fragment in a hostile universe. That's how egos perceive themselves.

And that illusion dissolves. And when, as you become more rooted in that presence that you are, this, the peace, a very powerful sense of peace is there then always in the background of your life. Because you have that sense of connectedness to the transcendent, to God.

That sense of connectedness to God, then that is the end of living in a state of fear. Fear, anxiety, et cetera, et cetera. That is the state of connectedness.

[Speaker 2] (9:35:09 - 9:35:12)

Ah, that means you're already home.

[Speaker 1] (9:35:16 - 9:35:37)

I always think that the famous ohm sound and the English word home are related. It's not by accident that they are so similar. I am home.

Home. Home.

[Speaker 2] (9:35:42 - 9:35:53)

So that is through self-transcendence, you realize the one self that you are an expression of.

[Speaker 1] (9:35:57 - 9:37:26)

And for many people, self-transcendence does not come until the dream of a separate self becomes unbearably difficult and painful. For many people, I'll repeat it, self-transcendence does not come until your so-called life gets very unpleasant and very difficult, and you experience all kinds of loss and limitation. And then something can happen that suddenly when the self becomes very unsatisfying and limiting and painful, then something opens up.

Then the self gives way, and you transcend it, and you realize the essence of who you are beyond the person, the being. But you don't have to wait for that. And many of you have already been through the painful, the experience of suffering, which is inseparable from considering yourself to be a separate entity.

[Speaker 2] (9:37:28 - 9:37:29)

Suffering. Suffering.

[Speaker 1] (9:37:29 - 9:37:49)

Suffering is that which leads you to awakening. That's a miracle. Ultimately, suffering is transcended, but it is not transcended until the self is transcended, the limited egoic self.

[Speaker 2] (9:37:50 - 9:38:02)

But until that happens, suffering is the most important thing in your life, the most indispensable thing in your life is suffering.

[Speaker 1] (9:38:09 - 9:38:42)

It's the way. Suffering is the way until it's not needed anymore, but it leads potentially to self-transcendence. When the self becomes too unpleasant, you can't stand it anymore.

The pain is too much. So that's, these are the, in the ancient teachings, that's the importance of suffering.

[Speaker 2] (9:38:44 - 9:38:52)

So when it happens in your life, welcome it.

[Speaker 1] (9:38:54 - 9:50:00)

Suffering happens when loss happens on whatever level, loss of possessions, loss of status, loss of certain physical abilities, loss of loved ones, et cetera, et cetera. That

brings about a lot of suffering. Many other forms of suffering are only created by the human mind, like many forms of anxiety and fear created almost exclusively, but just by the mind.

Suffering, I teach suffering, said the Buddha, I teach suffering and the end of suffering. And the same message, symbolic form in Jesus on the cross is the archetypal image of suffering. Jesus is the archetypal human, represents every human.

And this is the image of ultimate suffering. This is a death on the cross and resurrection, self-transcendence. That's a beautiful teaching contained in an image, so people can intuitively understand it without having the ability to understand it conceptually.

Even a very simple person could intuitively get this message. So Ramana Maharshi, the great Indian sage who lived in the first half of the 20th century in India, said that the most important, the most effective criterion to judge your progress on the spiritual path is the degree of absence of thinking. That's pretty simple.

So this is your practice beyond any meditation, formal meditation practice that you may do is very helpful. But the spaciousness needs to become part of your everyday life. Your daily life needs to be interspersed with spaces.

And in every hour, there need to be spaces until a time comes when the spaciousness never leaves you. So you will be able to use your mind without always in the background sensing your own presence. I call it your own, although it's not your own because nothing is your own.

In the background, you sense your own presence, your spaciousness while you listen to someone. And even while you speak, not 100% of your consciousness is drawn into the mind stream that through which words are formulated. Because then you're lost, you're lost in the conditioned mind.

And you go, roll, roll, and the stream is coming out of your mouth and strengthened by the emotions behind it, because your thinking activates the emotional body. And then the emotional body participates in that outflow of stuff. And it's not, there's no wisdom in it.

You're just contributing to the problem. You might be discussing how to solve all problems, but then you get angry about this because people just cannot see the truth, but you know it, but they can't. So accessing that in daily life, and I've already given you a few little hints as to what good portals are to enter that state.

One I just mentioned, detect in yourself when you have a dysfunctional relationship with the present moment. And that could be quite a lot of times. A dysfunctional present means you dislike what is.

You hate what is. You criticize what is. You complain what is.

You complain about other people. You complain about those people there. You complain about my life.

Complain about my ex-wife. Complain about what they did to me. Complain about the, whatever the mind can, it loves complaining, but the body doesn't like it because when you complain, what do you feel?

It feels good to the ego because the ego strengthened itself when you complain about another person. The ego has enhanced itself because I'm now superior to this person or group of people that I'm complaining about. That's how it operates.

The ego feels superior when it can judge another negatively. Therefore, it compulsively judges other people, situations, places negatively. It loves that.

But if you are vigilant, you will see that it, that actually is not, the body doesn't feel good in the body. It feels good in the fictitious psychological entity that we call the ego. But if you could examine the physiological function in the body, you would feel it's the energy flow through the body becomes interrupted, decreases.

When you get angry, they've observed that your stomach lining becomes red and all kinds of secretions happen in negative states. So detect dysfunctional relationship. And when you find it in yourself in the moment, you say, oh, there it is.

At that moment, you have a choice. You can say, okay, I want to continue to be in this dysfunctional state. And then you carry on, but that's unlikely because dysfunctional state ultimately only survive as long as you're unconscious of them.

You do not recognize them as dysfunctional states. Then they survive. The moment you recognize a state as dysfunctional, then you realize you actually would be better off without it.

When you feel upset about having to wait somewhere for too long, and you suddenly discover you're upset and then you're vigilant again. You say, why am I upset? Because of this situation?

No, I'm upset because of what your mind is saying about this situation. That's an amazing realization, but you have to do it in the moment it happens. At first, perhaps the realization will come just after it happens.

And you look back on it and say, oh, that's what happened. It's amazing. There's so many situations in life that are upsetting what people say to you, but shouldn't have said or failed to say or do.

All kinds of things. And when you look closely, you see, it's the mental commentary that

judges the situation, that causes the emotion, that causes the upset, not the situation in itself. When you've realized that situations are neutral, then you no longer have, you no longer personalize things.

And then this is in the ease of accepting the is-ness. You accept that humans are often unconscious. They often say things that come out of their unconscious state, and that's fine.

That's why they're at. So becoming friendly with the is-ness of this moment, if action is required, it will be more powerful when it comes out of presence, not out of resistance. And there will be wisdom in it, as Buddhists call it, right action, or skillful means or skillful action.

So you discover dysfunctional states. That's vital. Then you can become friendly with the present moment when the present moment is no longer obscured by the dysfunctional state of consciousness.

And you suddenly go, oh, well, that's what is. So is there anything I need to do now? Is there anything I can do?

Then you take action. If there's nothing I can do, then just acceptance. Welcome to our live meditation.

If you're still thinking while you're looking, I suggest you stop thinking.

Eckhart Tolle Talk YouTube 10

[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 19:03)

now just like that is that possible yes when I talk about it it sounds as if you were doing something stopping thinking but really the thinking is a doing and when you stop thinking there's a letting go which is the cessation of doing so that you become aware of being that's why we're here that may sound a little dualistic when I say become aware of being more accurately I could say what arises when you stop thinking or when thinking subsides is the being awareness so it's not so dualistic anymore when I put it like that because there is no duality there except in language it's helpful to be here together and it's an opportunity for those of you who are not yet able to let go of thinking in daily life from time to time not continuously then here you may be able to get a taste of what it means not to think without going to sleep without becoming sleepy staying alert and being aware that you are alert being aware of the alertness that's still there when thinking subsides at first it may seem like nothingness nothing at all but as you stay with it you begin to notice there is a great depth to that seeming nothingness there's a depth there and an aliveness a presence that depth and that presence really is the essence of who you are which is not the person the person is a temporary apparition or phenomenon that arises in the world of form but who you really are is deeper than that temporary apparition in the world of form you need to know that not conceptually you need to know yourself as that if you don't you get completely lost in the world of form in the world of apparitions in the world of gain and loss up and down good and bad and that's ultimately not a pleasant way to live when you don't know your own depths that depth that connects you with a totality and with the source of all life that depth where are one with the source of all life most humans on the planet don't know their own depths there's a growing number of humans who are beginning to discover it or have discovered it or are beginning to live in a state of connectedness with it but most humans don't know themselves they don't know who they are they only know themselves as the body and their mental emotional conditioning which produces the egoic entity that they identify with as themselves enormous power is suddenly arising in you which is the power of the present moment which is the power of unconditioned consciousness also the power of dealing with the situation if there's something that you need to do suddenly right action as the Buddha calls it right action happens so be aware of the conceptualizing your life and allowing an unhappy story in your head to make you unhappy people think they are unhappy because of the circumstances of their lives in cases they are unhappy because of what they're telling themselves so what the mind is saying about what's going on around you and has happened will happen so that's a it's a suffering the origin of suffering to a large extent is there and even in extreme situations having lost your home for example not knowing where to live you even there it applies you do not in the face of a challenge if you are present you don't convert the challenge into suffering you just be with is and you start experimenting with little things in your life

that cause you irritation or a little bit of anger or some impatience that situations that are very common every day and you look at the situation you become aware suddenly that this irritation arising or anger arising and you become aware that it doesn't actually feel very good and the body knows it doesn't feel good the body doesn't like it there's irritation arising and you think it's because of what's going on but if you look more closely think now is this situation causing this or is what I'm saying about it causing this what my mind the commentary of my mind and in most cases you will find it's the mental commentary that you had been identified with that causes the unhappiness and then you say let's experiment with removing the commentary how would I experience this situation if I did not add the mental baggage to it so in other words you're just now with the isness of this moment without any thing mental stuff added being added to it that says this should not be happening I don't want to be here and many other things suddenly you're fine a minute ago you were extremely irritated and angry and you couldn't differentiate between the circumstances external circumstance of your life and the inner commentary about the circumstances and this is the essence of unconsciousness I'm able to differentiate between the circumstances and the commentary so the circumstances and the commentary become single is experienced as a single phenomenon and then when you suddenly you can separate this is the isness of this moment and it is as it is enormous power is suddenly arising in you which is the power of the present moment which is the power of unconditioned consciousness also the power of dealing with the situation if there's something that you need to do suddenly right action as the Buddha calls it right action happens or non-action if action is not possible then right surrender happens but you allow this moment to be as it is without but what does it mean means you don't add unnecessary mental baggage to it that argues with the isness of this moment there are millions of people billions who go through life in that dysfunctional state of consciousness creating suffering for themselves and anybody who creates suffering for themselves create suffering for others around them you so you're spreading unhappiness and it's called normal life and it spreads it spreads imagine a country of millions of people living like that what is a collective state of consciousness of that country and what do you expect them every human is trapped in their personal ego and then the collective of the country develops a huge collective ego that's even more insane than the personal one crazy but it's so easy to step out of that except it's not nobody has told people that it's possible one not on a big scale not at school what I'm talking about here and now should be the primary subject at school for children how to live not the useless stuff they have to learn well they can add this too but that's fine but what is primary primary is how to live in a sane way I mean you have to learn how to drive before you can get a license they wouldn't let you go on in a car without having learned the basic of because you could cause a lot of havoc be a danger to yourself and others but living is infinitely more than driving and that of course implies also if you learn how to live you spread it to your children because you you can infect your children in a good way with your consciousness and you bring up your children in a conscious environment because you know how to live you still make

mistakes yes you're not perfect but you know the basics of how not to live in a way that is insane and then your children grow up in that and they don't have to go through the enormous learning process that you had to go through when I had to go through too and that was the originally the basic of the ancient Greek philosophers the philosophy at that time or something totally different from what it is now basically yes it was also an early form of science but it was more fundamentally we're teaching how to live life to be applied in everyday life it's a beautiful summer day on the clock in the afternoon perfect temperature blue sky sunshine but as the Zen master would say of course temperature is always perfect

[Speaker 2] (19:03 - 19:27)

perfect which means you're okay with what it is which means there's nobody

[Speaker 1] (19:28 - 19:50)

boys inside you complain it should be different we were in Denver a few days ago it was pretty

[Speaker 2] (19:50 - 20:18)

hot there probably still is so I didn't go out too much I tend to lose physical energy

[Speaker 1] (20:18 - 20:50)

so my preference is also not very hot conditions but if they happen to be hot and it's just what is there's no in addition to the perhaps some physical discomfort there's no additional layer

[Speaker 2] (20:50 - 21:39)

of psychological suffering and it's easier to be in this state of spaciousness when you're

[Speaker 1] (21:39 - 22:19)

okay with what is because a lot of the unnecessary thinking that humans engage in unconsciously is connected with arguing with the isness of things internally or externally or externally can be either speaking it say get on your computer or social media

[Speaker 2] (22:20 - 22:49)

and you can complain there and that's good for the ego it's not a moment state of consciousness

[Speaker 1] (22:50 - 23:54)

to the state of unconsciousness it's a totally different thing changing things taking action

or speaking out and there's an opportunity for change to happen or useless complaining so all that unnecessary thinking that goes into useless arguing with complaining the isness of things when that falls away that there's less compulsive

[Speaker 2] (23:54 - 26:13)

thinking significant percentage of compulsive thinking concerns that state of dissatisfaction that fuels the dissatisfaction with so you can experience that spaciousness that's there in the absence of compulsive thinking and that's why we're here we're here to deepen or to put it differently to discover the depths within ourselves which begins underneath the thinking our life meditation is an invitation to step out of thinking become still or rather discover the stillness that's already there underneath the thinking so we are in a meditative

[Speaker 1] (26:13 - 26:34)

state now even the words that i speak come out of stillness there's a lot of stillness

[Speaker 2] (26:34 - 27:53)

in between the words spaciousness it's important to be aware of that so in the gaps between the words as i speak you can discover that when you pay attention you become aware of those gaps you suddenly realize you're not thinking you're just aware and so you develop the amazing

[Speaker 1] (27:54 - 28:09)

ability to engage in thinking when it's needed step out of thinking

[Speaker 2] (28:10 - 30:24)

it's not needed right now there's a little bit of thinking because you hear what i'm saying and that becomes a thought in your head that's relatively little there's more spaciousness here so you can step in and out of thinking and then something else happens and you may discover that even when you are thinking or even you engaged in conversation which involves thought words thoughts even then there's still a part of you rooted in not thinking so you can use your mind without losing the stillness underneath

[Speaker 1] (30:30 - 30:41)

and then the nature of your thinking changes you don't you don't need to actually do it it

[Speaker 2] (30:41 - 31:46)

happens by itself thinking no longer has you in its grasp thinking is then no longer an energy field by which you are possessed no longer like a

[Speaker 1] (31:48 - 32:43)

parasite that sucks up all your consciousness and manufactures one thought after another so to speak and thinking then is no longer the place you look to for knowing who you are

[Speaker 2] (32:51 - 34:49)

for your sense of self your identity because you realize that who you are transcends thinking is far deeper than thinking and ultimately has nothing to do with your personality so the personality still operates in this world it's fine but in a more sane way because it's no longer the ego personality it's just the personality

[Speaker 1] (34:52 - 35:37)

the difference is when your personality your historical person is all you know when you're unaware of the depths within you the spaciousness the stillness the unconditioned consciousness then that is the ego personality personality is when the ego

[Speaker 2] (35:39 - 36:30)

it's all you know you're identified with it then the ego disappears when you know yourself as the spaciousness the formless consciousness but the personality is still there

[Speaker 1] (36:30 - 36:59)

so that form identity as i call it you still are able to operate as this form identity in fact function much better as a personality when you're rooted

[Speaker 2] (37:00 - 37:40)

in transcendence because that flows that emanates into the personality also so although the

[Speaker 1] (37:40 - 59:54)

you the person or personality are now connected with the essence identity personality being form identity spaciousness stillness awareness is essence identity essence identity then shines through the form identity and you become a more peaceful human being through that you no longer create suffering for yourself and others just not to say that others may suffer because of something that you do but you don't create it they create it for themselves for example there are some patterns in the mind that everybody inherits that even for advanced presence practitioners like yourselves can still reassert themselves because they are so normal by the way my definition of normal is insane as you probably know and you may be able to catch yourself many times during the day when this normal one of these normal patterns reasserts itself and of course one of the

most prevalent patterns is the is reducing the the present moment to a means to an end it could be a simple thing like you get up in the morning and you're getting ready to go to work what how what is the quality of your doing during that time of getting ready to go out or here you got up this morning getting ready to have go to breakfast and then come here how do you experience that time are you able to be present in what you're doing or is the doing no more than a means to an end and that's a huge difference whether you this you fold your pajama after and put it on your bed is that do you give it attention is it a pleasant thing to do do you acknowledge the being of this pajama and feel the texture and give it some loving attention and then you put it away or is it what's the next thing and the next and the next because i need to get i need to the next moment never comes does it no i don't think it does because when the next moment comes it's the present moment so the next moment doesn't come it can never arrive there's only this moment but if your habit is to treat this moment most of the time as a means of getting to the next moment so not being fully in it but mentally being somewhere else and then i just need so the basic attitude is i just need to get this moment out of the way then i will get to a better one and that is a very deep-seated pattern that prevents you from being present but it's only when i voice it like this that it becomes apparent to you because otherwise you won't even see it because it's so normal to live in such a way and it's not only people also treat entire life periods in that way then it's not only of course most fundamentally the present moment but they also treat entire chunks of their life in that way for example you're waiting for the weekend so it's only two more days of going having to go to work and then there comes or you're waiting for something else getting a better job finding the person who is going to make me happy it's only in the meantime i'm just ticking over it's just i'm just waiting for well what's the expression i'm waiting for the big break or whatever i'm waiting for the big thing to happen and finally i can start living when that happens whatever form that takes when that happens then i'll then my life will really start this somehow i don't know if anybody remembers it's probably not popular anymore there used to be a genre in theater that was called the theater of the absurd Samuel Beckett and other authors and often they showed there was a famous play called Waiting for Godot and there are two men waiting for this guy to arrive with a nobody knows who Godot is but they spent the entire play it's a theater play the entire play this they're waiting Godot who knows some critics say well Godot God Godot they're waiting for God but it's not said but this entire the entire period is spent waiting and i don't think Godot ever arrives and they're similar and this is just to show the absurdity of ultimately everyday life and of course sometimes life does get better of course it doesn't if you are now living in unpleasant surroundings perhaps it's noisy or it's cold too cold or too warm or cramped or whatever it is you have might have a job that's repetitive you're waiting to get out of that feel lonely one relationship has come to an end the other another one hasn't started yet i'm just waiting and so you're hoping that things will get better and sometimes they do get better but the habit pattern is deeply ingrained and even if situation gets better then you'll be waiting for something else because no situation can ever completely satisfy you no

person no condition no situation waiting for retirement i can maybe take early retirement and then what play golf lie on the beach and many people are very disappointed when they retire and don't know what to do with themselves and they lose their sense of identity that they it was always a false sense of identity because it is derived from their function but at least they had a false sense of identity and now they don't i don't have any and then to happen they can't they don't know the possibilities of human life so be vigilant if you feel that an improvement is highly desirable in your life situation that's okay but it's much more likely to happen if you give more attention to the present moment rather than trying to get away from the present moment or denying it always making it into a means to an end if you give if you give more your fuller more fullest attention to this moment the so-called future is much more likely to improve the so-called future because there is no future when it comes it's the present moment a little strange paradox different it's when you fully acknowledge the present moment and the when you give it attention then you see the good you're aware of the good in the present moment it's an amazing realization that who you essentially are is you're invisible the moment you move to thoughts what nobody knows scientists don't really know what what a thought is what is a thought where does it live in you where does it live in you that's an interesting thing the does it have a much now mainstream science is still still largely totally materialistic which means it says that matter is all that exists and everything is matter and it says that consciousness is a by-product or they say epiphenomenon other words a by-product of the human brain in some way this is a long one could talk about this for a long time i don't want to go this way and entertain you in that direction it is more important experiential to have i want this to be an experiential gathering rather than intellectual gathering but ask yourself the question what is a thought where does it live all your memories i suggest for example the memory of please go ahead the memory of your deceased grandmother for example or the memory of you when you were a child when you were a child you lived in a particular place maybe you had your own room and you can suddenly recollect many details for the room that you had when you were a child even how the doorknob felt when you opened the door the carpet the furniture and you can remember your grand grandmother or the first teacher when you first started school the teacher you had then and you can remember okay now you you haven't perhaps thought of your that first great teacher in several years but now that i mention it suddenly the he or she pops up where and in what form did this first teacher of yours or your grandmother or the memory of the room that you lived in when you were six years old and of course there are hundreds of thousands of memories like that but where did this live in you in what form was it must if it's molecules and atoms in your brain that somehow certain atoms represent your grandmother and other things represent other molecules represent other things the weird thing is if a surgeon opens up your brain he will not find any of your memories he will not find you that's a strange thing he cannot he find things but not you he cannot find because you you can you do not exist on a physical level ultimately only as a physical body but the the depths of you as who you are even who you are as a person

which is still limited even that just the human you don't exist as in the physical realm really i don't know where you exist perhaps in the cloud the cloud that you and then you download the memory from the cloud so every thought is invisible but if can of course it uses the brain in order to express itself emotion to the emotion itself is not visible but it can manifest of course with physical symptoms in the body but in itself it's an energy field a non-physical energy field so the entire structure of the psychic structure of you is essentially invisible so this is why in the famous little book the little prince i think it was famous classic it says what is essential is invisible to the eye this eye which means it that means all the other senses too what is essential is not visible to the senses so you are essentially invisible you are not and i the way i see it if thought is already does not even exist in this dimension that so you are multi-dimensional you exist as a thought made entity but it's not no longer it's associated with a physical realm but it is not confined to the physical realm your thoughts are invisible your whole sense of who you are is invisible nobody could find it but by looking for you in the physical realm you're not there and that's it's an amazing realization that the who you essentially are is your you are invisible all the all the thoughts that go through your head they are not visible to the senses interesting so and that's only the surface part of you even there let's go back to the analogy of the ocean you have the ocean on the surface of the ocean there are waves and ripples now let's in this analogy let's say every little ripple or wave believes itself to be an independent entity disconnected from other ripples it only knows itself as a ripple because it doesn't know its own depth and every wave only knows itself as a wave wave could be perhaps vips if you own a private jet you're a wave and if you don't then you're a ripple so but the wave and ripple are all short-lived their destiny is the same the body one day the body is here the you're somebody the next day you're nobody whether you're a wave or ripple doesn't matter so now this this ripple of course feels uneasy on the surface of the ocean because its sense of identity is very limited and it feels sometimes threatened by other ripples or it wants to use other ripples to associate with in order to become a bigger ripple and sometimes temporarily that works but not for very long and then you're looking for yourself on the horizontal realm where can i be a more complete ripple can you help me be a more complete ripple no or i need you if we come together we can be a big ripple and it's never nothing really works in one moment the ripple goes to a talk in the and it hears this weird analogy and then says but who are you beyond the body of you as the person the the invisible you can you become aware of the invisible you which is the first of all it's the person that consists of thoughts and emotions but that's already a little bit beyond beyond the surface of the ocean you go a little bit into the ocean and there you exist as a person and there's all your emotions and your thoughts and your identity as a human there you are in already you've gone up you become aware of that and that's still very limited and then and that is sustained by the incessant thinking machine the conditioned mind is this it sustains the personal selfhood self identity that's amazing and so the key is to realizing go deeper and sense your connectedness with the ocean ocean in this analogy means consciousness universal consciousness that pervades the entire universe the intelligence

that underlies all phenomenal existence the intelligence behind it all the organizing principle behind the arising of forms all forms a vast intelligence that exists does not exist as such but it gives rise to existence the vast intelligence is it is being it is not it doesn't exist because everything that exists exists in this dimension

[Speaker 8] (59:54 - 1:00:35)

um my question is how does one remain centered in stillness when we might be surrounded by and asked to engage uh mentally and emotionally with others who are not

[Speaker 1] (1:00:37 - 1:06:40)

i assume that this situation happens to you quite often because you're asking the question and of course it's a very common thing for people to find themselves in such situations let's assume then it's these are human beings that you you cannot easily or you don't want to to separate yourself from like could be family members or it could be people you work with those two situations are often situations where you feel you you want to continue to interact with these people or you have to interact with these people but it's getting difficult because you can there is toxicity or there's a lot of unconsciousness egos fighting against other egos and so on um let's just for a moment put aside the more extreme manifestations of such situations there are situations whether it's family members or at work there's there's some extreme situations that are so destructive and toxic that you the only um healthy and sane cause of action would be to remove yourself so if it's an extreme situation let's say you're in a relationship the relationship is sometimes via this physical violence or this repeated emotional violence that such an extreme situation or you are at work at the company that you work for is the environment the energy is so toxic and negative they're just going into that office you feel the weight of it and the pull of that negativity and this it's full of ego battling each other so in certain extreme situations i would recommend to that you remove yourself from this because i mentioned that at first because i want to put that aside we need to know extreme situations involving emotional violence physical violence whatever it may be uh it would you have to take responsibility and remove yourself from that situation but many situations and assume in your case perhaps it's it's not that extreme so what remains is normal human unconsciousness not the extreme forms of unconsciousness so to deal with normal human unconsciousness again uh be aware when you are interacting with people realize that you may not always succeed in doing this but the most important thing your see if you can bring about a shift in the way in which you approach the situation and these people the most important thing in such situations is your state of consciousness rather than whatever it is that they are talking about they may be talking about this or that whether it's at work or there may be gossiping or there may be whatever they're engaged in emotional ego stuff uh use it as an opportunity to stay present and it's not easy and you can only you need to intensify

your presence when you are with unconscious people by that i mean when you are sitting alone in a room or you're walking out in nature it's it's being present is not that difficult you can it's especially nature is conducive to to presence or being alone in a room if you discover that you actually like sitting alone in a room that's a great thing because that means you you become comfortable with yourself uh there are still the majority of humans still become very uncomfortable with sitting alone in a room and you may discover that you actually like being alone not continuously you still love people but you also love being alone because when you're alone you can sense the presence that you are the very simple but powerful presence and you've sensed there's a stillness there it's lovely and then of course then you leave your room and then you meet other people you lose yourself you could because the the there's a gravitational pull that the mind has and so people know that they so other people's minds will try to draw you in uh i don't is it may i ask you before i carry on is it predominantly is it more a family situation in your case or is it a work situation or which one is it predominantly

[Speaker 8] (1:06:42 - 1:07:20)

um i would say thank you for asking um it is both and um both family and work occasionally uh are are issues or not issues but present themselves as as a challenge um what is an ongoing daily challenge is the unconsciousness of the city i'm surrounded in so you know by wednesday i that starts to peak and and become much more difficult

[Speaker 1] (1:07:20 - 1:07:28)

for me to stay out of my head becomes very noisy oh you can sense the you can sense the energy field

[Speaker 8] (1:07:28 - 1:07:44)

of the safety ah yeah right yes yes sunday is very pleasant wednesday thursday friday or not right right so but it's it's really you know that plus the more intense situations of work and family

[Speaker 1] (1:07:44 - 1:08:32)

which occasionally come in yes yes i need to ask one more question do you find yourself drawn into how when other people are ego uh controlled do you find yourself that emotionally mentally you be you you become just like them or do you feel you're a little bit of an outsider now that's observing what's going on or do are you a full participant temporarily in the unconscious interactions that are taking place the drama whatever it may be are you a full participant or are you a reluctant sometimes a reluctant participant or you remain there as almost an

[Speaker 8] (1:08:32 - 1:09:02)

outsider observing what's going on how is it for you i it oscillates um most of the time i am an outsider uh who enjoys engaging um i i suspect that my sensitivity to to presence and stillness is becoming is increasing or the sensitivity to that lack of in myself is increasing

[Speaker 2] (1:09:02 - 1:09:12)

does that answer your question yes yes let's thank you it's good yeah yeah

[Speaker 1] (1:09:13 - 1:15:56)

um let's talk for a moment about this the energy field of the city before we go on to your personal the um i don't know if you whether you meditate or not whether you do some formal meditation and and often you say yes the often people and people meditate and um um then some something just disturbing things happen while they meditate suddenly there's disturbing noise this morning i was sitting i was sitting in in my living room and it's wednesday so they do the gardening on wednesday with extremely noisy leaf blowers the this is the time of year with of leaf blowers and so the the noise can and i was just so it was so peaceful as i was sitting there and um suddenly there was this and often i immediately knew how to completely transcend it because i've been it's second nature to me now but often i have to tell people how to deal with disturbing things like that especially when they're trying to meditate and then that happens i always say incorporate whatever arises during this time when you're trying to meditate everything that arises make it part of your meditation in other words resist nothing that arises don't demand that anything that arises should not arise in that case even a disturbing noise such as a leaf blower is incorporated into your meditation by deep acceptance of what is the you don't resist you could you may be able to practice the same in the city when you feel the energy field let's i mean you you may be walking there or driving or just being in an apartment or office to practice surrender to this energy that you feel then you may be able to transcend that particular energy if you don't if you react to it it still you have it has you in its grip in a way one could say when you react to toxic energy you become part of the toxic energy without knowing it so the only the only way you can become free other than removing yourself and live in the countryside the the only way you can get beyond it is through deep surrender so completely and this can be a spiritual practice as i said except in the most extreme cases when there's violence of some kind or extraordinary toxicity then obviously you remove yourself otherwise surrender to something that seems unacceptable and yet and yet you surrender you're totally okay with it suddenly the toxic energy of the city but you no longer even call it toxic you just you can sense it and allow yourself to sense that and say oh that's what is and you might also then recognize it as an expression of human unconsciousness to some extent but also yes it's still a manifestation of life at a particular stage evolutionary stage and that's what it is you can then i i had that realization many many years ago when i went through shift in consciousness at the time i lived in london and i had to travel every morning to

work on the subway which is called tube or underground they call it it has different lines and one is called at that time it was decades ago i don't know how it is now one was the one the line that i had to catch is called the northern line the northern line was always considered the worst of all tube lines because had the longest delays and the most totally cramped uh carriages that always you can never find a seat you had to push yourself in and then there were long gaps no trains people called it the misery line and i had to catch that line every morning after my shift in consciousness i still was the same i went in there and i felt completely at peace on the northern line which before was a source of great unhappiness uh felt completely at peace i couldn't quite understand why for a long time and later i realized uh i'm actually not complaining about anything anymore i'm not complaining about it it's just it is my mind wasn't saying anything about it anymore i could still feel feel that energy but it it was i allowed myself to feel that and by allowing myself to feel it there was transcendence so i have what i think is the

[Speaker 4] (1:15:56 - 1:18:54)

coolest story to tell you about how your work is manifesting in australia oh yes and then i have a question okay so the story is in this crazy country of ours we have a sport called the national rugby league are there any fans here see two we're mutually exclusive for five ten yes and um the the teams are made up of of their whole bunch of teams with ferocious names so there's the tigers the eels um the bulldogs um warriors like they're ferocious right but the one team that i had the privilege of working with and introducing your work to this season is a team that has been on a losing streak for 43 years oh and they are the bunnies they're rabbits so they're called the rabidos and um by some series of coincidences you know how it works some something just happens this happens and this happens and this happens and you end up working with 35 110 kilo guys six foot two muscles on muscles tattoos piercings crazy like just loveliest loveliest big athletes and you've got them sitting there in a semi-circle starting to watch their thoughts and at the end of the first session one one of the guys comes up to me and says oh what is all this stuff i don't have any thoughts what are you talking about and i'm like okay just just keep keep showing up it's going to be fine we'll you know just see what happens end of session three the same guy comes up and goes i saw my thoughts i saw my thoughts i'm like woohoo and and over the course of this season what was very interesting was the um that we were teaching them everything it was like eckhart distilled for football players and it was about being present and it was about forget forget that you just um missed a tackle you just let a try in that that the ref has just done too bad too bad ref calls that's the sort of stuff that you just don't want in a game that's the stuff that you resist and you say that shouldn't have happened and you start beating yourself up and you've got you can lose 10 minutes out of an 80 minute game by by going into that narrative and and so that what they learned was i have to drop the story now and i have to get back and play the best game that i can and i know how to play this game if i stop thinking so that's what they did and these guys aren't renowned for um for for from a lot

of these skills they're not renowned for reading a lot but one of them i i love them don't get me wrong i love them one of them was reading um nelson mandela's long road to freedom and then another guy came up to me at the end of the session and said this is sounding really familiar i'm reading a book by this guy called eckhart toller and i'm like what really so it it just is amazing me how it's how it's showing up in in the world and we're in australia and that they happened to win after 43 years a month ago very good wonderful thank you so i think you could personally take credit for the rabbitos breaking the 43 year drought

[Speaker 1] (1:18:54 - 1:18:59)

okay i'll have to find out more about them absolutely and then my question the phone

[Speaker 4] (1:18:59 - 1:20:12)

started ringing a little bit after after a little bit the word got out that we'd worked with the and and the question is uh we've now been approached by a company and my business partner said to me think of the company that you would never ever ever want to work for and i ran through okay maybe tiny abbott's office or um the nuclear industry and and then he said no uh it's a tobacco company i i could just see my narrative going over my dead body are we going to work with the tobacco industry they are peddling misery and then on the other hand i'm like well i've got a mortgage to pay and so i'm i pose the question to you a cut um this awakening it's am i just meant to go with the flow and say and just show up and see what happens or or am i actually needing to choose consciously so i don't enable dysfunctional systems on the planet what work are you supposed to do with them it's the same work it's about um helping them deal with stress and um we call it mind training because that's what what works in the corporate sector that's what gets us in the door and um it's about helping them perform better under pressure and under stress so they will probably sell more cigarettes if we do our job well

[Speaker 1] (1:20:13 - 1:22:25)

or they may leave the company exactly that yeah only you of course can know whether this is the right thing for you to do or not but helping human beings to become more conscious must be a good thing no matter where they are and even if the initial the reason why they want you is to become more efficient at what they do they may not realize that you will take them beyond that so sometimes people take up meditation companies might send their employees to to meditate so that they can perform better but often it changes the people and sometimes they don't want to perform better anymore and they leave the company so only you can i never actually or very rarely tell people what to do except our young man a while ago so only you can know whether that feels right but one consideration i'll just repeat what i said is that helping any humans to become more conscious cannot be bad and if they if they think that you are there to help them become more efficient at what they do that's at least that brings them to you so let

me know what you decide and who knows what happens to that company when you have finished with them so it'll be interesting to see thank you thank you very much i just want to finish by saying

[Speaker 4] (1:22:25 - 1:22:40)

the two things i most love about you are your facial expressions and that you laugh at your own jokes like your jokes are funny but it's even funnier that you'd like your jokes it's just so beautiful thank you so much thank you thank you

[Speaker 1] (1:22:50 - 1:31:57)

so this mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation when i meditate extreme fear often arises in my mind i feel like i would be destroyed or completely disappear so i stop meditation because of the fear i'm so afraid to keep going on although i intuitively know that bearing the fear would get me closer to enlightenment how can i conquer this fear this is yes of course the fear of the person the personalized sense of self or the ego which can feel threatened by the arising awareness and once you know that you can still meditate and allow the fear to be there it's only when you try to run away from the fear that really it becomes a great obstacle but if you can be with the fear allow the fear to be there as on a pure energy level feel the fear then you will find it begins to dissolve so rather than not wanting to feel it allow yourself to feel it then this is the beginning of change if you always run away from it then it'll linger there's no change there's a book called i think feel the fear and do it anyway or something like that but that is a quite good advice although i mean not applied necessarily to everything i'm going to jump off now but to allow yourself to feel whatever feeling comes is part of the present the what the isness of the present moment so if the fear arises but then you also realize what is is the fear created by a thought you will know that or is the fear arising just by itself in a particular situation when you become still do you have a fear of silence do you feel uncomfortable when you go into a room and there's there's no noise in it some people do feel some people are uncomfortable in nature it's not noisy enough so see it may be that the fear arises when you when you become still you meditate then it's not necessarily associated with a thought but with that arising of awareness and instead of stopping your meditation just what happens if i just carry on and make the fear into a meditation meditate on the fear so when if you do meditate nothing really can disturb you but the good meditator incorporates whatever arises in the present moment into the meditation including the most irritating noise that suddenly starts up outside and the mind says i can't meditate now i need stillness and then you realize no perhaps this is part of the meditation and how does it become part of the meditation by allowing the isness of this moment which is that by just letting go of resistance allow whatever it is to be and if it comes from within fear anxiety you allow that to be but you have to be careful that it doesn't become a thought because the

moment you are drawn back into thinking that's the end of your meditation you can allow a thought to be there but to order to allow a thought to be there that implies that there is some awareness there behind the thought so you are still there if so to be able it's a wonderful thing do you allow the thought to be that's very different from being drawn into the thought and following it where it wants to take you of course that's the end of your meditation or your mindfulness or whatever you want to call it i don't use mindfulness as you know because it's not about a full mind that's why i avoid the word mindfulness but mindfulness is a lovely thing it's really presence so you can follow a thought it takes it grabs you it grabs all your attention and pulls you along that's one way or you can realize there's a thought arising about what my ex-spouse did five years ago to me while i'm meditating and you can allow the thought to arise and be aware and if you do that instead of being pulled into it then you will find that it quickly it arises and it subsides so then it becomes very much like you know the sky in this one let's say you have a blue sky and clouds occasionally come so the clouds are the thoughts that arise in the mind the blue sky the vastness of that space is your awareness so clouds are not a problem if within the larger context of the aware presence they come and go and there might be thoughts that say ridiculous things there might be a thought about i'd like to eat uh uh apple pie now i really need to eat apple pie the microsoft most absurd things to interrupt your meditation then you imagine an apple pie you're eating and then you know there's the thought of apple pie you allow that to be you don't get drawn into the apple pie thought or even suddenly you have to get up and run to the fridge to see if there's an apple pie and still in there the thought arises you are the sky that's the awareness and the thought is what comes into the awareness now if more and more thoughts come or if you follow one of the cloud thoughts that drift into the space of awareness one of the cloud thoughts and you suddenly go it it grabs hold of you and you follow it then the cloud gets bigger then it attracts other clouds that correspond to it they suddenly come from out of nowhere and then you are in a big cloud you're still sitting there trying to meditate but you're really in a big cloud of thought and before you know it the entire sky is cloudy oh totally overcast now of course there's still some light shining through the clouds but you no longer know where that comes from there's some light of course consciousness thought cannot exist without consciousness thought is a manifestation of consciousness but so there's the consciousness that is behind the thoughts but you don't no longer know that consciousness directly only through the filter of thoughts in the same way that you don't know the sunlight anymore except through the filter of the clouds this is sarah from california

[Speaker 3] (1:31:58 - 1:32:05)

sarah please please join us and share your question with eckhart hello mr eckhart toy

[Speaker 2] (1:32:05 - 1:32:58)

hello sarah hello my question for you today is how do i as an awakening soul keep faith

in manifesting global and personal love peace and harmony at this time when there's so much chaos corruption fear and a lot of hate actually and anger among the global population and among those close to me in other words how do i not fall into the darkness of fear and separation from my source from my essence and from separating from others and remembering that as you say not it is not personal it is not who they are how do i use conscious manifestation to achieve that thank you thank you thank you very much thank

[Speaker 1] (1:32:58 - 2:23:54)

you to use the term manifestation in a wider sense one could say that you manifest the way in which you experience what you might call reality or your life you could call it your life could call it reality how do you experience it and to what extent are you dependent upon external conditions as far as your state of consciousness is concerned how much freedom do you have um can you live peacefully in a world that is to a large extent not peaceful and if that is possible how how do you do that how do you not get drawn into the conflict and anger egoic dysfunction of the world egoic both individually egoic and collectively egoic let's start by looking at to some extent it might be helpful as a starting point to differentiate between what would conventionally be called your life this is whatever in your daily experience of people people that you interact with whatever you do in this world work situation family situations meeting people here and there going from here to all your your private sphere there's that so you meet all kinds of people some familiar people some people that you meet briefly have interactions with in then you have in this technologically advanced society you have another well not everybody but most people i have another level of interaction with other people it also becomes part of what they call my life and that is interaction through technology you interact through social media with more people than you actually know this is the case with many people these days they interact with more people than they actually know in their non-normal everyday existence you interact with all kinds of people that you've never met not everybody but most these days because people use facebook and they use twitter and they use all kinds of things that sending message messages and so on um and on social media you also interact with people in a different way that you haven't so look at then the third level so we have actual personal contact people and whatever that what whatever the nature of this interact these interactions is it could be is it conflict ridden is it conflict ridden in your or is there some conflict but also a certain amount of harmony in your daily life then you look at the other level of social interactions through the media through um social media what kind of interactions do you have there with people that you might never have met but nevertheless you are in contact with them you exchange um what is what is the quality of that kind of interaction that you have how much conflict is there how much negativity is there and how much is there that is a manifestation of of consciousness um you have to look at that many people are there are people as you sure you know there are many especially younger people but others too

there are many people in this world for whom the human interactions that they have through technology are more much more important than the actual interactions they have with with human beings they interact through social media with countless people and and they the the virtual world becomes to them more important than their actual surroundings it's an amazing thing um a i don't believe that is a very helpful thing but that's how it is it's a huge challenge so you have that level then you have another level where you come in contact with the world through what we might call mainstream media you get the news and you get commentaries and mostly these days the news and commentaries are mixed up either they come in one you can't just get the news anymore you then you already have the news already embedded in a commentary and you get a there's a also that the third level becomes also for many people almost more important than their daily existence with the people that they actually know and interact with sometimes of course those levels can meet for example you're in the news about people going into stores and not wearing their masks and then there's a lot of upheaval about that and people get worked up about this and very angry and you can then you can see little clips of people shouting at each other because somebody's not wearing a mask and then the other person is shouting something back and to some extent there can be that level and the person level can meet because 10 minutes later you go into the store and you might witness something similar but so well your experience of reality or your world consists of these levels so you have to look at these I think I can try to perceive those three levels not it's first of all it's important not to lose touch with the fact that level one where you have actual human interactions with people in your daily life which is relationships that you have people you work with people you meet casually but actual human interactions that really is the main part or should be the main part of your life should be that the actual living experience and so what I'm recommending is that you separate for see if you can separate those levels and look at the primordial level of your actual experience with human beings leaving aside for a moment social media and leaving aside watching the news every day and all the other things connected with the news whatever leave that aside for a moment it's important to see the difference so when you talk about negativity and destructiveness and or anger and antagonism and conflict everywhere first of all look at your your life your actual life does that apply there or to what extent does that apply there because that's an important part of your reality is your the reality that you create that you manifest in your personal life that is that is that is primary I would say is that sometimes of course the the reality that you see in the mainstream the media when you watch the news sometimes the two meet as I said before they can meet but so first of all take responsibility for you take it is you you need to take responsibility for your life here in on the level of personal interactions that's where it starts and that's where you you can do a lot of good and you can do harm too do you contribute there to human unconsciousness do you could or or do you contribute there to the awakening of humanity every encounter with another human being whether it's a person you've known for a long time family member spouse whatever it may be or whoever it may be every interaction with a true interaction not talking about social

media every interaction with another human being is important what is the quality of your consciousness as you interact with actual human beings not not ciphers on the screen if they expressed an opinion and then you attack this actual human beings what what's the quality of your life on that level what is most likely happening right now we need to be aware of that it is true that though there is an increase in the collective at the present time of what we might call dysfunction or disorder or even chaos disruption we are entering or we have already entered collectively a time period of collective disorder or disruption or chaos there are time periods that they fluctuate there's always there it's true that the media the media actually is part of it they don't just report it they they be they amplify the disruption and the chaos unfortunately i'm not blaming anybody there some people say there's there's all some evil plan behind it all maybe there is who knows some conspiracy theories maybe one out of 10 conspiracy theories but actually be true but we don't even need to go there the the fact is that the mainstream media is part of part of the the disorder that's that is increasing disorder in this world and there my feeling is there's more to come so be spiritually prepared very important be spiritually prepared so that you do not become part of the disorder that's happening and increasingly i believe going to happen even more in this world we are moving the world always moves between order and chaos there are two polarities you should always strive for order that's important in your life in the world but realize the world for its evolutionary progress also needs chaos periods of chaos and disorder and out of chaos and disorder a new order develops and so there's a gradual evolution of consciousness when there is disorder there is a regressive movement and which means most people become relatively more unconscious and in the present time anybody who is not awakening even to some extent spiritually will be drawn into deeper unconsciousness because they become part of the collective movement towards disorder or chaos when structures dissolve and that is a challenge for humans now especially for you everybody i'm talking to and many others of course it is your challenge to stay conscious while this is happening so that you do not become contaminated by the collective negativity and unconsciousness it doesn't mean that you necessarily need to completely withdraw from the world you can still attempt as to the best of your abilities to create a better world if you have whatever your sphere of influence may be see if you can bring in more consciousness into whatever you do whoever you are in contact with be a bringer of consciousness you bring consciousness into an unconscious world without creating some mental conceptual image i am the bringer of consciousness then you're lost in ego again so but be prepared for increasing challenges in the collective do not be drawn into reactivity and do not be hypnotized by these events when you watch what's happening in the media and so on stay present what you're watching is an evolutionary story humanity is displaying probably entering a regressive period as they sometimes happen before there's a further awakening of consciousness we perhaps i'm not for sure but there's a good chance we're entering a regressive period which is perfectly fine it's what you're watching is the evolutionary growth of the human species and so they are manifesting whatever behavior corresponds to the particular stage in the evolution of

humanity and the evolution is towards more consciousness that's that's for sure so if you discover within yourself that a lot of the time you are in a state of lack of insufficiency of not enough and you feel that the answer to the remedy is to be active in this world and achieve and do as much as possible then you'll probably find that ultimately that is not the answer to your state of lack in order to transcend to go beyond your state of lack of neediness of not enough spiritual practice and spiritual realization is necessary focus on the realization of being it's only there that you can go beyond that state of lack which is ego go within and discover who or what you are beyond the person so here we have then fundamental at the most fundamental level abundance is being in touch with a source of life within yourself and recognizing it as the essence of who you are of course so the secret of life is to to be in touch with that within yourself and from that we could say state of connectedness with being look out onto the world and the first thing you see is abundance all around you because you're surrounded by millions of different life forms everywhere unfolding continuously unbelievable profusion of life everywhere whether you're out in the country natural world or whether you're in new york city or any city walking along fifth avenue and there too profusion of manifestations of life you don't even need to differentiate between natural you can actually enjoy all manifestations of life from the tree to the store display at tiffany's if you want it's just life you don't necessarily need to you don't at that stage you don't need to have anything because you're already enjoying all that and that is a wonderful feeling of abundance already but you have to be in the background there needs to be the connectedness so there is a certain powerful field of stillness as you walk around fifth avenue looking at everything you need to have a strong a stronger connection on fifth avenue than you need in the middle of the forest but it's not that you can't be then that place on fifth avenue you can so if you're walking out in the middle of a big city of course you get all kinds of your attention is pulled this way and that and the staying rooted in that field so that you're not dependent on your environment to feel peaceful if you're dependent on your environment to feel peaceful and oh oh i can't be peaceful here i need to go out somewhere else yes i i'm often mentioned of course that nature is helpful it is wonderful to go out to nature but if you are dependent on nature to become still and peaceful then your life becomes restricted and there is a lack of depth still you're dependent on a certain environment fine you can nature is you love nature that's beautiful you love being in nature it's wonderful but you are then dependent on that and you cannot take that state of aliveness into the city so it requires greater depth and intensity aliveness so that you can enjoy the aliveness everywhere wherever you are in all manifestations of life see them as temporary play the temporary play of forms because that's what it is there's nothing permanent here nothing permanent if you take a movie picture of fifth avenue let's just stay with fifth avenue it's that stands for all cities in all streets if you took a movie camera to fifth avenue and film all the people running around the street and then a few years later let's say 50 years you watch the film then most of the people running around fifth avenue will have disappeared already not only from fifth avenue but from the planet so you watch ultimately insubstantial life forms going about their

business or their play they call it business but it is play and to them it's serious but it's not it's the play of life includes wall street if you know it's play it's fine but you can only know it's play through being connected to that which is deeper than the forms in yourself then you recognize the forms as the play of form but if you are not connected with the depths of being in yourself you don't recognize the movement of form as the play of forms because to you then that's all there is and then there comes a neediness i need these forms to make me happy and there comes a concern and seriousness about forms because that's all you seem to have so you get unduly anxious about the forms of life and everything is very serious so most people in big cities are serious going about their business and there's fear underlying the seriousness they're serious because they are ultimately in a state of concealed to themselves fear and they're trying to get somewhere they never get there but they always on the way somewhere very important to get this done they never get it done because they do this and there's something else lack of that's not abundance there can be no true feeling of abundance if you don't recognize the playful nature of the world if you are dependent for your sense of fullness on the forms there's no abundance you're just seeking more forms to fill your life up with so here we have then fundamental at the most fundamental level abundance is being in touch with the source of life within yourself and recognizing it as the essence of who you are of course and then look around and experience the sensory world and then you can participate in the play without completely losing yourself in it and enjoy the play of form and then you experience as you do that you experience another level of abundance that is the abundance of experiences of experiencing life in various ways through where you go what you do relationships sensory experience even and even there you don't get lost in it you can even enjoy food tastes good without the addictive enjoyment that is very different that goes i need more of this and then there's come you want to you need to take it in to more more more more drink another one sex need more and it draws you out of yes you where's the next the next sex object and it of course it draws you out of out there you can enjoy sensory experience without becoming addicted to sensory experience and that is to being able to enjoy sensory experience and whatever you do it's also abundance it's the part of the fullness of life and then it's possible that also things come into your life and then you can enjoy things also for what they are without getting worked up about owning them or fear of loss enjoy something beautiful why not but not obsessively accumulating one thing after another pointlessly but to to honor the world of things also is part of being here so as things come to you so you're not really you don't need to seek abundance for the sake of abundance you have to go to the place of abundance from there different levels of abundance manifest in your life they may include the outermost level things coming to you how can we measure our spiritual progress well one thing i mentioned earlier when we gave the example of arriving here and being told that no we have no reservation for you similar such situations are interesting situations that can reflect back to you what your level of consciousness is how you react or respond in such a situation and life is full of situations like that when something happens and you are you're not being honored or somebody hasn't respected

you or is not giving you enough attention and something goes drastically wrong and how what what does that do to you and how do you how does it affect you that you can through self-observation you can often sometimes the observation can call me can only come in retrospectively sometimes in the moment you get so taken over by some reaction that you don't even know what's going on you're just on automatic that's the ego having taken over and sometimes after it has subsided you look back on the situation and you observe your reaction say hmm what if even better if somebody could have videoed you that would be extremely helpful if you could arrange with a person close to you to pick up the iphone and and put it on the on on video and film you when you're being unconscious and then when you're more conscious ask you are you ready to look at yourself but for the deepest answer to how can we measure our progress on the spiritual path I would like to refer you to the answer given by Bhagwan Sri Ramana Maharshi when he was asked the same question sometime in the 1950s how can we measure progress our progress on the spiritual path and his answer and that is the answer at the deepest level is the degree of absence of thinking is the measure for progress on the spiritual path that's clear enough if that's too complicated an answer I can probably simplify it it's how little you think how little you think shows you how far you are progressing or progressed on the spiritual path or how much you think shows you how little progress you have made that's a little drastic perhaps but unfortunately it's true so it's just that's so simple isn't it now again many of you are already able to step out of thinking and the the thoughtless state which is presence which is awareness awareness arises in your life already here and there spontaneously when you look at something new there's a moment of before you call it anything a new person you meet a new person for the first five seconds the mind hasn't had time to formulate an opinion about that person there's a moment of spaciousness that sometimes in that moment when people can an intuitive perception of the other person in the first moment but then the mind comes in and very often what the mind says is just an expression of its conditioning and very often it's not the other person you're saying something about yourself rather than the other person you're projecting in other words so measure for progress on this road path in other words is the degree of stillness in your life your inner space in daily life not how long you can sit in meditation but more importantly the stillness in everyday life can your life be interspersed with stillness so that you no longer have the density of the mind and the emotions but something else shining through the density the light that is who you truly are shines through the density that's spiritual that's the spiritual dimension as i mentioned before at some point there was a time when i woke up one morning and i felt at peace after being a tortured individual and a strange thing at night i woke up the next morning completely at peace what's going on and i didn't have an answer why it took me about two years to realize why i was at peace and to realize that i had to actually i wasn't a kind of spiritual search i didn't know exactly what i was searching for i went to see monks and all kinds of strange teachers and teachings i just wanted to check them all out until one monk said to me that uh zen monk said well zen is all about not thinking oh and i realized i was at peace because on

that day the first morning i wasn't thinking that much anymore but i didn't know i wasn't thinking it much i experienced the state of not thinking as peace so i hadn't been able to interpret it as that was not thinking so you experience no no thought as simply a very peaceful energy arising but it could only arise because the density of the mind wasn't there anymore there was some thinking of course but not the not the continuous density very much less thinking how much less i don't know a lot less much more than 50 more much more 80 probably so that's a spontaneous thing why that happened who knows and later the understanding of it came two years later and then gradually the teaching over the years developed now people asked me well to you it just happened what are you expecting us to do about it it's not happening to us spontaneously but i know that from enormous amount of feedback i get from people that the teaching actually works for many many people it their life gets renewed because the old mind patterns are subsiding and the new consciousness is arising so although it may not happen in one moment that's fairly rare it is for most of you or all of you it is a the process i call it the awakening process when presence awakens it's a new birth you are newborn if the so many words have been misused so much that i don't want to use them anymore don't say newborn fear dissolves when you start doing what you fear instead of thinking about it as long as it doesn't kill you i have the decade this is both gone actually bits i have the decade-long experience that fear arises when i talk or should talk in front of many people in similar situations i cannot deprogram myself to accept this and speak what can i do the easiest thing is to sit in front of a group of people and talk about what you feel at this moment so you would say as i sit here my hands are wet come i can feel trembling there's a panic i can i'm sweating because i'm talking to you and the more you talk about what's actually there the more quickly you actually transcend it and you connect with people so the simple truth i'm so nervous okay it's okay to be nervous you begin to accept the way things are this is what it's not that i should i should be not just speak from your heart completely honest and open and then you connect with people and after a few minutes if you have something to say it'll come out of you if you have nothing to say then you better have a script to read i remember when i had my i was very much ego trapped in my 20s even talking in a room where there are four or five people discussing something i found it difficult it was to me almost like public speaking so i should i say something and often i didn't fear dissolves when you start doing what you fear instead of thinking about it as long as it doesn't kill you often the doing is the answer rather than the thinking about do and then see me i had a friend who came to see me regularly well somebody would come for spiritual advice and so one day he met a woman on the internet and then every week he came he told me the relationship was getting deeper and deeper and i said what relationship well he said well we are talking to each other on the and then beginning to talk even on the phone after a while it's not really i'm falling in love with this woman and i think about her all the time and i said you know you're not thinking about this woman you're thinking about her there's a mental image in your head of who that woman is so when and then he said yes but i'm married should i see her it's all i said go in you must meet her i'm not even talking to you about it

anymore i said go and meet her and he did and that was the end of the relationship it ended after one minute and then i stopped seeing people individually all problems are really this perhaps a more obvious kind of mind-created problem but all problems are actually created by unconscious thinking all problems when that goes and you step out of compulsive unconscious thinking all you're left with is whatever is right now the situation that you either take action or you refrain from taking action some situations you need to take action other situations there's nothing i can do like right now so it's either one or the other neither is a problem action or refraining from action there's no problem if it's an emergency obviously it's action that's required others where action is possible action happens and if it's not nothing nothing i can do surrender accept let go be just present and even if it seems unacceptable then you have to go even deeper because some situations seem unacceptable they are just if you accept the unacceptable you go very deep unacceptable meaning the death of a loved one your own approaching death the loss of your precious car unacceptable then you need to go very really deep because that's that takes you into awakening and often doing isn't possible anymore when death approaches to still think in terms of doing is absurd as they still do in hospitals where they they give you potent drugs just so that you can live another two or three months and suffer or even six months or a year because death is unacceptable to the western mind still to a large extent and it believes you do until the very end you have to do something but they yes doing is fine but there comes a time when doing needs to be relinquished and that's beautiful and that's where real realization happens i envisage whether it will come through this form or through some of the forms here places where people learn how to die beautifully how they where they learn about old age so that it's not just something that where people are put away and just waiting for the unacceptable to happen while they watch television but true places of spirituality where they use the great opportunity that's there in old age as the body begins to dissolve a great opportunity for awakening the flowering of life it could be parents are often hypocritical they demand certain things from their children but they themselves don't do it so the state of consciousness that you are predominantly in at home is the main teaching and there's just been a book published on educate on parenting by susan stifelman and the title is uh parenting with presence okay that may be helpful i believe it's a good book and i wrote the foreword for it um there may be uh in a year or two another book on on parenting but this may already help you i recommend it um i wrote i write a little bit about parenting in the in the new earth but one could say much more that many volumes could be written about it i am perhaps not the most qualified person because i've never been a parent but uh but we talked about that i mean

[Speaker 4] (2:23:54 - 2:24:03)

we talk about this being challenged every day and staying in the presence and so on it is i think it

[Speaker 2] (2:24:03 - 2:24:14)

is a very much challenging with children yes huge challenge yeah but a great opportunity to

[Speaker 1] (2:24:14 - 2:32:20)

to you um presence the main often there have been quite a few questions here also on the class written questions about um bringing up children consciously and what is the how what do what's the main main thing to do to bring up children consciously what what do we do the main thing is your own state of consciousness in the at home that's always your main teaching uh there's often a discrepancy between what parents teach their children verbally and how they behave at home and their state of consciousness and the children know that they can feel that that basically parents are often hypocritical they demand certain things from their children but they themselves don't do it so the state of consciousness that you are predominantly in at home is the main teaching so to be able to i mentioned in a new earth to be able to for example give your fullest attention to your child when you're listening to the child and not always equate attention with some kind of thing that they either should be doing or should not be doing that's how many parents relate to their children whenever they give attention they say don't do this or you should do should be doing that the entire home environment seems to consist of either stopping to do something or doing something that they are not doing and that's the only way attention flows out to the child so and that is not there's a lack of presence a lack of the acknowledgement of the being of the child there's the entire household is dominated by doing and in the doing which includes the mental doing and and the physical doing in the doing the being is completely neglected it's never acknowledged the the presence of the child is never fully acknowledged the child is not seen really by the parent and deep down the child can feel can sense that something essential is missing and that what arises then in the child is a a discomfort a sense of lack and even some anger sometimes towards the parent which often comes out when they reach teenage years for some inexplicable seemingly inexplicable reason the teenager becomes angry with the parent and they say what happened to this house can you turn into this monster and it is often the case now don't blame yourself but it's it's often the case that the for years the child's being felt unacknowledged and basically that means the child felt not seen by the parent and then that is almost to be deprived to be deprived of real lovingness which is attention and not the conditional love that is usually attached to the doing or the not doing and and that is missing and that's a vital thing that really brings about a lot of conflict between the child and the parent especially as they grow go into their teenage years can you be total can you be fully yourself can you be in your essence as much as possible when you relate to the child that includes periods when you're not talking about what he or she should be doing or should not be doing but just giving your fullest attention you look or you listen to what they have to say or you look or you're asking questions and then you listen and sometimes it may just

be wordless attention too for brief moments just just looking and that is all that changes that brings in a different a different energy field into the home environment and that's the main teaching everything else is secondary what you say to the child and so on is all secondary although there are things you can say that are helpful too i have spoken a few times about the pain body in children when it begins to manifest uh to bring some attention to the child's pain body after it's happened some children have temper tantrums or go sulking and with withdraw and these are so children already experience pain body attacks some more acutely than others and so i recommend that after it has subsided perhaps the next day or a few hours later you say what did you feel when that what what was that that came up when you started screaming what did it feel like even perhaps in ask a child to draw a picture of what this thing is that it's the anger it felt he's 14 what he's 14 14 yes i asked him to draw it this is mostly for younger children and because painting a picture of it creates some awareness and creates some space around it and and then the next time it comes up you can just it you it will you won't be able to stop it but you can say oh that is again isn't it listen so you're not trying to stop the pain body you're trying to help the child to become aware of it and you can start with that already when they're four years old five years old um so that's that is very helpful it's an amazing talent bringing up children and every parent makes mistakes that's inevitable but at least your son is lucky to have you because you are endeavoring to bring him up consciously and so and that's a new thing that's coming into there are more humans now who are actually been they may not always succeed but they are becoming conscious parents and that is a wonderful thing in my generation when i was a child conscious parent was unheard of nobody had conscious parents well at least nobody i knew all the parents were very unconscious totally dominated by ego they just the same upbringing that they experienced they inflicted on their children there was no no no change whatsoever and so conscious parent is something relatively recent although there may have been exceptions of course in the past too they're always exceptions i just never met them and certainly my parents were not conscious they were just as unconscious as everybody else trapped in their own ego and there was constant dysfunction and uh it was not a pleasant environment and there's nobody to blame that's that was the way they brought me up corresponded to their state of consciousness that's all so thank you that and then i will start

[Speaker 12] (2:32:21 - 2:32:23)

to stand on one leg

[Speaker 1] (2:32:23 - 2:38:03)

that may help too but it started when i was writing the a new earth and then i couldn't focus on anything else while i was writing and then things started to accumulate and now i still get all these manuscripts and books sent and some of them are taking up more and more space at my place so let's not go there well the anxiety about not taking

care of the future is of course losing the present moment that's the real loss of the present moment but taking care of the future by doing some planning constructive planning even constructive thinking not useless thinking and worrying and uh toxic thinking in the middle of the night things what i should be doing or haven't done or if i do it might go wrong not that kind of totally useless thinking which is losing the present moment then there is the applied thinking which is oh i need to work out what i'm going to do whatever schedule for the next thing i'm going to do a plan for the next year when i will have to do this or that whatever and you may find that if you do focused thinking and apply it to whatever it is that you need to work out is not losing the present moment it's only useless thinking about the present moment that mentally projects you away from now and doesn't get you anywhere it detracts from the quality of life and detracts from your sense of aliveness so planning you can do in the present moment let's say i plan where am i going to go i'm going on a tour somewhere i was on a europe tour last late last year and that had to be planned almost a year in advance so already at the beginning of last year and before then we were already talking about the europe tour and so what then you look at the calendar cities geography of places where they connect all the other factors that you need to look at you're not really losing the present moment because you're not projecting yourself mentally over there and imagining how it's going to go or imagining that when you finally give that talk in london then you're really going to feel really fulfilled or projecting yourself to that talk in london when nobody's going to like what you're going to say and half the audience are going to leave am i going to be inspired when i reach london and to give a talk it's just losing the present these this kind of thinking happens it pretends to be useful and constructive but it's not at all and it's not taking responsibility for anything but applied thinking and for applied thinking it's good to give yourself a time limit a space you sit down for an hour or you talk to people and say what do we need to do here to in order to do this that that that you're not losing the present moment some people often this is not uncommon for people to have this question thinking that i must never think about the future but when you apply that you're not really thinking about the future you're doing the planning is now there's just you're not projecting yourself away from the present moment so it's applied and constructive thinking the same with the past sometimes you need to think about something that happened in the past you need your memory for certain things and then you need to kind of go back there in your mind and then you talk about well but there's a reason why you bring it into the present because you need that kind of memory or the knowledge you perhaps you learned something there at the past europe tour those and those things went very wrong the people had to line up for an hour and i was an hour late starting it was disorganized what did we do wrong that's fine you can you have to go there but but if you in the middle of the day you think you think how dreadful that was or you're blaming yourself or others about what went wrong then you lose yourself in the past so you can use past and future without losing yourself in them and then really you remain present even while you refer back to the past or while you make plans for the future

[Speaker 9] (2:38:04 - 2:38:11)

so that's really how it works is there a way that you can if you're happy you can trust the universe

[Speaker 1] (2:38:11 - 2:44:23)

that you're on the right path oh yes well that's that is an underlying thing is of course the sense of connectedness with the deeper level the deeper levels of your being the awareness the presence the stillness whatever you want to call it and that gives you a certain rootedness you're rooted in being and then what happens on the the outcome of things that you do is no longer the the factor that determines your state of consciousness so when you when things go wrong sometimes they do you're not devastated you don't oh you don't feel you're going to die because it went wrong and you did you didn't get there you tried so hard in the end it didn't work and it's it's so awful you beat yourself up mentally no that's a very dysfunctional and stuff creates a lot of suffering so you are less dependent on the you you welcome a good outcome of course but you're not dependent on a good outcome for feeling peaceful and really complete in yourself and that sense of completeness in yourself because there are two levels as you as you know that one could say the two dimensions you are the person but you are also the vast consciousness so there's the ripple there's the ocean the person lives in time and there's a development the person learns things gets better at certain things and so on that at the deepest level there is already that sense of completion you don't need to become anything when you are connected with the depths of who you are in that depth you don't need to become you are already complete on the level of the person you're never really complete and there are always things that are could be called imperfections not once when you're connected not huge things that create a lot of dysfunction in your life and make your life and other people's lives unhappy not that kind of thing but there are things that are certain personal things that are limitations on you can't be i have my place at the moment is untidy i'm not perfect there so there was a time when my place was tidy so i'm not an untidy person continuously but it started when i was writing the a new earth and then i couldn't focus on anything else while i was writing and then things started to accumulate and now i still get all these manuscripts and books sent and some of them are taking up more and more space at my place so let's not go there that's an imperfection on my part if somebody had an idea of somebody who's fully awake he must live in certain way and then he comes says how can you this is not tidy how do you live occasionally i have a cup of coffee one a day and occasionally people see me having a cup of coffee somewhere and say why do you need coffee you've written you've written all these spiritual books and now you still need coffee i don't know if i need it i just enjoy a cup of coffee and i drink a glass of wine or two occasionally with dinner you drink alcohol well if my state of conscience is so fragile that a glass of wine would upset it then what this can't be worth very much so the the addictiveness does not come in because the addictiveness would be something else if i

were addicted to coffee and couldn't live without six cups of coffee a day some or if i were addicted to alcohol and couldn't know wouldn't know when to stop drinking there would be something else but you can enjoy things but people might interpret it as an imperfection and perhaps it is but become allow yourself to have your imperfections as long as they don't create suffering for others or yourself become comfortable with things where you are not perfect some people are habitually it's not a nice thing it's not my problem but they're habitually late some people just have that it's almost in their genes i had a filipino friend and i recently met her again after many years in london at university in cambridge and it must be in the filipino genes to be late all the time and apparently when i talked to her she said yes everybody's late nobody expects people to be on time and so and that maybe she may not be able to get rid of that because it's in her genes it says be late or you don't need to be on time or that and that's fine that's how they live it's not a problem in the philippines it might become a problem in the west but not to them to other people who might say there's something wrong with you no if some things can change and that's good and as consciousness awakens in you more the awareness arises it does tend to dissolve those patterns as i said that really f up your life

[Speaker 9] (2:44:25 - 2:44:27)

okay thank you

[Speaker 1] (2:44:55 - 2:57:22)

and that change in consciousness must there's only one place where it can happen and that's in you and that implies that you practice self-observation that is an essential part of the change in consciousness to practice self-observation is implies that there is enough presence or awareness in you from where you can self-observe and in almost all of you there is maybe not all the time but there is there is enough to have brought you here and that is quite a bit so is there enough presence in you so that you can self-observe your own motivations your own thought structures what are the habitual thoughts that i think so that you are not drawn continuously into every thought that comes and follow it where it wants to take you one little thought comes in about your life oh and then another thought and you follow it oh oh no and then before you know it your more thoughts come and then other conflicting thoughts and no no that's not how it is yes it is no no i can't take anymore and you believe in that thought too that you can't take anymore so the ability to to observe non-judgmentally what goes on inside you there is awareness there needs to be awareness so that is self knowledge self-knowledge means it's really not so much on knowing on a conceptual level what happened to you in the past and trying to understand the past the story of me i need to investigate the story of me there is a place for that in certain cases you may want to understand what happened how why you acted or your what your parents did to you and come to an understanding your limited understanding of that but ultimately the arising of the new consciousness is not is not a better conceptual understanding of anything it's not a

better conceptual understanding of who you are it goes beyond any concept awareness in itself does not necessarily imply immediately that you understand more about yourself in fact as you become more aware in yourself you the need to understand my life and work it out diminishes and so the compulsion to also to understand every other human being that you meet immediately formulate certain judgments and conclusions about that other human being and the urge to immediately form judgment inclusion about any situation that you encounter and then this is how it is and then you have a narrative that develops in the mind and then you're telling yourself the narrative about who you are who they are and how it all is you've all met people like that and once you were like that yourself and just perhaps still occasionally that that comes back and you go it's good to act it out a bit because then you can recognize it that's not presence that's absence it's it's it's called absence the opposite of presence of course is absence that means you are not there you are not there all that's there pretending to be you is the egoic mind the conceptual mind and the mind says it's me and my life so what arises then is the awareness which means since as it arises it seems at first that you know less than before because you no longer compulsively immediately interpret everything conceptually every human being you encounter and your own life you don't compulsively that compulsion the compulsion to judge continuously isn't there and so it seems at first and the the egoic mind will may come in and say oh wait a minute you don't know what's going on anymore if you don't if you don't judge it you don't you who knows who that person is if you don't judge it he he could be your enemy he could be or to deceive you you better be careful you need to judge but then no you don't and so I understood when I was reading Plato the Plato's works as you may know I don't know how many people these days read Plato but uh he reports in his works the what Socrates taught how faithfully he recorded what Socrates taught we don't know but one certain things seem to be because Socrates never wrote anything certain things however seem genuine and there's especially one statement that Socrates made that's often repeated by Plato and that is this when somebody went to the oracle at Delphi in ancient Greece and the oracle said who is the wisest man on the planet or in the world the oracle said Socrates is the wisest okay they heard this then they they went to Athens where Socrates was and that oh oh listen the uh the um oracle at Delphi said you are the wisest all men why is that and Socrates said I am the wisest because I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing on another occasion he said uh I'm wise because I know that I know nothing and then people later they read it over the centuries and most people interpret it as kind of a feigned modesty and they say of course he knows what does it he knows a lot but he just says it it's it's a feigned modesty it's a in other words it's ego but that's not how it is it describes a state of consciousness out of which his enormously creative teaching his deep insights arose it is it describes the very foundation of the state of of what of what ultimately is the state of spacious awareness or presence and that state is one of actually cessation of mind activity without loss of consciousness so every of the so-called dialogues of Socrates and the way it's reported by Plato is not absolutely correct because I know exactly maybe I was

there I don't know but I know how Socrates always started the he started the his blood his Socratic dialogues with just not knowing and then he begins to ask questions and through questions the knowing gradually arises he does not start with already accumulated knowledge so it starts from the he was comfortable with the state of not knowing in other words he was rooted in the state of pure awareness pure awareness in your pure awareness conceptually of course you don't know anything when when your mind stops for example now if I I stop speaking now and use and you can you're still here too we can do it together I stopped speaking for a few seconds and as I stopped speaking do you need to fill that space between me stopping to speak and starting to speak again do you need to fill that space with thought or are you able to simply be present in that space in other words are you able to just simply be don't suppress thought it doesn't work you can't you can't hold your breath and say I must not think that might work but but then thinking will come even up up even more strongly once you start breathing again so it's not that you cannot you can't hold down thought it's a pure shift into a more alert state of consciousness alert alert means okay now acting out alertness now I'm not just acting it out when I look at you in this weird way I'm not thinking and when you look at me looking at you in this weird way you also could experiment with that and see whether as I stop speaking now for 10 seconds you can just be in that space of pure awareness where you take in sense perceptions against the background of awareness and you might notice that in that space you don't know anything you don't even know your name because your name is a thought you don't know anything in that space and yet you are there conscious present without any movement in the mind

[Speaker 3] (2:57:41 - 2:57:51)

we have Celia joining us from Portugal. Celia welcome and please go ahead and share your question with Eckhart.

[Speaker 9] (2:57:52 - 2:58:01)

Hello thank you for having me it's an honor Eckhart you have shined such a light on my path thank you so much.

[Speaker 1] (2:58:02 - 2:58:03)

Thank you thank you very much

[Speaker 9] (2:58:04 - 2:58:49)

uh so my question is if I'm honest what I really want to manifest is a of a spiritual nature and I find this is the same for many on this path but these spiritual intentions are not so easy to simulate in terms of feeling like we have already received or to visualize can you address how manifestation can be applied to spiritual yearnings or is manifestation only

to be applied to practical purposes while we work on our spiritual practice?

[Speaker 1] (2:58:50 - 3:31:38)

Thank you thank you good question one important thing to be aware of is that you don't make the mistake of regarding spiritual realization or being enlightened or being egoless or being in permanent conscious connectedness with source whatever you want to call it not to regard that as a state to be achieved it's very easy to fall into that error of wanting to become fully awakened for example and then you might say this is part of the question uh is there something I can do perhaps to manifest this awakened version of myself so if you have this intention or this image in your mind you want to arrive at a fully awakened state whatever else you want to call it that will become a great obstacle because spiritual awakening or the ego state or whatever it is cannot be achieved in the future you would be creating an image that you then pursue wanting to reach or achieve and you won't achieve it as long as you have an image of yourself that you want to achieve you're striving towards that in other words you make it into a goal like everything else things that you want to achieve in this world but the one thing that you will not achieve by making it into a goal is this state of awakening or being fully yourself is another way of putting it being realizing the essence of who you are so you would be striving away from the only place where it is accessible to you and that's in the vertical dimension of the present moment so for everything else manifestation practices can be helpful but not for realizing who you are because there's no you don't achieve anything you don't attain anything by spiritual awakening that's it's not an achievement it's not an attainment it's a realization that means it's already here so if you look to the future for it you miss the fact that it's already here and you don't realize that that's the place where you haven't been looking because there is if you're looking to the future and this is why i'm saying it becomes a great obstacle if you look to the future for enlightenment fulfillment whatever it may be that becomes the obstacle and you won't get your phone you won't find it and you will be striving even you might be engaged in arduous spiritual practices very determined to awaken but you have in your mind a future goal that you want to achieve without you might not call it that but underlying it underlying your practice is this assumption of arriving at a at a future goal and that is because is the greatest obstacle to that realization because what is future future is basically inseparable from thought because the future exists only in your mind as a thought form if any i'll be very happy to listen to anybody who wants to prove me wrong because then he would probably would come to me and say here's a future i have discovered it so far nobody has come to me and said here's the future you are wrong the future is more than just a thought form and i don't think anybody will come so now that means if you're looking to the future you have a thought form that you are pursuing of yourself as the fully awakened one or whatever term you use so you are pursuing a thought form in the future which the inseparable future and thought and then you reach the end of this incarnation and you become frustrated because you haven't found it why not because

the thought form or the future the future self prevented you from discovering what's already here discovering who or what you already are so it's a complete it's a reversal of normal practice is yes you need time for everything in this world in order to do this any action unfolds in time for anything you pursue you want to acquire something achieve something become good at something all these things require time yes but the one thing that does not only not require time but the one thing to which time is the obstacle is that self-realization for everything else you need time and that's fine but to find yourself you don't need time that is a an amazing realization the buddha also had to learn that he didn't know that when he started off when the buddha started off he realized the unsatisfactory nature of normal human existence he saw there's so much suffering and then you die so he saw the unsatisfactory and said there must be a transcendent dimension there must be something beyond so for many years he practiced seeking to find enlightenment transcendence and he practiced the most arduous disciplines with great teachers he almost killed himself with the physical spiritual practice and after several years of spiritual practice he still hadn't wasn't any further to his goal of enlightenment and then he said well i've had enough of that that by the way is not a literal literal quote from the scriptures this is my free translation he said i've had enough and he stopped his spiritual practice and he sat under a tree and then that was the big moment he sat under a tree and suddenly the realization happened enlightenment what does that mean all doing came to a stop he realized through the doing he cannot achieve being being needs to be discovered but not achieved so no matter what he did he didn't achieve it because you cannot achieve it you cannot achieve enlightenment you can discover it it's already here and when he sat under the tree all doing came to a stop all future came to a halt there was no more future all seeking stopped seeking for an enlightened version of myself basically that stopped and and then it happened the the realization came to him and that was the moment of enlightenment so there's a deep lesson in that now of course some people say that the buddha's search through spiritual practice was unnecessary you could say that if he had realized before he started his arduous spiritual practice if he had realized that that was unnecessary not only unnecessary that it was ultimately misleading then he could have sat under the tree immediately okay that's an interesting uh perspective on it but one could also say that he needed to go through that in order to realize the futility of it um and then give up the the surrender only happened as a result of the being frustrated with spiritual practice so who knows whether one could say it wasn't necessary at all or he had to go through it i have a way of putting this and that is the question is my answer to the question do you need time for spiritual realization do you need time to wake up spiritually and my answer is you need time until you realize that you don't need time so you come to a point of but the vertical dimension suddenly opens up so one cannot really start some spiritual teachers do that they tell people there's nothing you can do there's nothing you need to do about waking up you either wake up or not or discover who you are very often it's not very helpful uh it doesn't leave people and so i i think the the doing it's helpful to to do to want to achieve this or that you every human being needs to arrive at a point where

the doing is realized as ultimately not leading to the ultimate goal or realization but you may have to become frustrated several times quite a few times before you realize that no amount of doing will ultimately lead to the realization of who you are in fact the doing is is the obstacle but sometimes you need to go through that state of doing to fully realize that so the to project a to pursue a state that you want to achieve um is not to be encouraged but to realize that there's nothing to achieve and who you are in your essence is already complete full perfect in your essence there's nothing that you could add to who you are you're already one with god to use that term one with source the source of all life you're already one with that on the level of manifestation there are many things that where you could improve your life as this manifested being that you are temporarily you can learn new things explore new things achieve get obtain and then of course it leaves you again nothing stays with you in the world of manifestation it comes and then it goes so there's nothing wrong with doing and achieving and obtaining but for realization it's not helpful it's a hindrance so we come to the point of where doing and being are reconciled in yourself to reconcile in yourself the dimension of being with the dimension of doing so if you discover within yourself that a lot of the time you are in a state of lack of insufficiency of not enough and you feel that the answer to the remedy is to be active in this world and achieve and do as much as possible then you'll probably find that ultimately that is not the answer to your state of lack in order to transcend to go beyond your state of lack of neediness of not enough spiritual practice and spiritual realization is necessary focus on the realization of being it's only there that you can go beyond that state of lack which is ego go within and discover who or what you are beyond the person it can be a more playful thing where you simply look around and acknowledge the presence of what's around you and feel your own presence in the background it's not a serious business now i have to practice presence no just don't even call it anything just be at ease in the present moment there's only this moment don't try to be present just be at ease in the now and then look around and sense and it's fine and then thoughts come don't have to stay there no and then thoughts come and thoughts go around your mind for a few minutes and then again you take some steps into your presence again walking from here to there making a cup of tea looking out of the window and then thoughts come again so you intersperse your the day or your life with presence and also when you're traveling either no matter when you go to work wherever you go whether you go whether you walk or drive or use a bicycle or use a train or use a bus it's a wonderful opportunity for just go within and be be present as you travel whenever you're waiting just be it's not there's no effort involved at all the effort is not being present is more effortful that's where all effort arises you don't use willpower to be present just an arising alertness don't demand that it should be there for long periods of time that's frustrating and then you say oh it's gone i can't do it anyway screw it i'm i'm quoting quoting you and that's the mind talking not the presence talking it's the mind saying it's useless to be present it's too hard work i can't do it i can't stay there anyway these are thoughts that arise in your mind and you believe them but they are thoughts that are designed to take you out of presence and to prevent you from returning to

presence they're not the truth they are they are created by your mind to take you out of presence that's all so the mistake you made is you believed in those thoughts so even the thoughts through it is not the true thought as Byron Katie would say how do you know that's true it's not a true thought it's a thought that's there to take you out of presence and to make sure that you don't go back to it and then another thought comes and says what's the point it's not working for me maybe it's working for others but it's not working for me all kinds of you may be familiar with that kinds of self-talk in the head be very aware of what kind of self-talk happens in your head very interesting because you can learn so much about your the conditioning of your mind by listening to the way in which you talk to yourself and everybody talks to themselves and some people use the first person singular and talk as I and many people use this use the you they talk to themselves addressing themselves as you you are useless aren't you why can other people do it but you can't who is talking to whom so you're you're creating a split in your mind and one part of your mind talks the other part of your mind and calls it you and it's amazing so recognize that the self-talk rarely speaks the truth it's a form of conditioning that goes on in your mind and it is associated with the ego which does not want to go away it wants to stay in charge stick around it knows what to say to take you out but if you don't believe in every thought that arises especially thoughts concerning presence then you're free the thoughts may still come but you can say oh there goes his thought you don't actually you no longer comment on the thought and this is interesting you you become the from the awareness you can see and recognize the thought as a thought that your mind throws up without calling it anything it's a bit like holding a mirror up to something that arises that's the awareness the mirror doesn't judge what arises because if you criticize the thought that you just had it's just more self-talk and even if you say why are you always having this self-talk you should stop you should by now you should be beyond that self-talk you've been doing spiritual work for years and you still can't get out of your self-talk what's wrong with you more of it so when you did when you become aware of your self-talk don't formulate judgments around the self-talk you get just more of it don't criticize yourself be hold up a mirror to it and from there there's a knowing there in that awareness you know that this is self-talk and you know that it's not true without having to tell yourself through words that this is not true and this is self-talk you just know in this so this is a in the same way that you can know you can look at a you can look at a plant or a flower you know it's a flower but you don't have to tell yourself this is a flower you know it without formulating any words in your mind any concepts you can look at the sky beautiful vast blue you don't have to say to yourself this is a vast blue sky and i'm looking at it you that's that's knowing through concepts and words but there's another kind of knowing does not require words you just know and because you do not limit what you are perceiving through concepts you can actually sense a greater depth in that which you are perceiving whether it's the flower or the sky you can sense a depth in it that goes beyond what you see on the surface of your sense perceptions the depths becomes obscure to you when you look at everything through continental concepts when you say this is a beautiful vast sky you're still limiting yourself your the

true perception does not happen until the words disappear and there's only the awareness and the perception and in that the sky is more than just the sky it's suddenly because every concept reduces it and you think the word sky is the sky you know the painting i think it's by margaret the painting of an apple and he writes underneath this is not an apple of course it isn't it's the painting of an apple in the same way that a word or concept is not it krishna murthy said when you teach a child the name of the bird from then on the child will never see that bird again because the child then begins to substitute the concept for the direct perception which and there's a depth to the direct perception in which the bird is more than a bird there's a depth to the bird and you realize that life form is more than a bird it just appears as a bird and there's what i'm trying to put into words comes from a perception that is beyond words that's why it's so difficult so you see it there's a depth to the flower and the sky and the bird that cannot be there when you look at it through concepts you can feel the aliveness of the bird you can sense its connectedness to the totality you can sense its sacredness you can sense it's it's beautiful you could never realize that through concepts so don't believe in the words that your mind throws up and that take you out of presence that's the main lesson for you here and it's a lesson for everybody because everybody is burdened and some people are plagued and tortured by their self-talk in a way that would be regarded as indefensible cruelty if somebody close to you did it to you all the time on a daily basis what are i don't know what terms they use the legal terms when you get a divorce uh cruelty or inhuman cruelty or whatever that would apply to your mind that you have to live with when you are not aware enough for perhaps not is perhaps not as bad for you it just takes you out of presence but for other many other people the self-talk can be extremely destructive and can make your life miserable absolutely miserable you don't know that's only the self talking that you think that's your life you think your life is miserable not realizing it's your self-talk that makes your life miserable is it a is i don't know whether to laugh or cry at this uh so absolutely vital lesson hold up a mirror the mirror of awareness to your self-talk so that you realize it's no more than self-talk in particular if you've had predominantly negative or even 50 and many people have 80 to 90 negative self-talk then realize this is stuff my mind produces and not not verbally you don't have to realize it verbally you it's the mirror of awareness and you look and you know wow and i've lived with that for so many years and i've survived miraculously even with that dreadful self-talk in the head and because when you no longer identify with it it begins to subside it's only when you only empower it again and again when it takes you over so completely that you identify it becomes you i haven't mentioned being in the body for a while so let's feel it now that you are actually you feel the energy field of your as you sit there and i sit here we feel a certain aliveness pervading the body it's very simple but some attention has to go there otherwise you can't feel anything which means you have to take some attention away from the thinking if you're fully in thought you can't feel your body at all you're not don't feel alive anymore just abstractions so the beautiful thing is it's not only that your body loves being acknowledged and getting your attention it's a very healing thing to do and most importantly it slows down your thinking

considerably if it doesn't even stop it completely because you have to if you have your attention here you can't have it there and this be the embodied state it's quite nice what you're feeling is not ultimately the physical body it's already halfway beyond the physical body chi life energy and i call that it's halfway between form and formlessness it's a bridge chi is the bridge between the the formless dimension and the form so it's wonderful to be to sense that and it can be you can do it anywhere when you're there's enough room you don't need to focus on externals a hundred percent have some attention in the body so we sit here boredom disappears for example when you have attention in the body you're not bored you actually enjoy being feeling alive and that it can serve as an anchor for staying present and that can be one way of looking around at the world without unnecessary mental labeling this clarity of perception and looking at the situations that arise in that clarity of perception and from that clarity of perception you know what you need to do or what needs doing in that situation it's a higher intelligence that you contact via the body a higher intelligence than the acquired knowledge of the human mind and then you know what to do it it acts it tells you you have an inside or spontaneous doing or if there's nothing to do it being is enough it's you can enjoy just being sleepless nights are wonderful opportunity for going into the body oh i can't sleep i wish i could sleep why don't you do something useful go into the body um and then you lie there and feel the the aliveness oh i wish i i hope i won't go to sleep

[Speaker 12] (3:31:38 - 3:31:52)

too soon because it's so nice and before you know it you've gone to sleep perhaps

[Speaker 1] (3:31:54 - 3:51:43)

and then you wake up in the morning perhaps you still feel a lingering sensation there in the body and if you don't as you wake up put your attention into the body first before you start thinking about the day for just a couple of minutes three minutes two minutes it's a good start of the day to feel alive can't be a bad start of the day i'll tell you what a bad start of the day is listening to the news first thing it keeps it's it's a grounding but not a heavy grounding it's a rooted in being are there any thought processes connected with the fear in other words what are the thoughts that your mind is producing while you're feeling the fear well fear anxiety which is a form of fear very common for some people have it many have it in the background continuously and i would say there's some degree of fear even if you're not conscious of it if you're totally identified with the egoic mind you will have fear if only in the background and it may come out in other forms it can come express itself as anger if you look at anger closely you usually find hidden underneath the anger is a state of fear so if there's fear one important thing is to of course you need to direct your attention to it you acknowledge that there's fear the question the important question that arises is are there any thought processes connected with the fear in other words what are the thoughts that your mind is producing while you're feeling the fear is it possible that certain thoughts that you think

frequently or habitually produce the fear is it possible you project yourself into the next moment into the future moment excessively trying to control something that you have no control over what's going to happen to me or project or creating an imaginary imaginary scenario of loss that you might yet you might suffer it's not happening now but it might happen and many things that the thought activity excessive thought activity often creates scenarios of things going wrong that are not happening now may never happen often probably will never happen and even if they did happen the actual situation would actually be easier to face than the imaginary situation in your mind because there's nothing you can do there's no action you can take to remedy an imaginary situation except to stop thinking it but if an actual situation arises you face it and you give it your attention and then you take the action that you need to take but an imaginary situation you're totally at the mercy of it so it only exists in your mind so you need to see whether your mind is creating the fear by thinking fearful thoughts by projecting itself into the future and if if that is the case then you can see oh so i'm creating those because my body cannot tell the difference between an actual event that's happening outside and what my mind is producing so when when i'm thinking thought my life situation is critical if if this is the basically what your thoughts are telling you then your body believes that this is the actual truth that you are being threatened at this very moment if the body doesn't know the difference that the tiger isn't in the room the threatening presence is your thoughts the body reacts in the same way whether there's a threat an actual threat in the room all your thoughts can create the same even palpitations you can be shortness of breath because you're thinking fearful thoughts at night i had that for years awful state it's insane it's a disease but nothing is happening absolutely nothing there's a quiet room nothing it's all happening in the mind so if that's the case see okay then you need to tackle the thoughts because they will cause the fear and how do you tackle thoughts is by using by realizing the futility and the destructive nature of these thoughts and choosing to step out and what do you do to step out first you don't believe your mind that tells you no you can't step out you have to continue thinking no you step out and take a conscious breath or put your attention into the inner energy field of the body a conscious choice to remove attention from thinking and you may have to be really alert to do it if you are immersed in a mind stream it could even be that it's so powerful that you just cannot get out it has such gravitational pull it pulls you but at least you know that this is what's happening so you there's a state where you cannot help yourself yet but at least there is the beginning of a beginning of a disidentification from it when you know that this is what is happening your health your relationships your work or lack of it finances living situation usually those things make up your life my life but i call that your life situation as opposed to life which is only ever now your life situation exists in the mind you have to keep it alive there it's important of course you have to deal with situations as they arise in your life but they only arise in the present moment and when you think about your life situation you can only think about it in the present moment it's important to have these two your life and your life situation and not allow your life situation to completely obscure your life your presence

your sense of aliveness your spaciousness and that's helpful to bring attention to learn to bring attention to your senses the expression we could use is come to your senses those five senses so you become more aware of what surrounds you inhabit the body it's another one that brings you connects you with life takes you out of the conceptualizing mind be here now come to your senses inhabit the body be here now they all one and then you don't carry continuously with you like a heavy burden your life situation of course you address whatever challenges arrive you deal with them as they arise in the present moment occasionally you might have to make do some planning or some strategy occasionally but also that happens in the present moment for the rest of the time don't allow your life situation to completely obscure completely stifle your sense of aliveness your presence in the moment because then you walk around with the burden of a very heavy personality and you don't see what's around you anymore you can't truly relate to other humans because you have the heaviness of your problematic life situation and whose life situation is not problematic it's in the nature of life situations to be problematic of course you arrange your life as best you can your life situation as best you can yes you you may acquire new skills so you can get a better job or or in whatever way you improve or attempt to improve your life situation find a nicer place to live why not that's all fine but the expectation that at some point life should leave you alone and not challenge you anymore and that there's something wrong when life challenges you that's a delusion that itself the unconscious assumption that there's something wrong when life presents so-called problems to you better word is challenges there's an unconscious assumption and an unconscious resentment and negative reaction the moment you're faced with a new challenge because of the underlying assumption that these things these things should not be happening but no matter how carefully you arrange your life situation and no matter how much positive thinking you do which is a nice thing you will still be challenged by life you will still experience the polarities of life you will experience for example that every situation every new situation has its new set of challenges so to cut to sever the link between the emotion that you feel and your thought processes what you do is and this is not pleasant but it's possible you place your attention on the emotion you feel it it's unpleasant but it's not going to kill you a child will probably not be able to do that if it's intense it might have to escape into some through dissociation or whatever possibly but an adult fear it's not going to kill you it might kill you if you allow it to rise into your mind because if you might even commit suicide if you can't stand this anymore but it will not kill you in itself so feel it and then you shine the light of awareness on it and you may have to do that a lot and at first it's not pleasant but it's a burning up of the old emotion and the only way to get rid of it is to accept it as it is right now if you want to get rid of it you can't but that complete acceptance of what is is actually the doorway through it it's a transformation of it and if it's extreme that can become your main meditation in life and that will become your main teacher and that will bring about your transformation there in some people's lives there is one huge disability one huge source of suffering or pain that they it could be a physical disability it could be a situation like being in prison it could be an emotion like

that that you carry inside that does that doesn't need to go doesn't want to go away so one in certain people's lives there is one one major thing that seems to color your entire life and and and make make your effect your entire life and seemingly makes it impossible for you to ever be free or happy or joyful but if that that one thing if you surrender to it allow it to be and make it as a continuous spiritual practice you need nothing else that one thing will transform you if you surrender to it and there will come a point when you are grateful that that you had to go through that because it will have taken you it will be the greatest spiritual teacher so there was i believe if i remember correctly even a picture to us that philosopher always said it's not the situation that makes you unhappy it's the thought to make you unhappy i if i remember correctly he was also crippled he couldn't walk properly and he was a slave until he became freed so it's often humans who have one major disability or some huge huge difficulty in life and that becomes their catalyst for spiritual transformation if they can surrender to it allow it to be acceptance i call it acceptance of the seemingly unacceptable stephen hawking's case for example i don't know to what extent he awakened spiritually but he accepted the unacceptable and so certain miracles happened he survived just nobody would have thought it possible and he put his life became fruitful on one level at least acceptance of the unacceptable is a great source of grace in this world it's just a miracle but it's an arduous it can be an arduous process for especially for this questioner here who is here it may take a while you have to endure it and be with it and surrender to it a lot of the time and that's your meditation you don't need transcendental meditation your pain your fear is enough be with it the strange thing is only by encountering these challenges do we grow in consciousness and generate energy it awakens us eventually now if you overdo physical exercise you put too much strain on the body you could kill the body you could kill yourself and this has happened people who were so obsessed with physical exercise that they overdid it i've read for example whenever it was one or two years ago a man who wrote about the incredible benefits of jogging died of a heart attack while he was jogging he wasn't that old so you can overdo it and then instead of the body getting stronger it dies and you could also say when you look at life and humans life on this planet probably many other planets you would say well it's all very well sometimes it seems to work that through facing challenges and problems we grow we grow out of identification with mind we grow out of the ego we transcend our conditioned state of consciousness and a new consciousness arises and if i know not actually speaking for myself without facing difficulties and challenges there would not have been any growth in consciousness and no awakening if i had had a what's the word for example a trust fund where you know from a very early age your parents have already looked after your security and you know from an early age you if you don't want to work or anything you don't have to you can have a comfortable life without ever doing anything so there are people like that there may even be one or two here but if you are here and you are a trust fund baby then other things must have happened to you that created difficulties it wasn't financial but there were other things

[Speaker 11] (3:52:06 - 3:52:42)

my north star is the monk the story you shared about the monk who lived saying is that so for everything that came i am trying my best to get there in my journey to accepting the isness of things and accepting the moment what i'm struggling with is when am i being a doormat how do i determine it's clear in the example you just shared being homeless in the gray areas of life how do i determine when i need to take action

[Speaker 1] (3:52:43 - 3:58:41)

right thank you thank you good i don't know if you that story i wrote about it in the new earth i think the monk who is accused of having seduced a young girl who became pregnant because the girl told her parents that this monk did it and then the parents went to the monk and said the terrible thing you did now she told us what you did and all the monk ever said was is that so and then they told everybody else he lost his reputation and that was before that happened before the arrival of twitter and facebook and so on so but basically he was cancelled in modern terminology and then the girl gave birth to the baby and the parents said we don't want that baby we'll take it to the monk he can look after it's his baby so they brought the baby to the monk and here's your baby you look after the baby and the monk said is that so and then the monk looked after the baby for a year or so uh just looked after it very well and then the girl grew up a little bit more who had given birth and then finally she confessed to her parents that he was not the father but it was some young guy from next door bad so the parents ran back to the monk said we are terribly sorry we now know that you're not the father of the baby and again the monk said is that so and he handed the baby back to the parents that is an extreme example of non-resistance um jesus has another extreme example of non-resistance you and somebody slaps you on the one cheek and you offer your other cheek that's another extreme example of non-resistance but all it points to is not so much what you do on an outer level but it points to an inner state of non-resistance um you could still if you had were that monk you could still have said this is not true i'm not i did not father this baby this is not even then you could still be in an inner state of non-resistance you could still you could they could state simply this is how it is probably nobody would have believed him but he could have stated it and so the important thing is non-resistance is not so much to do what externally what you do but it's an it's an inner state of consciousness of non-resistance acceptance of what is of the present moment in this this moment um it doesn't if it's misunderstood then it could lead as you say it could lead you to become a doormat because then you would go along with with what everybody said anybody says to you uh and you would can you do this can you do this for me yeah okay i can do it and then you could be used by people but a state of non of non-resistance sometimes um may require you to say no to a let's say somebody requests something but you feel you don't want to do it or you cannot do it uh for some reason and you say no i i don't i think i wrote about this i had this expression a high quality no as opposed to a low quality no a low quality no is you make the other

person into a kind of enemies and why you always ask me this like you're you should argue and shout you accuse the other you're just trying to use me i can see it you've used me before and now you're doing it again now you're asking me for money again i've already lent you five times here have you given it back to me no you haven't so no i'm not going to do it just don't leave me alone that's one no and then there's another no which is non-reactive it's not all right does not arise from reactivity but is a response to the situation that says uh no i don't want to let's say whatever the request is or the demand no i i can't do it anymore i don't want to do it anymore no i'm not going to give you money again because i've already given you five times so i'm just i'm i won't give you uh that's just how it is i know i can't uh no no i cannot whatever it may be you're saying no without creating an enemy without treating or a situation without making a situation into an enemy so it's a conscious no and you're still in an inner state of non-resistance the state of resistance strengthens the ego and this is a way of not operating through not operating through ego so you don't have to become a doormat

[Speaker 2] (3:58:47 - 3:58:53)

but this this non-reactive no requires you to be alert and present

[Speaker 1] (3:58:54 - 3:59:16)

um and then you start also part of that is um you stop complaining to people about what they do as i gave in the example i gave just a minute ago when you give a low quality no you say you make the other wrong

[Speaker 2] (3:59:17 - 3:59:23)

and you complain about them all that drops away

[Speaker 1] (3:59:24 - 4:00:04)

uh i often as you might know i often remember an important aspect of the egoic mind the unconscious patterns of the egoic mind is the complaining function complaining about other humans their deficiencies what the many ways in which they are wrong and lacking in whatever it may be and for many humans it's a very important part of their life

[Speaker 2] (4:00:05 - 4:00:18)

is complaining about others uh either you can complain to them directly or very frequently to

[Speaker 1] (4:00:18 - 4:34:08)

other people when you're talking you know what he said and then you tell the story that's and again another favorite occupation of the egoist telling a story of what he or she did and then he said this and that and i said how dare you do this again and then he

said and then i said it's a very frequent thing that unconscious people do and you're always the winner of course you're always the one who is right in that story the complaining disappears from your life and that's a very important shift because it has no purpose i'm not talking about complaining to say i want to exchange this thing i bought this yesterday but it's not working i that's that's not complaining you could make it into complaining because you could personalize it and regarding as a personal insult to you that they sold you something that's not working and then it becomes an unpleasant drama again but to to rectify something that is wrong is not complaining unless you make it into complaining you seem to i need to i want to return this uh because it's not working but you don't go in the soup is cold can you please heat it up but you don't how dare you serve me this cold soup do you bring in the the me that put the offended person or offended is a big thing these days as you know everybody's offended continuously on social media and everywhere i'm offended yes no i'm more offended than you another the ego has in certain time periods the ego manifests in different ways and now of course the ego uses the opportunity of the digital age social media facebook twitter whatever else it's called i don't know uh it uses that to amplify itself in certain ways that were not possible before so it's a great opportunity for the ego to proliferate and amplify itself you're just trying to use me and i'm not going to do that anymore i'm not going to be used anymore by you this is it that's it or no more that that's another kind of no but it's a low quality no so i often say say yes to the present moment or i say make the present moment your friend not your enemy so it's to say yes to the present moment is a powerful teaching but it can be misunderstood and has been misunderstood sometimes and it needs to be explained what that actually means it means oh by the way um there's a funny movie made a few some years ago with jim carrey it's called the yes man and this is a person in the movie a character the character he plays he works at a bank i think to in the mortgage department and he's very he's very bitter and he likes to say no to people who apply for mortgages every no you can't have it he loves and it's very negative about everything now his life is uneventful boring everything is negative then he goes to a new age a friend invites him to a strange new age event with a new age teacher and the teacher says you have to say yes yes to everything say yes to everything and um he kind of becomes convinced well i might as well try that i've got nothing to lose and from then on whatever people ask him every mortgage he approves and whatever people ask him can you lend me money sure yes can you do this yes yes yes and then his life becomes very interesting but also very chaotic he he gets into most chaotic situations and he kind of all gets out of hand and i in the end he kind of seems to realize that this wasn't quite working it that that was that is not the true meaning so to say yes to the present moment does not mean that you accept everything that people ask of you in some cases you have to use the now the no but in the um don't but not in an angry way that denies the present moment i call that a high quality no uh so it's let's say um in the orchestra can you look after my children or let's be can because i i need you you're so so good with children to feel flatter you you feel obliged you're such a wonderful person i so love you can you do it again please and at some point safety i'm

sorry i can't do it anymore um but without any negativity a simple statement it is not a reactive statement you don't make her into a bad person who i know she you want to take advantage of me i'm not doing it anymore that is a low quality no even if perhaps you she did try to perhaps she was trying to take advantage of you but that is not that may be then a dysfunction in her egoic self many humans do that the world is full of people who perhaps are trying to take advantage of you that's what the egos do and so it is not who she truly is but you speak to you do not speak to the ego in her you simply say i love your children they're just wonderful and i enjoyed my time but i can't do it anymore i'm sorry about that high quality no no no i can't do that a person says can you lend me another thousand dollars um and he's well i've already lent you two thousand three months ago and last year i lent you five thousand i haven't got anything back yet and then he's i'm sorry i have to say no but you don't say you're just you're just trying to use me you and i'm not going to do that anymore i'm not going to be used anymore by you this is it that's it or no more that that's another kind of no but it's a low quality no and the high quality no no i'm sorry that's it i can't do that anymore this it it implies there's a presence behind what you say it's not reactive and with the same the person who asked you to write something you say i've seen the background i'm not in agreement with that therefore i'm sorry i need need to say no to this i can't do this thank you high quality no it's beautiful and it works quite often you may have to use that make sure that it's not reactive and then becomes low quality you have to be vigilant to see if your actions any given moment whether they are no more than a means to an end another question when we lose a form that represented abundance do we resign ourselves to the loss or should we take action to bring new forms of abundance into being again the question may refer to you so i cannot question you directly here maybe you lost possessions money whatever and the question is do we resign ourselves to the loss or should we take action to bring new forms of abundance into being well you can do you can resign yourself it's not a question of either or whether or not you create more of the same whatever it is if you lost a house whether you work to have another house or if you lost investments whether you work hard to create the same again or whether you no longer are interested in doing that in any case resigning yourself to the loss applies in any case if you don't do that then you suffer and then you build up negativity and then you all your the action you take is then based on negative reaction and you can work very hard and perhaps you'll recreate the same abundance but it's not pleasant so acceptance of what is always comes first and then you're free to go on from there acceptance of loss that's what is nothing is permanent in this world it consists of gain and loss sooner or later you have to let go acceptance comes first and then there's a choice if you enjoy the creation of abundant forms whatever you do why not carry on doing it and very quickly you will probably create the same abundance if you don't enjoy the doing if the doing is only a means to an end because you need the money you want to have the psychological security of money you still haven't learned that it doesn't really work then you just go through the same cycle again and you won't be happy you'll be compulsively working hard trying to get your money back so it's the question of step

one is acceptance of what is because it is step two is you listen within and see what it is that wants to be done perhaps you worked for 20 years built up something lost it do you want to work on another 20 years or even 10 years or 10 years if you enjoyed yes why not the important question whatever you do is what I'm doing primarily a means to an end or is it primarily an end in itself if it's an end in itself means as I do what I do there is an enjoyment there there is an aliveness there yes I know what I want to achieve so that's why I'm saying primarily primarily a means to an end or primarily an end in itself if your doing is not primarily an end in itself then there's lack of enjoyment and lack of harmonious doing and that's unconscious and it it makes you unhappy basically even if you don't know it many unconscious people are unhappy and they don't they are so unconscious they don't even know that they're unhappy but because it's their normal state isn't everybody else the same so that applies to whatever you do not just going going beyond this this particular question you have to be vigilant to see if your actions any given moment even simple things running errands things you do every day you need to be vigilant to see whether they are no more than a means to an end in which case you are not present in what you do you're probably impatient or stressed or complaining would rather be somewhere else as the car sticker says the bumper sticker stickers you have say things like I'd rather be fishing and if your mindset is I'd rather be even when you're fishing you won't be happy for very long and then very quickly you'd rather be sitting in your car driving somewhere exciting so taking responsibility for your life is taking responsibility for how you perform your actions what you do and if most of your actions are means to an end your whole life is of low quality it lacks presence and you're always looking out for the next moment which you think is going to be better when it comes is unfortunately only the present moment which is never good enough that's low quality life you know the quality of your life the way in which I use the term is deeper than the conventional use of the term or it's good to have the term at all quality of life because it implies that what determines the the value of your life is not quantity it's not how much you consume how many things you own or whatever how many people you control in your job or your whatever it's not quantity that determines the the value of your life it's quality so in the conventional term I'm glad that this term exists it means how you enjoy whether you enjoy whether you can go to to have quality time with another human being which means attention quality activities where you're not just working all the time but doing other things they have the quality of life or cities every year they have a list I don't remember who publishes it or how they exactly they determine it but it's an attempt to determine how pleasant it is to live or how unpleasant it is to live in a particular city many factors contribute to that so that's a good thing but the way in which I use quality goes even beyond that or it's it is connected somehow but it goes it goes deeper you can live in a city that's very low on the life quality list and lead a life of the highest quality which means as you do what you do you are giving it full attention knowing that yes I'm doing this because that I need to get there and there you know what the end is that you want to achieve but your primary concern is the doing the smallest thing and then your life is of high quality every action has a certain aliveness

and presence it is not stressed it's not done with reluctance it's not done with impatience it's not done with irritation all this can't you see how that lowers the quality of your life all those things but it's so normal but you can do the same thing why bring all that to the action the irritation the stress the dislike the impatience the complaining why what purpose does it has no real purpose except it strengthens your false sense of self uh oh so you can see you have a choice you can do the same even if you do nothing to change your life on the external level let's say everything that you've been doing so far you carry on doing it but you bring a completely different you take you take out all the resistance patterns from what you've been doing you take out all the complaining and the wanting to be somewhere else and the irritation and the impatience and the stress so you're still doing exactly the same and yet your life is completely transformed on the inside an amazing thing on the outside at first nothing has changed you still do exactly the same i am you know that without adding any qualifiers to it without adding anything to the i am it's the pure sense of being which is i am some people hate themselves i don't like my body i don't like who i am i don't like this how awful way to live i hate myself it's much better to love yourself so in new age teachings you learn to let go of this dysfunctional relationship with yourself and then this is a good thing it's much better to love yourself than to hate yourself so but you have to achieve that transition not easy if the hating yourself has been deeply ingrained you may have to put little stickers on your bathroom mirror i love myself oh yes and and everywhere you are lovable oh thank you thank you yes and again this is fine it's a transitional stage it's not the final stage sometimes in new age things it's a final stage it's a it's a lovely transitional stage but really it's the stage of awakening is that you begin to let go of having a relationship with yourself so that you can just be yourself and you have to be in the present moment in order to be yourself and that is you can sometimes learn by looking at an animal with the animal is at a pre-egoic stage what we are moving towards or into is a post-egoic stage now the animal like your dog is pre-egoic the dog has consciousness but not conceptual consciousness that it not the dog does not operate through mental concepts in other words the dog does not have an opinion about you isn't that that's why you love the dog so much and also the dog does not have a relationship with himself or herself humans have but i have not met a single dog that has a problem with self-esteem for example i have not met a single dog that has a problem with body image even the the ugliest dog is okay because the split hasn't happened yet the split into me and myself so that the dog this is why the dog often is often joyful and the slightest thing you sometimes you go you if you have a dog you go away for 10 minutes and you come back home the dog acts if you have been away for 10 years he's so happy and the the hat is contagious a little bit the happiness of a dog the wagging tail of the dog why is the dog so happy because the dog does not have a self the dog is him her itself the dog is and then the tail goes life is good if the dog could say something it would say life is good in the present moment just give me my food and it's even better so the humans they love to be with their animals because it gives them a little bit of a little glimpse of self-transcendence because when they look into the eyes of the dog they are not being

judged and that feels good and you can sense by looking at the eyes you can sense the being of the dog wow now the dog what you really love in just an example dog cat what you really love in the dog is not the outer surface of the dog although it's lovely to the touch and all that yes but you know there is something that you cannot see that you relate to when you look into the eyes of a dog that is the the essence of the dog what you love is actually the consciousness of the dog which has no ego in it it exists at a pre-egoic state you love the consciousness of the dog and when you look in the eyes of you feel a little bit you connect a little bit to that in yourself for a few seconds when you're not you don't need any defense mechanism or anything like that when you relate to a dog although there are some humans with huge egos i have observed a few who relate to their pet through their ego but that's another story and that's a sad story they have an ego relationship i knew a woman who would in the evenings he would put food out for her cat would go out the cat would be in the garden and she had the window open that was a neighbor of mine years ago and she would put the food out and this woman had a very accomplished person but a gigantic ego she would she put the cat food of her cat out and then if the cat didn't come because cats have many things to do out in the garden and it was dinner time for the cat and she put the plate there and she was sitting there waiting for the cat to come and 15 minutes passed and then she said okay then she would close the window said if she doesn't want to see me i don't want to see her oh my god she has an ego relationship with her cat i so a relationship with yourself that eventually is transcended so that you can simply be in the present moment not and let's go deeper now so that in the present moment uh which is a portal into the awakened state in this present moment let's see who or what are you in the present moment without reference to any thought without reference to any thought about who you are that's an interesting pointer in other words what does it feel like to be yourself without remembering your past or thinking about the future just in this moment you don't need to remember your email address or anything it's not necessary now or what you ate yesterday without reference to past and future um what does it do you disappear or what is left of you without the memory the narrative that usually do you describe as my life without that memory of that you need to revive continuously without that what does it feel like to be you and i cannot answer that i can only give it to you as a pointer and slow down a little bit as i talk so that you can perhaps inquire investigate internally what what it feels like what is the most essential thing about your identity is are you still there when you don't think about your life like now are you still there and what what is that i'm not going to answer it and i don't expect a conceptual answer um so the that's me there was a ancient spiritual teacher in india whose favorite meditation was asking his disciples to ask themselves who am i you can also ask yourself what am i who or what what am i what am i but don't answer it verbally but feel or sense what it means to be alive or to be you what am i what am i there's a there's a gap in the stream of thinking then what what is there when there's a gap in the stream of thinking like now and in the gap there's a there's a stillness yes um there's also a sense of there's something there but it's hard to describe there's a sense of presence of beingness and in that sense of

presence of beingness you know that you are you know you can say i am you know that without adding any qualifiers to it without adding anything to the i am it's the pure sense of being which is i am it's very peaceful you need an alertness to sustain it just for a little bit without the alertness you will immediately fall back into the stream of thinking but it's not you don't use willpower to to stop your thinking mind that doesn't really work so you don't hold your breath in order to stop thinking that does it might work for a little while but then you think even more it's like a boiling kettle hold the lid on the boiling kettle just alertness and so jesus said as i said at the beginning and what i say to you i say to all stay awake in some translations it's in it's translated as stay alert what i say to you i say to all stay alert that alertness is consciousness without thought it seems at first just to be an absence it seems at first like okay stillness one could say is the absence of noise in a stillness in absence it might seem at first as a kind of nothingness and yet if you if you stay with it for a little bit just a few more seconds stay alert then you can sense it's not just the absence of something it's also the presence of something but not so much the presence of something but the sense of presence itself not of something the greater part of human suffering is caused by you humans do it to each other it's that is this and this is why it's so important this shift in consciousness because we would undoubtedly destroy ourselves if there is no shift in consciousness

[Speaker 9] (4:34:13 - 4:34:48)

how does one keep faith and stay on a path of awakening and having a peaceful meaningful meaningful light existence amongst all the sadness war and suffering i feel best when not taking political sides and not engaging much in current political financial economical affairs however i've been called a pacifist and been told that the problem with this world is people such as myself who don't take a stance how does one take a stance without being too attached to an ideology or group and without being brought down by the mass consciousness

[Speaker 13] (4:34:48 - 4:34:52)

thank you thank you

[Speaker 1] (4:35:02 - 4:47:39)

well the what you said just the mass consciousness that's a good term that's certainly the case and the unconsciousness of the collective is amplified by our technology of course um it's uh it does not mean that you cannot the expression is used i think you said take a stance which is means to participate in some way in the discourse that happens on the in the world of the internet and all that there's a disc people are continuously talking to each other and there's also the secondary thing is because action is there any desirability of taking action what kind of action taking a stance most important thing is there's nothing wrong with expressing your viewpoint or opinion because i'm sure you have viewpoints and opinions the important thing is not to confuse

opinion and identity that's that's when you lose yourself when an opinion which is your mental position your viewpoint your opinion if if that if you unconsciously you equate that with your identity then you begin you begin begin to fight against other humans who have different opinions or identities that clash with yours uh so and again the key to becoming free of this uh delusion of equating opinion and identity is to to have an identity that transcends to find your true identity that transcends thought that is beyond thought and beyond the personality again that's what we started with today and what which continuously in the background of what we are talking about here in the background is that to be to to be rooted in the awareness even while you express an opinion you can you might it might be a political opinion on the left on the right whatever it may be and you express your opinion and somebody else may attack your opinion um you ask at first you'd ask yourself what is the point am i am i making a useful contribution to the world by expressing this opinion that's an interesting question is this helping anybody or are you just talking to are you trying to convince people of that you are right and they are wrong you're not probably not going to succeed in that the other person will become more deeply entrenched in their opinions if you try to prove them wrong uh is it are you engaged in an egoic endeavor which is simply make others wrong and make yourself right and the world of the internet is full of people who are engaged in that practice of making themselves right and others wrong and by doing that the ego feels an enhanced sense of identity in other words you become more deluded ever more deluded of who you are is there any point in participating in some discussions there may be some point perhaps you can present put forward information that people did not have perhaps you have it and you can show instead of engaging in some kind of fight which is always egoic put forward some information and see that's how it is that that those are the facts and even then people may dislike your facts and and not want to see them but whatever it is you can participate in the discourse with wisdom uh with awareness so that you don't create enemies nobody nobody is your enemy um another question is action what action can i take the first your first responsibility is always in the same way that uh on aeroplanes when they announce what to do when the airbag comes down from this from the ceiling when the air pressure in case they always say in case there's a loss of air pressure these oxygen bags will come down from the ceiling and you're supposed to put them on your mouth and they always say if you're with a child put put it on yours first and then on the child so the uh because if you put it on the child first you may lose consciousness a second after that you can't help the child anymore to be but your state of consciousness is the foundation for your experience of this world your state of form of consciousness is a foundation for whatever you do or say so you give primary importance to your state of consciousness and then which means be aware be present don't be just trapped in the conditioned mind be present be aware and one once you know that your primary responsibility is your state of consciousness because that's the foundation for everything that affects the world in many ways even not only in ways that people you come into contact with could be affected in a good way by your state of consciousness even people you are not in contact with can be affected by your state of

consciousness because everything is connected underneath the surface of the phenomenal world everything is connected and every human is connected to every other human ultimately there's a collective of humanity that is one consciousness of there's the consciousness of humanity which is an aspect of the greater consciousness of the universe so one could say there's ultimately only one human being on this earth and this one human being one human there's one human consciousness which is only an aspect of the universal consciousness this one human consciousness expresses itself in billions of short-lived forms they come and go every human form is on a cosmic scale every human form appears on this planet like a like a just a flash of light appearing that was you that was me lights continuously lights flashing one consciousness there's only one light but many it appears in many forms so once you stake responsibility for your state of consciousness and continue to realize that that is primary then you can take some action and you will know what is right the wisp because you can use wisdom then with the wisdom you will know you will know whether there's anything you can do because there are multiple huge many problems in this world which ones do you want to where do you want to take some action which is the most important one to you so there's a huge choice if you want to take action but never lose yourself in the action because all the things that are dysfunctional in this world the suffering in this world to a greater extent is created by human dysfunction the dysfunction that is inherent in the collective human mind which is the personal ego and the collective ego so there is a deep dysfunction in the human mind it's a kind of mental illness and that that mental illness in the collective human mind manifests itself in many different forms warfare is one of them and there are many many other forms the greater part of human suffering if you want to it might be easier to have a little bit of perspective look at the history of the 20th century and you can see the countless millions that were killed humans killing each other by the millions the incredible suffering that took place there most of it was not caused by natural catastrophes some was but not most of it was caused by other humans humans doing it to other humans that were the greater part of human suffering is caused by you humans do it to each other it's that is this the and this is why it's so important this shift in consciousness because we would undoubtedly destroy ourselves if there is no shift in consciousness so the dysfunction was already there even before we created the technology that we now have the dysfunction was already there but it was never life-threatening because humans did not have the power to destroy themselves but now the dysfunction is still there but now humans have the power to destroy themselves and the planet if nothing changes this is right now for the first time in human history a change in consciousness is no longer an option or a luxury one could almost say but a necessity for humanity to survive the change in consciousness is necessary and you need to embody that before you take any action or while you take action you need to embody that changed consciousness so that you don't get drawn into the unconsciousness of the world so you can acknowledge all the beauty that is in others even though in the external form of you that beauty

[Speaker 4] (4:47:39 - 4:48:04)

may no longer be manifested i often find myself comparing myself to other people particularly my my physical appearance compared to other women and it gets very tiresome as you can imagine um and i was wondering if you had any practical advice for for helping dissolve this

[Speaker 1] (4:48:23 - 4:48:36)

and i assume sometimes you come out as better than and at other times as not as good as is that right

[Speaker 12] (4:48:38 - 4:48:40)

yes yes

[Speaker 1] (4:48:44 - 5:08:26)

and better than feels good and not as good as doesn't it all feels tiresome to be honest that's a good point to reach to get tired of an old pattern like that then you're ready to let go so as the cause in miracles puts it uh comparison is one of the favorite ego devices to keep the ego going or it keeps itself going especially by comparing whether the comparing is to do with external appearance or comparing other things uh evaluating others in comparison to how in your own mind you evaluate yourself it could be to do with knowledge education class social class strengths physical strengths how many possessions worth he's worth so such and such amount of dollars and i'm worth so much more than he or so much less than he all kinds of things implied in that is a sense of a desire on the part of the ego to enhance its sense of worthiness uh and if anybody has less than you or appears less than you or can do less than you in some somewhat nonsensical way it seems to add something to your sense of self of course it doesn't make sense it's a it's a little bit absurd but that's how the ego functions and in reverse if somebody it feels to the ego as if somebody has just achieved something or that you haven't achieved it feels to the ego as if some something of its sense of self had been taken away so it gets deflated and and he's not happy the if you're really trapped in ego you are not happy when somebody good something good happens to somebody close to you because it feels to the ego as if it had become diminished because something somebody else has become enhanced their identity in the eyes of the ego it's all you can see when you explain it in this way so that you can actually see how it operates then you actually realize that that it is absurd to feel there is now less you have become less because somebody else has received more of something or can do something that you can't do and so you can see how unreal that sense of identity is you feel diminished because something good has happened to somebody close to you and in some cases if the ego is very strong in you without any trace of awareness you cannot even admit to yourself that you feel bad when when something good has happened to somebody close

to you it's it's there as an unreal an unwitnessed emotion and then it might come out in your and you speak to that person with a desire to diminish what they now have that you don't have and it's totally unconscious with you you are not totally unconscious there's already an awareness in you that is aware of that pattern if there were no awareness in you you wouldn't be asking that question you wouldn't be sitting here you would be acting out that pattern and next time somebody in your vicinity has a just bought a new dress that looks absolutely stunning you would look at it if you were totally trapped in ego you would look at it and something inside you would contract but you wouldn't know that because there wouldn't be enough awareness for that but that contraction as an energy field would then flow into your mind and then words will come out of your mouth again unconscious to diminish the worthiness of that dress and you might say oh that dress that would look good on your sister and the other person who perhaps is also identified with the completely with suddenly feels hurt deeply and in in both cases the the famous saying applies they don't they know not what they do which of course points to complete lack of awareness so in that sense people hurt each other and try to take away in order to feel and the moment the ego said that would look good on somebody else it feels a little bit better already because you've taken away a bit from that the the value the perceived value of that thing it's an insane it's a delusional system but many people are still totally trapped in that not in not with you of course it's not the case with you you're not totally trapped it still operates in you to some extent but not totally trapped so it is there's some connection with value my my your own sense of worth or worthiness which is connected to your external appearance it could be connected to other things it may also be connected to other things so you are in there's a an image in you of who you are it's a surface image of the surface appearance your body and the solution of course is very simple it's to take your attention beyond the surface where it usually is the surface of your body the surface of that which is on top of your body the clothes take your attention deeper to the inherent energy field or aliveness or conscious presence that pervades who you are the entire being nothing to do with the external nothing to do with the shape of the body or what's on top of the body and if that if you begin to go there into that dimension take your attention into that dimension where you are not the external form but you sense the very essence of who you are you sense the life that you are beyond the form then you no longer need to identify with form you're no longer than threatened when somebody else's form is seemingly better than yours it no longer does anything to your sense of identity or your sense of worthiness and then you're free and you're free to admire somebody else's good looks and you're free to be happy with the way you look for the time being until years pass and then perhaps the body doesn't look that great anymore after a few more decades you have a few decades to go but they pass fairly quickly too and the further you go the more quickly they seem to pass that's strange and and so the time comes when you notice a deterioration in the appearance and then you begin to notice that most women around you actually look better than you for the simple fact that they're younger and you can appreciate the way they look because they are a manifestation of life an external manifestation they are life

forms beautiful life forms without feeling threatened in any way in your own sense of self because the life of which those lovely women around you are manifestations you can sense that very life in its essence in you so you can acknowledge all the beauty that is in others even though in the external form of you that beauty may no longer be manifested as such so and that's wonderful freedom to appreciate the beauty that you see around you even if your own body is no longer part of that because there is a beauty in you that has nothing to do with form and that one could call that the essence of all beauty that's the very essence of life itself so when you have the essence you appreciate the external manifestation of it in its so-called one could say diluted form in the flower now most egos are not threatened by flowers but in a in another human being you can appreciate the beauty in another human being with and the comparison the compulsive need to compare disappears there isn't or what about me do I look as that that thought pattern dissolved long ago by the time you reach the point where most women will externally look better than you by the time then it's disappearing already so you don't need to wait a few more decades to get there or the ego can say okay I have another 30 years of I can identify with my good looks so the answer of course is then find the essence of who you are which is what all this teaching is always about find the essence of who you are so that you get in touch with the inherent sense of beingness or aliveness or presence within you which pervades the entire so-called physical body but is not the physical body and as I speak about it now you should be able to feel that within you the the the fact that there is an aliveness that pervades your entire being can you feel that that is more essentially who you are than the external appearance of who you are and that is going to be exactly the same in 30 years time as it is now so you then you become free of form you are essentially the consciousness behind it all so know yourself as that life or consciousness there's the same no thing know yourself as that and you're free of the ego the ego is there as a substitute it's to seek yourself in some form it's a that's the delusion and that's great creates an unhappy life so it's a wonderful thing it's it's also liberating to see the absurdity of the ego once you see how the patterns that I just just described just now you can see how mad it is to feel diminished when something good happens to somebody else to feel enhanced when something bad happens to somebody else and not even know it so let's see what happens next time you can admire a beautiful female form without any comparison in fact feel more intensely the beauty that is within you when you see it out there that's a wonderful thing there's only now it's when you're when the your mind is taking you to all kinds of unpleasant places you can always you come back so there's only this moment there's only this that's a and the now of course is the opening into the vertical dimension so you become aware of the present whenever suffering arises you don't want to manifest suffering but millions of people on a daily basis continuously manifest suffering but you don't want to so when you the beginning of an awakening is the realization that that you are manifesting suffering of course that's already an awakening there because if you're very unconscious the blame for all your suffering is always elsewhere it's never in your own mind when you're very unconscious other people the world situation fate god destiny your karma your parents

the unjust system whatever all kinds of things they're all to blame they are cause your suffering and you haven't realized that you are manifesting your mind ultimately is manifesting and in fact if you if you tell this to a person who is not ready to hear that they will get very angry very angry so but the that realization your mind the unconscious mind manifests suffering and to when you discover that that ultimately the suffering arises in your mind because your mind reacts to things your mind creates a narrative that makes you unhappy not the situation but the narrative that your mind creates around the situation makes you unhappy when you discover that that's the first stage of the way one the wakening is oh and at that moment that's an amazing discovery that virtually all your suffering is created by your mind amazing and then you realize you don't want to manifest that anymore and then you want to manifest something else but first before you manifest something else you need to stop manifesting suffering and a good way is bringing your attention into the present moment this what what is my problem now what nothing what's wrong with this moment this moment is as it is what's the problem so bring your attention to now whenever you feel unhappiness arising look at your mind and bring attention to the present moment which always means the externals of the present moment that's a manifested dimension of the present moment and then the essence of the now which is consciousness awareness presence and so that's the how you stop manifesting suffering and then you can if you want to manifest other things from once you have the foundation which is the being then you begin to work on the two levels so you you reconcile the two the being and the doing in your life and that's that's your purpose and you will not always succeed it's you fall back into usually you fall back into losing yourself in doing and then you suffer and this unhappiness that arises can you can then use as a very helpful way of telling you you've lost yourself you've lost the present moment and once you know that you can come back so let's leave it at that

[Speaker 7] (5:08:37 - 5:09:21)

thank you hello um i live in las vegas nevada which is very mind dominated and uh it's tough there um there seems to be two forces in my mind that's build up energy and it's very strong and it keeps me from uh getting in touch with my true self into creating more space and cultivating that space um one of them is that it's not that interesting i'd rather go along with interesting thoughts and do interesting activities and also i have this fear that if i don't analyze and constantly think about like solutions and things in my life that everything's going to fall apart so it's hard those two forces that build especially where i live it makes it

[Speaker 1] (5:09:21 - 6:05:43)

even more increases it more so the energy field there is a kind of nervous yes actually i work in a casino too well that's a wonderful challenge to stay conscious there yes it is lots of discipline yes that's your spiritual practice right i've been there i've walked

through some of the casinos in amazement and the it's it's a quite a place that seems to come out of some kind of dream when you walk around las vegas it's uh but it's actually quite interesting when the mind doesn't label it it's actually quite amazing oh all these all these strange life forms and what they have created it's quite amazing it's there's an intense aliveness there would i want to live there i don't know there have been some spiritual teachers who moved there i know of at least two i think it was andrew harvey a spiritual teacher moved to las vegas and there was a spiritual teacher called vernon howard who lived near las vegas and there may be one or two others why they moved there i'm not sure perhaps they maybe they loved it or perhaps to pay less tax perhaps who knows the well the challenge of course is uh to stay present and have stillness inside you that what you mentioned now you need to think about your your life problems or your life this is a very very common uh assumption unconscious assumption in humans that if i don't think about my problems though my life is going to fall apart i need i have to think about my life and what's going to happen and transfer of course nothing is going to fall apart if you stop thinking things will get better if you stop thinking with the exception of focused thinking in case there's a specific problem that needs to be addressed then focus thinking and then step even there stepping back into stillness so it's a wonderful thing if you're able to be present and still in las vegas then of course you're a master it's many people are be able to be present and still out in nature be a beautiful forest or the seashore or on top of a mountain and you watch the sunrise wow very still so still let's move here says the mind let's move here where it's so still and then wherever it is and if you do move there for a while it'll be wonderful oh it's so still and then of course the mind is becomes restless after a while there's nothing happening and you're not challenged by anything anymore if you have a meditation practice then you can of course convince yourself that you have finally achieved in your meditate five hours a day and let's say somehow food is brought to you as i remember a monk i knew buddhist monk telling me that story that he meditated in a hut up a mountain in thailand for half a year and he attained complete peacefulness peace nirvana he thought and every day somebody would bring him a bowl of food nothing to worry about nothing to do just be present and still the only challenge were mosquitoes he said but he learned to deal with that in other words to just completely accept and not mentally label it and just being used by them for food so he was came with that that was one challenge then he had to go back into the city to renew his visa because he was in thailand and he was a westerner and at the visa office they kept him waiting for one hour two hours and then he was in the wrong lineup for two hours and then he had to start lining up somewhere else and when he finally got to the window the man said oh no you haven't filled this out you do that again and he started so that was he then suddenly realized he had not attained nirvana so you're much better off in las vegas the thing is to use whatever environment you are in as part of their spiritual practice does not mean that you have to be stuck it may be that a deep sense of the need to remove yourself suddenly comes to you and then you go somewhere else that could happen because it seems like it's more of a challenge there yes yes so that's it's it's probably in many ways a better place to

practice than a monastery right i never thought of that way and worrying about your life or your problems is a very common belief that that is necessary to hold things together but it's not you have to recognize the futility of of borrowing and realize your life is already together you're breathing you're eating when you need food you sleep when you sleep you go to work you do what you do you look around contemplate look at the sky uh look away nasir gas is a very much a man-made or human-made environment everything is kind of artificial not to say fake so everything is fake that's fine it's it's not everybody that much but there are trees there may there are some trees in there beautiful desert there is the sky there's a light there's the desert you can easily get out and you're out in the in the stillness so you can take advantage of that when you need to and so be happy with where you are and accept where you are and then while you do what you do in the casino what do you do there i'm a dealer at nighttime with the drunks yeah yeah place your bets and then yeah and then you can observe human nature there around you most definitely yes every facet you observe human nature in its unconscious state mostly yeah but that's fine that's where they're at you can be the the presence for them yeah it's hard not to judge them oh yes that's your practice not to judge because they are expressions of life of aliveness right in their form they're beautiful too yeah okay thank you so much is there a difference between daytime and versus nighttime awareness how does one work with a mind that is racing at night and does not allow any deep sleep i can control the mind during the day and not get caught up but how about the sleep time during the day yes you deal with other things your mind is busy dealing with things and at night time the mind is left to itself and then this is a typical example of useless not only useless but self-destructive and harmful overthinking or mind activity uh and this is the many people have that problem in their lives the the night time is particularly hard i remember that vaguely from my distant past when i would wake up in the night sometimes in a state of panic and the mind just would not stop so first thing there needs to be a minimum of awareness but i believe you have that otherwise you wouldn't be here there needs to be a minimum of awareness from where you can know that this mind activity is futile it leads nowhere it just creates suffering misery so you know that you know that you don't want it and don't need it there are still many people who don't have that minimum of awareness where they they are so identified with their mind activity which tells them i must think about this i need to solve this problem now nobody has ever solved a problem but by worrying at night but the mind says don't stop thinking don't stop thinking it'll all collapse if you stop thinking so you already know it's futile you already know that you would rather be free of that okay that's good you have that minimum of awareness from there you can choose you realize the power you have you can choose to direct your attention somewhere else now you may have to do that many times you you will there will be a perhaps a tug of war between your mind and where you want it to go so first thing you do take a conscious breath you're in at night thinking thinking suddenly i don't want to think anymore it's futile and it's it hurts okay how do i get out of this can i take a conscious breath if you ask yourself a question you might hear the answer in your mind saying no i can't do it now and that's a lie that's a lie

by the ego invented by the egoic mind to stop you from doing it or you can ask okay i want to stop can i feel the the feeling of energy in my hands no i can't do it now i have to stop can't possibly do it now that's a lie there's nobody who cannot do it now you can do it now if you don't believe in the thought that tells you you cannot do it now and then you do it anyway either take a conscious breath or feel the energy that's the beginning of body awareness which is a powerful anchor for presence it takes your attention away from thinking into your body your consciousness moves so there isn't enough left for thinking a lot your mind and then you have to hold it in your body not through effort not not through forcing your attention into the body if you if your body becomes tense that's not it you can't go like i have to hold my attention in the body okay and now i'm forcing it down by breathing into i'm forcing attention into the body now you might even succeed for a little while but then no just take in a relaxed way attention moves into the body and you breathe into the body so the breast awareness and body awareness can become a single practice and then you feel the rest of the body coming alive there you can feel this there's life in your feet in your legs it's very subtle at first and then you feel the entire body pervaded by this sense of aliveness right now as i'm talking about it i can feel it zzzz i'm just making an audible sound for to uh because it's hard to talk about it so it goes almost like electricity and that is an anchor for presence now and then your mind will try to bring up thoughts critical thoughts that pull your attention back into thinking so it'll come up with this is really critical to think about it and then it you might you can feel your attention moving out of the body and back into your mind and then perhaps five minutes later you say oh it's gone and then you just gently go back into the body you choose where you where you want to place your conscious attention and you do it again and again and the moment will come when you actually enjoy being awake at night in your bed whereas before it was agony and so you lived that was when i started doing that it was so beautiful i always i didn't even i loved waking up in the middle of the night and would immediately go ah and sometimes already as i would often naturally just go there there was sometimes a feeling as i moved from sleep into wakefulness it was understood as if i was plugged into an electric outlet that wonderful intensely alive no thinking so it's your you have the power to choose where to direct your attention and don't believe the mind when it tells you you can't do it this is similar during the daytime some people have problems during the day too being present i can't do it now i've got so much on my mind maybe when i've dealt with that then i'll be present but it's just so much on my plate right now don't talk to me about presents it's just or as somebody i know who had done a lot of spiritual practice uh for 20 or 30 years and then suddenly she found he and she and her husband had invested money in the mad scheme or their savings with a man named madoff and he's in prison now but he had this wonderful scheme where you would get every year your investments would yield like 10 more 10 15 percent just wonder nowhere else would you get that so they had been highly recommended by friends everybody invested with mr made of totally reliable and then it turned out that mr made of had a gigantic ego and everybody was deceived and everybody lost their money when the crunch came and one day she got a call from her

advisor and said sorry to tell you that the made of financial empire just collapsed and with it all your savings and she when she recovered from her panic she called a friend i think it was a friend or was it her husband go you know what happened it's all gone and her friend with whom she had been on retreat said well just take a few breaths and just come into the present moment and then she said she found herself saying this is not the time to be spiritual of course later she realized and she actually grew enormously thread and deepened her consciousness later she realized this is precisely the best time to be spirit there's no better time than this to be spiritual so she did learn that lesson but it took a while and then she wrote a book about it that did so well that most of her money returns through the book true story this mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation so in some other translations he says i want you to have to have abundant life now abundant does not mean lots of things because that would mean that shopping malls are the kingdom of heaven let's say your goal is to to be widely known and to impact people's lives with your music fine perhaps you'll achieve it you can visualize it oh by the way when you visualize a goal that you want to achieve it's not in the future if if if you this is to do with manifesting when you want to manifest something it doesn't work very well when you think i i i will be famous i need to be famous i want to be famous not good good for manifestation if you want to manifest something you have to start with the foundation for manifestation is always the present moment it's never it's not the future what it works very simply jesus explained it in one sentence just one sentence whenever you pray for something believe that you have received it and it will be given to you now the key is that he did not say believe that you will receive it because that puts it into the future he said when you pray for something in other words when you want something believe that you have received it now what does that mean you have to feel in this moment the fullness of life that is there when you go deep enough into the being of you then you feel there's the fullness of life and you feel there is a sense of joyful aliveness that is a sense of power in you that you sense that that is the presence in you is there is a power in that presence and that power is there's a something that you could show almost there's a fullness in it already you can't really once you contact you when you're in touch with the the presence everything else that you could achieve in this life i compared i have this comparison analogy or whatever it is that which you realize within you this the power is the cream and everything else that you could achieve in this world is the skimmed milk so the the fullness of life this is an expression that jesus used he said and these are all put together he said i want you to have the fullness of life in some other translations he says i want you to have to have abundant life now abundant does not mean lots of things because that would mean that shopping malls are the kingdom of heaven so abundant life does not mean abundance as many things that abundance is the deeper place of a sense of intense aliveness the fullness of life that you feel within you that is abundant life presence to feel the life that you are the consciousness that you are out of that everything comes that's the fullness of life or abundant life you feel it in this moment and then if you then want to achieve

something you bring a vision what you want and let it merge with that feeling let's say you want you're a great musician that's reaching who's reaching millions of people and you see yourself as this great musician reaching millions of people but not in the future how does this great musician feel once he has reached or she has reached millions of people this is exactly how it feels the fullness of life you feel it right here now you merge the vision with the feeling of fullness of life which is presence and then that's manifestation that also means however when you if and when you get what you wanted to manifest you're no you're not any happier than you are already you're not more joyful or fulfilled than you are already the fulfillment can only be arrived at in the present moment because that is the fulfillment is not dependent on external conditions the fallacy is to believe that something in the external world that you you could arrive at or you could achieve will it has the capability at some point in future of fulfilling you of in whatever way of making you happy making you complete making you peaceful making you said feel your sense of self more strongly whatever it may be so the belief that something out there can give that to you in other words to put in the most general terms the feeling that the world can make you happy the world could be anything in the world could be past another person an achievement a place whatever it is the world can make me happy it cannot the world can briefly give you a sense of ah i have arrived but then you see oh no that wasn't it this is the case with relationships it's the case with anything you achieve even great worldly success i've met many worldly successful people who told me they became very miserable soon after the worldly success so that's not it so the it's the present moment is the key to all achievement if you feel the intensity of presence then everything else is an added onto you that's all manifestation jesus used that expression seek only the kingdom of heaven all the other things that you think you need will be added onto you they are additions but they are no longer the things that they totally dominate your consciousness and determine whether you turn out to be a happy unhappy person so the joy is found already if the thing is added to you you say oh that's great but it doesn't change how you feel already so you need to find the place of fulfillment in the present moment first and then you can manifest so the foundation for manifestation is becoming intensely present and realizing your essence identity and live from and through your essence identity that then the essence and through the essence identity you can manifest things but these are not the things that will make you happy they are they are icing on the cake they're not they're not the cake so whatever you whatever you can achieve is the icing on the cake it's not the cake the cake is here and now that's the that's the key and that also means your inner state is no longer dependent upon external conditions and is no longer dependent upon whether you achieve so-called worldly success or not because it's very much secondary it's nice if you have it it's not a big deal if you don't that's so and you can still be you can still be determined and feel very strongly that you have it already let's say okay let's say i want to live in a great place where there's no longer cold and uh let's say it's hawaii okay i'm i want to go i want to move to hawaii this is i want to i'll be happy there when i move to hawaii or maybe it's bali i'll be when i move to bali i'll be happy there because it's

paradise it's wonderful okay i want to move to then you can manifest i want to move to but you can even paint bali on a vision board bali and so i want to move to bali but you have to be in bali in this present moment how will you feel if you're in bali if you can't feel that now then it's not going to work very well in the the tropical island that you think will make you happy no you have to experience it as this is the essence of who you are will make you happy fulfilled and joyful and then if it manifests as a tropical island that's fine but but if you when you arrive in bali when you're already feeling pleasant it's again it's an adding on to because when you arrive at bali you may find not everything is paradise even there i had i haven't been there but i had somebody who who rented a house there and then yes it was lovely lovely but there's always something when you're at night time the rats were jumping up and wanting to get into the pantry and get the food so it's not no no if it doesn't if the fulfillment does not come from within in the in the now whatever you achieve will be marred by something there's always be yes it'll be nice but something will go wrong with it but something that seems to spoil your enjoyment of it is always something that's in the nature of the external world or it doesn't last long enough because then it's taken away again or you get tired of it she's like oh this is so great okay what now it's not great anymore so the foundation is there are many ways in which you can we can talk about it realize your essence identity and there's no greater fulfillment than to realize the presence that you are the being that you are beyond the person beyond the human so that you and then you become a full human being being is the foundation that's again you remember i uh you probably knew it already the story of mary and martha i taught the other day it's in the new mary represents the being dimension martha represents the doing dimension mary is deeply immersed in being martha is active doing things ultimately they're not meant to be two different people they need to become one human who is does not not lose connectedness with being when he or she is engaged in doing and so any kind of manifestation is also a kind of doing when you want to manifest something so you the wonderful thing is you can't really fail anymore because failure means you're terribly disappointed because you didn't get to that goal that's all your life has just become you've reworked for years and you tried and then you didn't arrive at your goal and then you develop the mental concept of i have failed and whenever you give too much power to the outside world and to external conditions and to future you will fail many people who are very successful temporarily in this world are also very miserable so they fail but they fail within their success they fail there are many wealthy famous people who are miserably unhappy there are also a few wealthy famous people who are okay because they have discovered the deeper dimension within themselves there are a few but but they had to go through unhappiness first and realize that's not it i'm on the cover of all these magazines and um everybody talks about me and not me i'm just giving example no there's not enough drama in my life for people to talk much much to talk about so remember the foundation for manifestation is here and now and then enjoy the doing if you're writing a book some of you may be writing a book or have written book already or let's say you are writing uh enjoy the process of writing and always connect with the

stillness within when the next when the flow is not there go within connect with the stillness within become present and it's so powerful that there are many stories of people who were stranded in the snow they knew if i go to sleep now i'm not going to wake up i'm going to die and freeze to death and then finally a moment comes when the pull of sleep becomes so irresistible that they would rather go into sleep than stay alive if you are jet lagged you might feel a wave of tiredness pulling at you tired it's a strange thing we think we know what we're talking about because we are so familiar with it everybody gets tired and everybody sleeps but if you were not familiar with it you just arrived here from some other place that i mentioned where people don't sleep or where there are no people but other beings it would be quite amazing that everyone every night goes into sleep which has both the dream state and of course it has the dreamless state and in the dreamless state you just disappear completely and of course the dream state is recognized when you look at somebody who is asleep or when you look at your dog or your cat you can recognize immediately that they are dreaming because of the movement of their eyelids if you have a dog or cat it's just fascinating to watch them asleep and then suddenly they go or their face twitches with cats the whiskers go and with dogs sometimes they can be even little barks our dog used to image little noises that were dream barks so it would go like oh and then the legs go twitching too so he must be running in his dream and we do the same well except the barking and then of course from there we go into dreamless sleep for certain periods of time there's no more twitching just complete and utter annihilation of you and the animal also does that the animal also experiences or there's nobody there to experience it the animal goes also into merges with something so periodically all beings i don't know if it applies to mosquitoes do they dream i don't know if anybody knows or flies or worms those life forms do they dream i don't know maybe some scientists might know or maybe at this very moment somebody's working on a phd about the dream life of worms which would be not surprising because phds become very specialized these days but when you feel tired something pulls you towards out of this world we call it tired and we think when we use the word tired we know what it is that we're talking about because the very familiar word kind of hides the fact that we have no idea what tired really is and we have no idea what going into dreamless sleep really is all we know is that the pull of tiredness is enormously powerful and eventually you can't resist it hopefully not while i'm talking but tonight and it's so powerful that there are many stories of people who were stranded in the snow or in the desert and they or whatever they knew if i go to sleep now i'm not going to wake up i'm going to die and freeze to death and then they resisted and then finally a moment comes when the pull of sleep becomes so irresistible that they would rather go into sleep than stay alive and it has i may have mentioned it once or twice before i suggest that in your own experience when you get sleepy and when you're in bed and you feel you're going into sleep now just be aware and feel what it's like what what what does it feel like and you then you'll notice that what is usually not looked at because it's so familiar has an enormous sweetness to it this when you're approaching sleep and you're in bed that is the attraction of sleep is so sweet and of course at that

moment you forget all your troubles mind activity subsides and and then it goes and then that the last moments and it pulls you and then you enter the first probably the dream state and then you go and then you go disappear so everybody goes out of existence every night for certain periods of time although in that dimension there probably is no time and everybody needs to and wants to go out of existence every night and if you didn't you would go insane if you get if you're asleep deprived eventually you start to hallucinate you start to have hallucinations instead of dreams and then finally you would go insane so we come we are in existence during the daytime do things think do and then we go disappear and suddenly we are born again go out that seems to be really you could probably learn a lot understand a lot realize many things about the universe if you just observe yourself because all those things that patterns that occur to you as a human being are really microcosmic versions of macrocosmic reality so the universe and i believe there are certain similarities here with in the subatomic realm and we're going to have a conversation tomorrow with a scientist and also who has come to join us it'll be very interesting but here i just can only talk from my own experience which you can verify in your own life that you disappear periodically and you need to disappear and you couldn't survive if you didn't periodically disappear into what we call sleep but don't really know what it is and it is good it is it feels so good to disappear into that sleep realm so we have the dimension of dream and dreamless sleep and then when we wake up we experience the ordinary we experience ordinary existence which is a kind of dream too in many respects things come and go very quickly except you kind of share it with seem to share it with more people so there are groups of people who can share the same kind of dream here we share the mill valley dream and it's quite pleasant could be worse you might be in winnipeg right now in the middle of the winter but if you're in winnipeg that's fine it's just a different kind of dream and it has its attractions too especially next to a nice fireplace there is an equivalent of dreamless sleep in our ordinary existence but most people are not aware of that and that is a dimension of consciousness that is possible for human beings that has certain similarities with dreamless sleep and although spiritual teachers and so on have spoken about it and pointed to it for a long time thousands of years it still is not common knowledge that there's a potential in every human being for realizing within him or herself a state of consciousness that is deeper infinitely deeper than the ordinary state of thinking and doing normal life i sometimes call that state spaciousness inner spaciousness or sometimes call it presence or stillness in indian spirituality india i mean india the uh they have a word for they talk about they have been talking about it they have a term for this they call it the fourth state of consciousness which is i believe you have dreamless state dreamless sleep you have the dream state you have ordinary wakefulness and then you have the the fourth state which most humans don't know that it's there for them they don't know and that is the greatest one could almost say yes tragedy of a human life is to miss that the possibility that there is in a human life to realize that fourth state of consciousness there is a an assumption by spiritual seekers even in india and anybody who hasn't realized it for themselves or even had glimpses of it there is an assumption

that that fourth state is extremely hard to attain and you need countless years of spiritual practice or countless lifetimes to finally achieve the fourth state of consciousness and that belief actually prevents you from realizing it within yourself because that state of spaciousness is already in you all the time so if you have the belief that it's something that you need to achieve at some future point that belief that thought would continuously prevent you from realizing it now because you mentally will always project and then you say i'm going to meditate because i want to achieve at some point the fourth state and then you that can be a great hindrance in your meditation because it prevents you from going deeper into the present moment where the fourth state is or one could almost say it's not just where the fourth state is the present moment is the fourth state of consciousness the space of now not what happens in the now but the deeper the space in which it happens the background to your life is continuously there and continuously also often seeps through one thought be in between two thoughts you go ah three seconds for three seconds you are free of yourself and you might look at something and ah or whatever it is or just experience a moment of peace and aliveness and then of course you get drawn back into your thinking and then at another time a little space comes in again when you're maybe all kinds when you're tasting something perhaps there's just the perception of the taste without any mental interference just an aware presence behind the sense perception and then you notice that the state is always there every thought exists in that in that space is only a wave movement in the space and so it's not something that you need to attain as if you didn't have it but because it's already here it is essentially who you are it is intrinsically one with the essence of your being and if you don't know that then your life is very limited to just a little person with no transcendent dimension to your life whatsoever and so here we are in order to deepen our realization of inner spaciousness that's all it's so you realize something that is already here rather than needing to look for it so why do you often not realize it because you overlook it just like the fish may overlook the fact that it's the fish is surrounded by water and starts looking for it where's the water people keep talking about the water and the more the fish looks the less likely that it will find the water so that spaciousness is something that at first may appear in your life as a glimpse and then and at first in many people's lives they don't know that that is spaciousness they experience it as a heightened aliveness or a deeper sense of peace or joy or an absence of problems for a little moment so they don't know that this is a different dimension of consciousness that is suddenly arisen they can still confuse it with something else as I did when the shift happened and that was a rare thing in my case it didn't it happened and then kind of stayed for most people it's a more gradual thing it comes gradually first in glimpses and then more suddenly it's there for a longer period of time or you go deeper into it and there's a gradual transformation of consciousness might be so gradual you don't even notice it and when it happened to me I didn't realize that there was spaciousness I didn't have the word spaciousness I didn't know anything about the fourth state of consciousness I knew nothing about presence or even mindfulness I didn't realize even that my mind had subsided and become spacious all I knew is suddenly life

is very peaceful it feels so this moment is feels so good that's all I knew and where does this peace come from I asked didn't know I didn't know it was the depths of who I am realizing the depths of who I am was joy and peace but I didn't have a word for that I couldn't call it the depths of who I am I just why am I suddenly so peaceful and I started keeping a diary which and which said I don't know why I suddenly feel so peaceful I just want to write down my daily experience of peace in case it leaves me then at least I can remember it and I wrote it's still somewhere I don't know where it is locked away I don't need to look at it but it's interesting that there was no understanding of what where did this piece originate what is this piece how did it come about so we one could say you disappear as a person but you are there very powerfully as a presence you disappear as a person temporarily but in a very powerful way that there is a presence which you cannot define and this

[Speaker 2] (6:05:44 - 6:05:56)

you then access this dimension that is one way of putting it it's pure

[Speaker 1] (6:05:57 - 6:06:25)

pure power pure intelligence all anything created arises out of that and as you invite that into

[Speaker 2] (6:06:25 - 6:06:43)

your life it can and will transform even the way in which you live as a person and that happens

[Speaker 1] (6:06:44 - 6:07:31)

without you thinking that you need to transform yourself a transformation happens even to the person although the person obviously will always have certain limitations you're good at this but you're not good at that and so on the person obviously cannot be perfect there's always certain characteristics that define a person it has form that's understood but that dimension as you access that flows into the conditioned entity that we call the person

[Speaker 13] (6:07:34 - 6:07:47)

and can even can use the personal mind and express itself through that in other words

[Speaker 1] (6:07:49 - 6:11:22)

inspiration can happen will happen more easily intuition happens more easily a creative ability develops more easily obviously you need to have some mastery some expertise in some fields then it can the this creative energy from the trans the unconditioned realm of being or consciousness can flow into what you do and transform and empower it of

course you need to already in the case of activity you need to have already developed something that it can flow into in my case it cannot flow into becoming a fantastic swimmer or tennis player it's not going to happen it's not going to empower me on that level and it's too late for that nor is it going to come up in me with the it's the creative realization finding the the unified field theory in physics at Einstein unsuccessfully looked for the unified field theory it's not going to come through this mind because the mind this is not it has not developed that particular avenue through which spirit or consciousness could express itself creatively but it is expressing itself creatively through these words so not through nuclear physics or sports it can impact in the case of this particular person or or whatever it may be where people develop the great new like Elon Musk great some great latest thing about electric cars or whatever I'm not going to be able to do that this this is not how the creative energy can express itself through me nor through nor I'm going to be a great dancer it's much too late for that too but you might or it might not be expressed itself in any of those ways too it is possible that the as as you access that dimension the power of now as you access that dimension within yourself it may not even express itself through some creative endeavor it could be something else it could be the way in which you relate to other humans changes affects everybody that you come in contact with perhaps you carry on with an ordinary activity and yet a new energy comes into that let's say let's say you have the simplest possible job

[Speaker 2] (6:11:23 - 6:11:28)

uh let's say you're at a

[Speaker 1] (6:11:30 - 6:14:40)

at a at a toll bridge where you have to pay I this came to mind just now because some time ago I was at a toll bridge where you have to you drive there you have to pay to use the road it's toll it's called so you have to stop the car there's a man and a little woman in a little booth and he or she says one dollar please or whatever and then you give and I there was one I don't remember where it was that person was everybody felt better after paying the one dollar because she was so present and there was an energy flowing through her that every time every person who went through I imagine must have felt better because of because that brief interaction there was a an outflow of loving kindness meta loving kindness that comes out of this another way in which presence then manifests itself in this dimension I've already mentioned creative things creative endeavor can empower many things that you do or it may just manifest itself as what we could call loving kindness that flows through you as you go about your normal business perhaps you haven't developed any particular avenue through which presence could express itself creatively whatever it may be sports dance science musical instrument all the various things maybe you haven't developed maybe you could still develop it or not it doesn't matter in some way presence will use you as a channel and then something

will flow through you into this dimension and it could be just your presence itself can be a powerful tool of transformation in this dimension so that this loving kindness flows through you into this world that affects everybody you come into contact with so who knows how this will transform your work your the way in which you experience life but it will transform it so when you bring together the human and the being instead of just being a human it's not enough being a human it's a terrible fate if you only know yourself as a human you have in other words zero self-transcendence you are trapped

[Speaker 2] (6:14:40 - 6:14:59)

in this limited little self and even the big egos the little little selves if the egos

[Speaker 1] (6:15:00 - 6:15:33)

there are some people who seem to have achieved much in this world to only through having a huge ego that is possible but the achievements are really not achievements at all because they make countless people unhappy so there's no point in building up some huge enterprise and while you're doing it you're not only unhappy yourself you make everybody else unhappy too

[Speaker 6] (6:15:34 - 6:17:29)

that does not transform this world my question is about my kids i'm grateful that when i read a new earth that it resonated with me i've been looking for a spiritual path and it just it made sense to me it resonated with me and it took i read the power of now years ago and i kind of read it and got it up here and put it on a shelf and kind of moved on but this time it seems to have yes taken a little bit more yes so i'm working at it and i have four-year-old twins and an eight-year-old some my question is um how to teach them to expose them to this because um you know my wife and i have different views she considers herself to be catholic and i don't have an association with a standard religion so to speak this seems to resonate with me so i'm just trying to get a sense for how to interact with them and to share this with them yes so the twins are how old four four yeah and

[Speaker 1] (6:17:29 - 6:23:50)

the older one is he's eight eight that's a boy the oldest is a boy and the twins are boy girl oh yeah well the most important thing is yes and many even good parents don't know that first of all the the energy field at home the energy that you and your wife generate at home which is a reflection of both your states of consciousness it is one of the most important factors so what is the general energy field that on a daily basis you and your wife manifest generate in this home environment i do know that nowadays nowadays many home environments have a very nervous energy field because everybody is so busy getting things done the parents are busy getting things done the children are

encouraged to continuously do this and do that or sometimes encouraged to stop doing this or stop doing that and then they have the this additional layer of electronic devices the pads ipads and whatever other devices samsung and so on uh the parents use them the phones children begin to use them but mainly the the constant field almost stressful environment to to visit some of these families there's always something next thing to do that seems to the the underlying in the underlying energy you're seeing what's the next thing that we need to do and have you done that yet come on let's do have you brushed your teeth no okay then do it many good meaning well-meaning parents interact with their children predominantly 90 or more even 100 on the level of doing either do this or stop doing that yeah i'm pretty good at being a human doing yes that's good to be a human being yes yeah and so the being of the child is never fully acknowledged in order to acknowledge the being of the child you have to spend moments when you you you give the child your fullest attention not not your fullest attention because because you're talking about something that needs to be done but your fullest attention to for example by just listening to the child when he has something to say to you or tell a story or giving your fullest attention occasionally by just observing them or him or her observing as they go about their life in the house it just needs to be a few minutes where your attention rests upon them even if they are sometimes not directly interacting with you because by by observing them at play for example without telling them to do this or that or don't do this or that but simply allow your attention to rest on them and watch them if possible in that state of relatively as much as possible thoughtless awareness where you're just the aware presence for the children and then occasionally when you come in when you they come close to you to look into their eyes doesn't have to be long they don't even have to you don't don't say let's look into each other's eyes you look into their eyes when when you talk to them when they talk to you and in that moment of looking you connect with their being so that part of your interaction with the child is not based on doing but on a flow of being towards the child so that you connect on the level of being that means you acknowledge the deeper reality of that child you truly acknowledge their being i would suggest that in modern families in most modern families children very often get read in states of anxiety or great restlessness later becoming in teenage years becoming states of antagonism and anger and i would suggest that often the child doesn't know why there is this anger and restlessness it often goes back to the parents inability or they they've done everything for the child on the level of the on the doing level but the children feel unseen by the parent they feel unseen in their being they are not acknowledged in their being and if they are unseen that vital dimension of their being feels starved it is not encouraged by the child and and the deepest connection with the child is missing the parent doesn't know that they think i'm really a good i'm doing all i

[Speaker 6] (6:23:50 - 6:24:18)

can make it makes sense because with the four-year-olds in particular i get what you're saying i get with all of them but in particular with them they're not getting that i can see

that they're they're angry about not getting the attention that they want they throw really big tantrums yes and my my four-year-old son actually gets physically angry yes so yes yes yes now you

[Speaker 1] (6:24:18 - 6:27:50)

don't give them the attention when they demand it through throwing a tantrum that's not the moment to give them although when the tantrum does happen it's good if you can be spacious and allow it to be while it happens instead of reacting so that they don't pull you into a similar state of consciousness when you get angry because they are in a tantrum so if you can then take that as a signal to be really alert and present and observe and so the that is not the moment though to connect because the child at that moment isn't there's the pain body is there covering up the essence of their being so the moment they demand attention is not the best moment to give them attention because the demand for attention can also be an egoic thing so it's not necessarily that they want the ego doesn't want attention on the deepest level it doesn't know what the deepest level is the ego wants a different kind of attention it wants to it wants you to to strengthen the ego in the child and so it's often is also a desire of the ego to control the environment because there's no other ways so very young children cry very loud it's an attempt of the developing ego to exert some control over their environment and that's good not to give them what they need what they demand there but give them attention in other moments and the real attention is let your awareness rest upon them look at them see them they want to be seen that's their being acknowledge their being so that that's don't again i have to repeat it because it's so important don't always interact only through doing or don't do this don't do that which tends to be the case with families and with your wife the same make sure that there is some spaciousness in your relationship no busy how the no matter how busy the household is make sure there is some spaciousness in the relationship between you so that there's some spaciousness emanating from both of you some peace even though you may be busy but there's some peace emanation into the energy field in your home that comes from you and that's children respond very much to the energy field that they grow up in that affects them very deeply so there's and the interaction between you and your wife is what generates that energy field and then give them attention doesn't have to be long periods of time but often at night before bedtime and during the day watch them listen to them occasionally fully and don't interfere with some kind of advice necessarily just listen just look acknowledge their beautiful being which is there and that's the greatest thing you can do for the child

[Speaker 3] (6:31:33 - 6:34:13)

hello friends welcome welcome everyone welcome everyone to this live teaching session with Eckhart Tolle it's on how presence can transform our lives this session is presented by Eckhart Teachings and Sounds True and my name is Tammy Simon I'm the founder of

Sounds True and it's an absolute delight and honor to be able to host this live teaching session we'll be exploring presence and its power and this session occurs as we are opening up registration to an online program with Eckhart called Doorways Into Presence you can learn more about the program at Eckhart's website EckhartTolle.com it's a program that explores 14 different gateways into presence delivered over the course of seven weeks two gateways a week in the experience as a community practicing entering and moving through these portals together to give you a sense the gateways include meditating with a candle contemplating the question who am I meditating with the sky everyday activities like drinking a refreshing cup of apple juice and more one of the practices one of the gateways that Eckhart introduces in Doorways Into Presence has us enter what he calls inner body awareness and Eckhart here in this special teaching session I was wondering if you could start by sharing with everyone who's joined us how the inner body is a gateway to presence what the link is and then actually take us into the guided experience of attuning to the inner body as a doorway into presence how does that sound as a way to begin?

[Speaker 1] (6:34:18 - 6:57:12)

Thank you Tammy hello everybody that sounds like a wonderful idea presence we could say is the dimension of consciousness most humans are only occasionally present for brief moments and some humans are almost never present at all and those that are present for brief moments usually don't recognize the significance of that their mind interprets it in a different way for example as a moment when they felt particularly alive or deeply at peace or full of life energy but usually they attribute that to some external cause so presence as a dimension of consciousness we could call that a higher intelligence that humans can access and recognize within themselves and that higher intelligence can bring about can manifest in many different ways in a person's life for example as a heightened creativity so that you're able to become more creative in whatever endeavor you're engaged in you have a creative flow suddenly happens and flows into your mind brings about new ideas that nobody has had before can improve the quality of whatever it is that you're doing whatever activity you may be engaged in it improves the way in which you perform that activity because when presence flows into what you do you do it without ego the fact that presence has arisen within you means the ego has subsided when presence diminishes usually the ego returns so for many humans for quite a long period of time they fluctuate those if you are if you have entered the awakening process as many of you have you will fluctuate from being present to being drawn back into mind identification identification with thinking which is the ego so you access presence as a dimension of consciousness and in what way it then manifests in your life in what way it changes your life varies from person to person you may not even create anything new because it presence may not necessarily manifest as a heightened ability to to become creative it could just be that it greatly improves the quality of your relationships with other humans or your ability to enjoy life the present

moment deeply it enables you to have empathy with other human beings and other life forms that before perhaps only happened rarely because the ego cannot really have true empathy with other humans or life forms empathy compassion loving kindness benevolence that flows out from you towards the world all life forms other human beings all these are manifestations of presence so it is the ultimately the only absolutely worthwhile thing to realize in your lifetime i don't call it achieve i call it realize because achieve implies that presence isn't here yet and you need to work hard make efforts in order to bring presence into your life but that's not how it is because presence is already there within you waiting to be realized it is waiting to be realized so presence is the it is a realization of presence it is not to become present is not an achievement because that would be an egoic thing or i i am present now i have achieved it who has achieved it no presence has arisen the ego has subsided so it's the realization of presence is already there underneath the incessant stream of thinking that most humans are identified with and underneath that there is this vast realm of unconditioned consciousness which we could also call stillness so to find that to this to realize that is the most important thing in your life it is a as i see it is the purpose of human existence is to embody the flowering of presence the arising of presence which on a collective level is the next stage in the evolution of humanity and is the only thing that can save us from the madness of the human ego both in its individual and collective aspect presence you cannot understand conceptually what it is you have to experience it realize it so there are doorways into presence into that realization and they these doorways they direct your attention away from where it normally is which is your attention or your consciousness is trapped in the stream of conceptualization and thinking for most humans almost a hundred percent of their conscience is trapped in that continuous stream of conceptualization which is involuntary incessant thinking and so we need to reclaim consciousness from the stream of thinking and then discover what is there beyond the stream of thinking not anything that is separate from the stream of thinking but is related this vastness of presence is related to the stream of thinking in the same way that the waves or ripples on the surface of the ocean are related to the totality of the ocean so most humans only know themselves as the waves and ripples on the surface they are surface phenomena that is the horizontal dimension of human existence that's all they know they know themselves as surface phenomena but there is a vertical dimension the intersection of course expressed in this symbol of the cross horizontal dimension vertical dimension presence is the vertical dimension so we have doorways that enable us to reclaim attention from the stream of thinking one of these doorways a very powerful one is the inner body another one that is closely related to the inner bodies and i often combine the two into one another one is awareness of your breathing sounds very simple awareness of your breathing so here for our practice i'm going to combine the two into one because they are very closely related awareness of your breath of course goes back thousands of years it's a very ancient spiritual practice very powerful spiritual practice why is it so powerful because it's a simple way of reclaiming consciousness withdrawing it from the stream of thinking by placing awareness on the inflow and outflow of your breath which

means and i'm not not just talking about it but as i speak you can verify it experience it here now being aware of your breathing begins with the simple fact that you notice that breathing is happening that's simple enough mostly of course you wouldn't notice it it's usually unconscious but something in you makes it happen you cannot stop it something if you wants to live and the breathing happens now you suddenly become aware that you're breathing some of your attention is moved away from thinking and is now accompanying the inflow of the breath into the body the attention is linked to the breast now so you could say you observe the inflow of the breath into the body and you observe the outflow you feel it you sense it observe is a visual thing and we're just using the term but you sense it you feel it the inflow and the outflow and while you sense that if you're really present with your breath you will notice you're not thinking you cannot be aware of your breathing and think at the same time so it's a very simple wonderful way of taking attention away from thinking most of which is useless anyway i'm not talking about constructive thinking creative thinking but all the useless thinking that humans are tortured by you breathe in and as you breathe in you can feel the air going or the energy of it flowing all the way into your abdomen and as you read as you breathe in the abdomen rises slightly and as the abdomen rises slightly you can sense an energy field within there there's an energy that is that is the beginning of sensing the inner body the the animating presence within the body so your the the breath awareness and body awareness can go together breath awareness takes you into body awareness and you can continue to to experience both at the same time as a single experience so let's continue with that practice inhalation into the abdomen and as you reach the end of the inhalation for a brief moment two or three seconds you pause you hold it there before you breathe out again at the end of the out breath you also pause for two or three seconds and there's a deep stillness there in that pause you breathe in again abdomen you feel the energy that is the inner body there and breathe out and a moment of cessation deep stillness and then start again you breathe in abdomen hold that feel the energy and breathe out and the next time as you breathe in feel the energy in the abdomen and now you can feel the energy in the abdomen actually spreading out into the rest of your body like this is a place from where the energy spreads out you can feel the that your legs are alive your chest is alive your arms are alive you can feel the animating presence that gives life to the body the invisible vast intelligence that sustains every moment that sustains the incredibly complicated functions of the various organs of your body and coordinates them all unbelievably complex thing there is the body and there's a vast intelligence that is there it is invisible it is part of the consciousness that you are of which the thinking mind is only a tiny fragment and so this vast intelligence the animating principle that gives life to the body the invisible you before and not you become conscious of it or it becomes conscious of itself when you feel the inner body but let's continue breathing in abdomen energy spreading out throughout the body and breathe out and now we can shift our attention this is a relatively short practice we shift our attention mainly from your breathing to the feeling of the inner body energy the animating presence within the body feel that you're still conscious of your breathing but

at the same time you're conscious of every cell in your body is alive you can sense in your hands you can sense there is this very subtle sense of aliveness in your hands in your feet in your legs your arms your chest and now slowly you can feel the totality of the body inner body as a single field of energy intensely alive and your attention remains there and you continue to be aware of your breathing but at the same time you feel this wonderful energy that pervades the entire body it is not the physical body it it makes the life of it is the life behind the physical body because the physical body is not life life is the invisible presence of consciousness itself and as you feel the inner body there's little or no thinking and you're very alert you may even want to close your eyes for a moment in order to feel the energy of the inner body even more every cell of the body is alive this by the way is a very healing thing to do there's enormous healing power in that inhabit the body the body loves to be noticed to be known so you feel that and you continue to be aware of your breathing also and it may be possible for you as your eyes are closed to perhaps even let go of a physical image you may still have in your mental image you may still have of your of your body so that all that remain and remains in your awareness is no longer the body but that energy itself that no longer has any form and now you have reached a level of presence which we could also call awareness in which you realize that this vastly intelligent energy field is consciousness itself before it becomes a person and you are that presence you are that presence that is your true identity so the person is a

[Speaker 2] (6:57:12 - 6:57:33)

passing phenomenon and ultimately you are not a person you are that vast energy that

[Speaker 1] (6:57:35 - 7:05:09)

briefly takes on the disguise of a person on the horizontal level of your life and then you hold that it is so once you connect with that realize that that is that your essence it's a wonderful realization and then you hold your attention there remain there and enjoy yourself in a deeper sense of the words enjoy yourself enjoy the being of you the enjoyment of being the enjoyment that you are of being i am this is why in india this realization is called it is the sat chit ananda sat is the being chit is consciousness ananda is the joy that that you feel that is the conscious being is joy conscious being realizing that you are i am without adding anything to it the primordial beingness of life itself that is a very deep realization that liberates you from the person when you realize that the person becomes a something you can play with enjoy for a while never take it too seriously it's like a role you play but you are not the role it's just something that unfolds but you are you can be rooted in the in the being of you that's why in the old testament moses asked the story goes moses meets god on a mountaintop and he asks who are you god says i am the i am one of the most profound statements in the bible then moses says what shall i tell my people when i come down from the mountain what shall i say who spoke to me what what shall i tell them god says it's a story god says tell them that

i am spoke to you did moses understand what he was saying i don't know um and then we make a jump into jesus gospel of john before abraham was i am said jesus before that is the timeless dimension of consciousness itself that is the essence of who you are it manifests as on this horizontal dimension it manifests as a physical body but that's not what it is it is a disguise so this is presence the realization of presence the most important thing in your life and even as i speak now perhaps as you're listening some of your attention will be on the words you take in the words but you can continue to feel the inner energy field of the body even as you listen and that that is a very important part it's not just here i'm aware of the inner body and then the rest of my life i lose myself again in everything no you can be you can stay conscious and at the same time perceive and even act and speak still feel the connectedness with being connectedness with being so that frees you from the ego because now you no longer need to derive your sense of who you are from the whatever your mind is telling you about who you are your memories your narratives your stories which you call my life that no longer yes you remember the stories what happened but they do not give you your sense of identity anymore they your sense of identity comes from a deeper place and so it liberates you from the narrow troublemaking ego identity that's true liberation ah and then you look at another human deeply and you can sense that they too are that divine presence even if they can't if they may not know it but if you can sense it in yourself you can sense it in the other so then your relationships change because you then you you should yes you still relate to a person whatever the person is but but but not only to a person you also relate to the transcendent dimension of that person which you recognize as one with your identity and that recognition is love true love recognition of oneness so this is we just encapsulated the entire spiritual life that is the essence that that is the essence of all spirituality and it's simple but tammy may have another question for us we have received a question

[Speaker 3] (7:05:09 - 7:05:52)

specifically eckhart about this gateway of inner body awareness because you describe it as so enjoyable and we have some participants in the doorways into presence program who have said yes sometimes it's very enjoyable but sometimes when tuning into the inner body it can actually feel like rough waters disturbing a lot of intensity anxious feelings like that and we're wondering how to work with that in this gateway yes thank you tammy that's a good point

[Speaker 1] (7:05:53 - 7:21:23)

often people ask that question so as you direct your attention into the inner body you may feel more strongly something that was already there in your emotional field which may not be pleasant a disturbance in many cases this emotion it is an emotional energy in many cases this emotion is anxiety or fear very common in other cases that emotion may also be residual anger those are those two are perhaps the most common forms of

disturbance that people feel and many humans continuously in the background have an emotion that is either that is anxiety that is the most common or anger which is also fairly common there's also possible there's a deep sadness that is also sometimes occurred a gloomy energy a dark gloomy energy so whatever it is it is emotion that lives in you and perhaps has lived in you for a long time sometimes it's some it's caused by something that happened only yesterday and it's still the emotion still lingers in you but in many cases it is almost always been there sometimes very much in the background at other times a bit more in the foreground and suddenly you feel it more strongly because your attention goes there and there it is let's say it's anxiety it lives here somewhere and you feel that disturbance as you go within now the important thing is you've taken attention away from thinking by directing your attention into the inner body and that is a good thing because then the emotion that you feel as you direct your attention the focus of your attention of on the emotion emotion then cannot rise up into your mind and use your thinking which is what it often does so when you feel anxiety the anxiety can cause you to think anxious thoughts and every anxious thought adds more energy to the anxiety that you feel and some humans live like that some humans continuously live like that they worry they're anxious they're fearful and the emotion and the thought processes are linked unconsciously thought feeds the emotion the emotion generates even more thought it's a vicious circle but if you direct your attention to the emotion itself then the emotion cannot use your mind anymore you you just observe because you are the there's an awareness there now the awareness that this is a disturbance within you and what you do is first of all you recognize it for what it is it's an energy field that is there you can feel it now that is a big difference from what normally happens in the unconscious state of humans because in the unconscious state the emotion becomes you you become a fearful person an anxious person it takes you over and when you direct your attention to it then it is still there but is it can no longer pretend to be you in other words by placing the your attention on the emotion emotion cannot become a person it remains as an emotion it's recognized as an emotion and you are aware of it and then first thing you do is you accept that it is there because it's the present moment and whatever arises in the present moment you better accept it because it already is it is so you can't argue with what is so you better accept that this is there you acknowledge it it is a disturbance within you an energy that does not feel pleasant but yes it may even be quite acute maybe perhaps it's intense fear then use your breath as described before breathe into the abdomen and then feel that the fear you decide that as much as possible you would like to release this fear and allow it to flow out with your breath and so you breathe out the fear as much as possible or the anger because you decide that you don't really want it or need it but the ego likes to identify with it the ego loves those things it says i want no i want it but it does want it so you it breathe you breathe it out and then some of it may still be there when you've done it a few times that's fine and then you feel the rest of your body where the where this energy is not present not the fearful the anxious or angry energy may not be in your hands or your arms or your legs your hands arms legs are fine they are perhaps not affected by this

thing that you feel in your chest or belly area so you feel the rest of your body is alive you feel the energy in your hands and your legs and your arms and your breathing and there's still some of that emotion is still there but there's been a very significant shift from being the emotion to being the presence behind the emotion to being the space in which the emotion exists so the shift of identity you are the space for the emotion you're that you are the awareness behind the emotion as you know this i call this old emotion that lives in a human being some for many years we i call it the pain body the pain body is accumulated old emotion and that pain body as you become present gradually it becomes released sometimes in exceptional cases it can suddenly really be released in an instant but in most cases it takes a while it can take you you experience it again and again sometimes it takes you over again but more and more you become aware of it and don't mistake it for what who or what you are you are not the emotion the emotion lives in you you are the awareness behind the emotion you are the presence that witnesses the emotion so one could say almost that here's the here's the unpleasant emotion and then there's the space around it and that space around it so to speak which starts with the inner space of your body that space around it becomes bigger and then you notice that who you essentially are is the space around the emotion but not the emotion itself one could say that the emotion is like a block of ice frozen energy and then gradually it dissolves as you bring the light of consciousness to it but can use that analogy painful emotions the pain body cannot survive for too long in the light of consciousness so just being aware of it is important or that it may not feel pleasant at first but it's worth it won't kill you it's not that bad but it may kill you if you're so unconscious that you totally identify with it but recognizing it it won't kill you you can have a little bit of unpleasantness that you can have a child it's more difficult if a child experiences very because of environment whatever happening in the child's life if a child experiences painful emotion the only thing that the child often can do is cut themselves off from it because it's too they cannot tolerate the pain so they have to push it out of awareness that's the only thing a child can often do and then so it's pushed out of awareness because the child would not be able to live with it then as you become an adult you can tolerate it but many adults are still so trapped in that child pattern of not wanting not thinking it is so threatening i cannot allow myself to feel it but if you do allow yourself to feel it that is the beginning of the transmutation transmutation is the correct word transmutation because that painful emotion can become transmuted it's actually it's trapped consciousness on a lower vibrational frequency so it can be transmuted into a higher frequency then it becomes freed it becomes liberated so it's sometimes the case that people who have a lot of negative emotion in other words a heavy pain body those people often are much more motivated to awaken because they can't stand the pain anymore and they become more motivated to become present and then all that trapped emotion which is low vibrational frequency consciousness at a low vibrational frequency is suddenly freed and becomes transmuted into the higher frequency of presence ah and that's and that you see perhaps a deeper meaning behind the old idea from medieval times and beyond of the transmutation of the alchemy the transmutation of base metal

into gold that was the external interpretation of it transforming base metal into a precious substance of gold so there's the alchemists worked with that there were books written about alchemy but the the they are all really talking about an inner transformation the transformation of human consciousness the transformation of pain into presence of suffering into consciousness transformation of the alchemy the alchemical transmutation of suffering into consciousness and that is the ultimate purpose of human suffering yes human suffering can end challenges no suffering can end but it has a purpose until it brings about this alchemical transmutation then you rise above suffering you will still face challenges in life but these challenges will not be transformed into suffering suffering amazing amazing process so eventually you will be thankful for you for your suffering and for the emotional pain that you have had because it was an essential part of your awakening

[Speaker 3] (7:21:29 - 7:22:21)

eckhart i just have one final question for you you mentioned towards the beginning of this live teaching that many of us in the process of awakening experience a fluctuation between being identified with our thinking mind and our emotions and presence there's this fluctuation and i'd love to hear more about your guidance on how we can make a lasting shift so that living with presence becomes our new way of living each day yes the important thing is present moment awareness

[Speaker 1] (7:22:22 - 7:34:08)

because that's all there is sometimes people wonder will i be able to sustain presence what do i how can i sustain presence better forget about that the the only vital question is am i present now or am i lost in my mind that's a vital question you can only be present now so the point of power is in the present moment now how can i how can i be present in the rest of my life it always comes back to the present moment in this awakening process many times probably you will lose yourself again in your mind you lose yourself in the horizontal dimension of life you lose awareness of the vertical dimension the being of you you lose you lose yourself in the doing unaware of being and when you lose yourself in doing which includes the primordial doing is thinking doing the thinking and then all the outer doing and all the things that continues to demand your attention they're all mental phenomena anyway so that you lose yourself in doing you lose yourself in your mind you lose yourself on the horizontal dimension and then inevitably some form of suffering very quickly when you lose yourself on the horizontal dimension very quickly some form of suffering will come into your life usually it's anxiety fear anger stress impatience regret feelings of envy of countless negative feelings all kinds of things can come in and so we could call it suffering we can call it the most generic term would be unhappiness in one form or another arises and that can be you can learn to recognize this when it arises we could call it a dysfunctional mental emotional state you recognize it for what it is and you say oops i must have lost the

present moment you get stressed about something you get upset about something oh i must have lost the present moment you can you can use it as an alarm clock that tells you wake up stay awake you can return your the moment you realize that you lost yourself you have a choice you can continue to go back into the horizontal dimension totally trapped in the horizontal dimension or you can step out of it and enter the vertical for a moment take a conscious breath feel the inner body don't believe your mind when your mind tells you no i don't have time for this you do have time for this because it doesn't take much time to take a conscious breath or feel the inner body by taking conscious breath let's say something upsets you in daily life irritates you upsets you and you can feel thoughts associated with you by the way it's more likely you're not upset by the situation you're upset by the thoughts that you have about your situation the situation is as it is every situation is as it is the upset is caused how how you enter your mind interprets the situation a negative narrative this is awful i can't stand this anymore why why did i why can't they do this he shouldn't have done that he should have done what all kinds of narratives so you realize that's losing yourself in the unconscious thought processes so you gradually learn to return to the present moment again and you lose yourself the moment you notice that you lost yourself some presence has returned because if there are no presence at all you would not even know that you are lost in your mind you would be so lost that you wouldn't know that you're lost and if you don't know you're lost in your mind you're truly lost it's the same way let's say a person who is mentally ill if they know that they are mentally ill there is some chance of recovery but if you are truly mentally ill you don't know that you're mentally ill you're so taken over by the mental illness you're totally lost in it but when you are unconscious in a normal sense that is also this normal being unconsciously and completely identified with your thinking mind now you may not be people you you're not mentally ill in the conventional sense of the word but the way i see it the normal state of human unconsciousness is a state of mental illness so normal the normal state of human unconsciousness has this it's not entirely mentally ill but it has a strong element a strong pathological element to it if that were not the case humans would not create this havoc that they create on the planet and have done for a long time so there is a strong element of something deeply dysfunctional in the human mind also wonderful things but always marked by something very deeply dysfunctional and that is the condition that all the ancient traditions have recognized they called it uh unconsciousness or delusion the state of being spiritually asleep the state of original sin which really means it's an original dysfunction that everybody inherits christianity got original sin some the state of suffering that the buddha says is normal that every human they can't get out of it unless they awaken suffering is normal unless you awaken if you don't awaken buddha says wherever you go whatever you do do whatever condition you encounter sooner or later and usually sooner you will encounter suffering no matter where you go or what you do it's very very true unless something changes within you you awaken so they all point to some fundamental dysfunction that humans are born with and this is ultimately this looks like a very negative thing but ultimately it is this fundamental dysfunction that will provide the

brings about the suffering and the suffering brings about the desire to awaken the the that is the that the motivating factor behind wanting and needing to awaken out of that unconsciousness that motivating factor is provided by suffering so suffering is both good and bad amazing quite amazing so presence then you you need to find a moment of presence as the moment you remember that you are lost you can choose to be present if only if only take a moment of presence even in a complicated situation that you're dealing with take a moment of presence breathe in feel the inner body become familiar with the feeling of the inner body become familiar so that you can easily quickly go there and direct your attention away from thinking and to drop down into inner body field the being of and if it's only in terms of temporal time maybe it's only a minute and even a minute it makes a lot of difference here if you can find 10 20 times a day one minute of presence make will make an enormous difference in your life and quite soon a minute will become a bit longer and then gradually it's no longer you no longer need to interrupt your activities to be present after a while you develop the ability to sense presence in the background of your life even while you're engaged in dealing with things in the foreground and that is reconciling the horizontal and vertical dimension in your life that is across at the present moment is the intersection of the horizontal and vertical so you deal with the horizontal without losing your rootedness in the vertical and that is the mastery of life and that is the fulfillment of the purpose of your incarnation here so it doesn't matter externally what the circumstances of your life are because in any circumstances you can you might be imprisoned any circumstances you can find this uh find the intersection between the vertical and the horizontal so that you become a human who is able to deal with the things on this world in this world without losing him or herself in this world you're rooted in the transcendent

[Speaker 3] (7:34:16 - 7:36:49)

that concludes our session for today heckart thank you so much and thank you to everyone for being with us how presence can transform our lives again this session is occurring as we are opening the registration for a program that's called doorways into presence and just to share personally for one moment we filmed this program over the course of several days and at the end i had the feeling that the way that these 14 gateways were professionally filmed and delivered with so much clarity from eckhart the instruction and the guided experience where the viewer does it right along with eckhart that this was historic actually and was tremendous medicine for the culture for all of us in the society and you know i've recorded so many different programs but there's a couple handfuls where i've had this moment of kind of chills in the back of my body of knowing the historic nature and the power of the program and that's really what i felt with doorways into presence again it's 14 different gateways that eckhart takes us through it's delivered over seven weeks there are live community sessions and an online interactive practice guideline workbook additionally people who participate in the program will receive a two-month membership in eckhart tolle now which offers over 400

hours of eckhart's teachings so again you can learn more at eckharttolle.com here in the present moment thank you thank you for being with us thank you friends heard uh

[Speaker 11] (7:36:49 - 7:37:38)

just a few minutes ago before you came on stage that there was a bit of a rush to get very close proximity physically to you and i think i've i might have heard you mentioned before the idea of a silent transmission of the teacher between the teacher and the student and we just talked about how someone who's deeply unconscious in a room when you go in that room with them you can feel it and it's you can feel the pull and therefore when you're with someone who's very conscious and present you can also feel that and feel open yes can you can you speak to that a little bit about the physical presence of yes someone yes there is the

[Speaker 1] (7:37:39 - 7:55:58)

in addition to the words that are being spoken the the words come out of a certain state of consciousness so when we meet there is the dimension of the verbal dimension the words that are being spoken but there's also a state of consciousness out of which the words come and that state of consciousness also emanates it's less noticeable than the words because the words the mind looks for the words and mentally they are taken in the sound is decoded translated and in addition to the words there is another dimension of teaching that is the emanation of presence and i'd like to i'm glad you bring this up now because for the second part of our retreat i'd like to have a little bit more silence also so that you can or many of you will be able to directly sense that power of silence and if you can sense silence coming from me or stillness rather that means it's also in you if you can sense that there is an emanation it must be in you if it were not in you you wouldn't even know it so if you can sense there is a silent emanation behind the words or silent emanation when no words are being spoken then that's a wonderful thing that can strengthen your own presence it's a bit i believe i used the analogy in one of the books of a burning a burning log in the fireplace there's a log and if you put it next to another log that's burning strongly then that will help the block that only just started to burn maybe burning is not the best analogy but it's burning in a good sense because in a way what's being burned up here is the unconsciousness of the ego the unconsciousness of the ego can be burned up through suffering and this is happening to most people on the planet that is how they make progress spiritually through suffering a lot of it self-inflicted or either on themselves or by humans on other humans and the other way of burning up the egoic self is through exposing yourself to a spiritual teaching or teacher and that can be done through a book a book has a certain power that is released if it came it if the book was written from presence in some strange way which i don't know how it happens the words still have a certain power the moment you read them and if there is an opening into presence in you they can the words can put you into presence so there are many people who read my books they've read them several times and they

pick them up again and again not necessarily to learn something new on the level of information although that can also happen because sometimes you realize when your conscience has changed you hadn't really understood something that you had read previously but you pick up the book because just reading one page or half a page can put you again into the state of presence so there's definitely just as unconsciousness spreads can you an un very unconscious human can infect many others around them with unconsciousness and nowadays you don't even need to be around them you can infect others through the internet so the internet has a lot of it can be very infectious and a lot of unconsciousness in itself of course it's neutral it can be used to spread consciousness and i'm attempting to do that of course but it is also used to spread unconsciousness so it's a neutral thing can be used for for higher purposes and lower purposes yes a state of consciousness infects others presence i would no longer use for presence i would no longer use the word in fact because it has negative connotations presence uh can pull others into presence so that but only if there is some opening in the other there needs to be that receptivity the it is almost to say that there is an a faculty in a human that in many humans is dormant or completely obscured and that faculty is the faculty of presence it's like an organ that is not operating yet but not a physical organ the ability to be present is a faculty a potential in every human being that still in most humans is still dormant and at some point in a person's life that something happens to awaken that faculty and it comes to life and when that happens and often it happens through suffering but it can happen in some cases there are some children born these days that already have that openness i've met some who are already born that was perhaps almost unknown in my generation they're already born with that faculty that's already awakened so they are immediately receptive even at the age of six they would be receptive to it i wasn't i believe i don't know but but there are also some and those tend to be born also into relatively conscious a relatively conscious family so definitely there is the wordless teaching and there is the teaching through words and both operate stop cherishing opinions now he's not saying stop having opinions because that would be difficult you can't at one stroke give up all opinions when the mind becomes active especially in a conversation opinions are expressed the egoic mind usually needs to respond in order to assert its existence or strengthen its sense of self particularly with opinions it can happen easily that before you know it you have been taken over by a mind stream the question is whether there's at any given moment there's enough presence in you so you can be aware of the movement of your thoughts in a conversation that's the challenge otherwise you're lost in the mind stream and the reactive patterns of the mind a good practice is to become aware of yourself listening when somebody says something be aware of two things when you're listening to another person but the other person may be voicing an opinion or gossiping or criticizing somebody else as is often the case when you're listening be aware of two things rather than one thing so make it into a spiritual practice be aware of obviously what you're listening to the content and at the same time be aware of yourself as the listener the presence that makes the listening possible the presence in you that makes the listening

possible so as you sit with people you are there as a listening presence in addition to being aware of what they're talking about you feel your continuing presence there and now if you never said anything that would be an easier practice but at some point of course you will probably because it's a normal human situation you will probably begin to speak also and then the important thing is not to get taken over by your mind stream you need to be particularly alert when a negativity comes in as you mentioned gossip about other people you find yourself you say agreeing or disagreeing so you're taking up a mental position is there is there something in between that is not necessarily agreeing not necessarily disagreeing in between the two mental positions of acceptance of what they're saying or reinforcing it with your opinion agreeing to it or disagreeing is there a neutral space from where you can simply observe possible mental positions mental positions in others and your own tendency to adopt a mental position one good practice i believe i even recommended it somewhere in the book is when everybody expressing their opinions whatever it may be about a good practice is and let's say it makes nobody's asking you let's say for your opinion and it makes no difference to the situation so they are not trying to decide some course of action but simply people are simply putting out their opinions you can observe the almost compulsion to give your opinion especially things like politics or other favorite things that people love to express opinions about you might feel the compulsion to say something and as a spiritual practice just let go of needing to put forward your opinion so in other words you ask yourself what happens if i don't express my opinion how does that feel of course it doesn't make any difference to the situation or who you are so to just refrain from unnecessarily expressing your opinion is a spiritual practice in itself and at first you feel almost that you're losing some of your identity when you're not participating in that but you're actually going away from egoic identity to a deeper place of awareness so the the pull of the mind is very strong when you're discussing things and other people are expressing their positions identifying with their positions be aware observe in other people the emotional charge behind their mental positions also observe how there's no there's no awareness of their of their mental position is complete identification with the thought streams so be there when you're with people be there as an observer also not just as if somebody's participating observe the force behind mental positions and if you see it in others how they get taken over by their opinions the buddha talks about the the thicket of opinions and how people get entangled in that really what he's talking about is identifying with thoughts so the thoughts become you and so people get trapped in the thicket of opinions as the buddha puts it and of course one zen master i can't remember the name recommended as a spiritual practice a very simple but powerful spiritual practice stop cherishing opinions he actually said don't seek the truth just cease cherishing opinions stop cherishing opinions there's no need to seek the truth stop cherishing opinions now he's not saying stop having opinions because that would be difficult you can't at one stroke give up all opinions nor is it necessary but he says stop cherishing opinions to cherish means really to identify to give your to have your whole sense of self in your opinions which are mental positions stop cherishing opinions stop

identifying with the mental positions then you can still have them but you are not they don't have you that's a fundamental difference for most people who are unaware in other words for most people they don't have opinions you can almost say the opinions have them they are energy forces mental energy fields that take possession of you completely and then it's not you think you have an opinion no the opinion has you the mental position has you it'll it's kind of like a parasitic presence in you so great spiritual practice rather than looking for the truth or god or self-realization or enlightenment stop identifying with your mental positions stop cherishing opinions that's a spiritual practice thank you hello

[Speaker 7] (7:55:58 - 7:56:44)

i live in las vegas nevada which is very mind dominated and uh it's tough there um there seems to be two forces in my mind that's build up energy and it's very strong and it keeps me from uh getting in touch with my true self into creating more space and cultivating that space one of them is that it's not that interesting i'd rather go along with interesting thoughts and do interesting activities and also i have this fear that if i don't analyze and constantly think about like solutions and things in my life that everything's gonna fall apart so it's hard those two forces are built especially where i live it makes it even more increases it more so the energy

[Speaker 1] (7:56:44 - 8:04:23)

field there is a kind of nervous yes actually i work in a casino too that's a wonderful challenge to stay conscious there yes it is that's your spiritual practice right i've been there i've walked through some of the casinos in amazement and the it's it's a quite a place that seems to come out of some kind of dream when you walk around las vegas it's a but it's actually quite interesting when the mind doesn't label it it's actually quite amazing oh all these all these strange life forms and what they have created it's quite amazing it's there's an intense aliveness there would i want to live there i don't know there have been some spiritual teachers who moved there i know of at least two i think it was andrew harvey a spiritual teacher moved to las vegas and there was a spiritual teacher called vernon howard who lived near las vegas and there may be one or two others why they moved there i'm not sure perhaps they maybe they loved it or perhaps uh to pay less tax perhaps who knows the well the challenge of course is uh to stay present and have stillness inside you that what you mentioned now you need to think about your your life problems or your life this is a very very common uh assumption unconscious assumption in humans that if i don't think about my problems my life is going to fall apart i need i have to think about my life and what's going to happen and transfer of course nothing is going to fall apart if you stop thinking things will get better if you stop thinking with the exception of focus thinking in case there's a specific problem that needs to be addressed then focus thinking and then step even there stepping back into stillness so it's a wonderful thing if you're able to be present and still

in las vegas then of course you're a master it's many people have been able to be present and still out in nature be a beautiful forest or the seashore or on top of a mountain and you watch the sunrise wow very still so still let's move here says the mind let's move here where it's so still and then wherever it is and if you do move there for a while it'll be wonderful oh it's so still and then of course the mind is becomes restless after a while there's nothing happening and you're not challenged by anything anymore if you have a meditation practice then you can of course convince yourself that you have finally achieved and you meditate five hours a day and let's say somehow food is brought to you as i remember a monk i knew buddhist monk telling me that story that he meditated in a hut up a mountain in thailand for half a year and he attained complete peacefulness peace nirvana he thought and every day somebody would bring him a bowl of food nothing to worry about nothing to do just be present and still the only challenge were mosquitoes he said but he learned to deal with that in other words to just completely accept and not mentally label it and just being used by them for food so he was came with that that was one challenge then he had to go back into the city to renew his visa because he was in thailand and he was a westerner and at the visa office they kept him waiting for one hour two hours and he was in the wrong lineup for two hours and then he had to start lining up somewhere else and when he finally got to the window the man said oh no you haven't filled this out you do that again and he started so that was he then suddenly realized he had not attained nirvana so you're much better off in las vegas the thing is to use whatever environment you are in as part of their spiritual practice does not mean that you have to be stuck it may be that a deep sense of that you need to remove yourself suddenly comes to you and then you go somewhere else that could happen because it seems like more of a challenge there yes yes so that's it's it's probably in many ways a better place to practice than a monastery right i never thought that way and worrying about your life or your problems is a very common belief that that is necessary to hold things together but it's not you have to recognize the futility of of worrying and realize your life is already together you're breathing you're eating when you need food you sleep when you sleep you go to work you do what you do you look around contemplate look at the sky look away now Vegas is very much a man-made or human-made environment everything is kind of artificial not to say fake so everything is fake that's fine it's not everybody that much but there are trees there are some trees in there there is the sky there's a light there's the desert you can easily get out and you're out in the in the stillness so you can take advantage of that but you need to and so be happy with where you are and accept where you are and then while you do what you do in the casino what do you do there i'm a dealer at night time with the drunks yeah yeah place your bets and then yeah and then you can observe human nature there around you most definitely yes every facet you observe human nature in its unconscious state mostly yeah but that's fine that's where they're at you can be the the presence for them yeah it's hard not to judge them oh yes that's your practice not to judge because they are expressions of life of aliveness right in their form they're beautiful too

[Speaker 7] (8:04:23 - 8:05:30)

yeah okay thank you so much hello um i live in las vegas nevada which is very mind dominated and it's tough there um there seems to be two forces in my mind that's build up energy and it's very strong and it keeps me from getting in touch with my true self into creating more space and cultivating that space um one of them is that it's not that interesting i'd rather go along with interesting thoughts and do interesting activities and also i have this fear that if i don't analyze and constantly think about like solutions and things in my life that everything's going to fall apart so it's hard uh those two forces are built especially where i live it makes

[Speaker 1] (8:05:30 - 8:10:32)

it even more increases it more so the energy field there is a kind of nervous yes actually i work in a casino too well that's a wonderful challenge to stay conscious there yes it is lots of discipline yes that's your spiritual practice right i've been there i've walked through some of the casinos in amazement and the it's it's a quite a place that seems to come out of some kind of dream when you walk around las vegas it's uh but it's actually quite interesting when the mind doesn't label it it's actually quite amazing wow all these all these strange life forms and what they have created it's quite amazing it's there's an intense aliveness there would i want to live there i don't know there have been some spiritual teachers who moved there i know of at least two i think it was andrew harvey a spiritual teacher moved to las vegas and there was a spiritual teacher called vernon howard who lived near las vegas and there may be one or two others why they moved there i'm not sure perhaps they maybe they loved it or perhaps uh to pay less tax perhaps who knows the well the challenge of course is uh to stay present and have stillness inside you that what you mentioned now you need to think about your your life problems or your life this is a very very common assumption unconscious assumption in humans that if i don't think about my problems my life is going to fall apart i need i have to think about my life and what's going to happen and transform of course nothing is going to fall apart if you stop thinking things will get better if you stop thinking with the exception of focused thinking in case there's a specific problem that needs to be addressed then focus thinking and then step even there stepping back into stillness so it's a wonderful thing if you're able to be present and still in las vegas then of course you're a master it's many people are be able to be present and still out in nature a beautiful forest or the seashore or on top of a mountain and you watch the sunrise wow very still so still let's move here says the mind let's move here where it's so still and then wherever it is and if you do move there for a while it'll be wonderful oh it's so still and then of course the mind is becomes restless after a while there's nothing happening and you're not challenged by anything anymore if you have a meditation practice then you can of course convince yourself that you have finally achieved in you meditate five hours a day and and let's say somehow food is brought to you as i remember a monk i knew buddhist monk telling me that story that he meditated in a hut up a mountain in thailand

for half a year and he attained complete peacefulness peace nirvana he thought and every day somebody would bring him a bowl of food nothing to worry about nothing to do just be present and still the only challenge were mosquitoes he said but he learned to deal with that in other words to just completely accept and not mentally label it and just being used by them for food so he was came with that that was one challenge then he had to go back into the city to renew his visa because he was in thailand and he was a westerner and at the visa office they kept him waiting for one hour two hours and then he was in the wrong lineup for two hours and then he said to start lining up somewhere else and when he finally got to the window the man said oh no you haven't filled this out you do that again

[Speaker 12] (8:10:32 - 8:10:35)

and he started shouting

[Speaker 1] (8:10:39 - 8:27:15)

so that was he then suddenly realized he had not attained nirvana so you're much better off in las vegas the thing is to use whatever environment you are in as part of the spiritual practice does not mean that you have to be stuck it may be that a deep sense of the need to remove yourself suddenly comes to you and then you go somewhere else that could happen because it seems like it's a challenge there yes yes so that's it's it's probably in many ways a better place to practice than a monastery right you never thought of it that way and worrying about your life or your problems is a very common belief that that is necessary to hold things together but it's not you have to recognize the futility of of worrying and realize your life is already together you're breathing you're eating when you need food you sleep when you sleep you go to work you do what you do you look around contemplate look at the sky uh look away las vegas is very much a man-made or human-made environment everything is kind of artificial not to say fake so everything is fake that's fine it's not everybody that much but there are trees there are some trees here and there there is the sky there's a light there's the desert you can easily get out and you're out in the stillness so you can take advantage of that but you need to and so be happy with where you are and accept where you are and while you do what you do in the casino what do you do there i'm a dealer at night time place your bets and then yeah and then you can observe human nature there around you you observe human nature in its unconscious state mostly but that's fine that's where they're at you can be the the presence for them yeah it's hard not to judge them oh yes that's your practice not to judge because they are expressions of life of aliveness right in their form they're beautiful too yeah i can see the beauty of life after reading one of your books there's a very strong desire or wish to share this realization did you also feel such feelings after understanding what happened does this come only from ego a strong desire to share what you know what you've read now hopefully it's not only what you have absorbed through reading the book but something that you also know in your life

experience if you've only absorbed it through reading the book then it is uh generally speaking premature to share too much with others except when a special occasion might arise when it is helpful to tell somebody well what i have a nice quote for you from what i read and it might help somebody but on the whole you need to at least begin to live it before you can show the way to others and it's not always ego the desire if there is a desire built into a spiritual realization it wants to spread of course it wants to reach others but the way it happened to me was just organically spontaneously after a while people would sometimes come and ask questions and i didn't know the answer beforehand the answer only came after listening to their question and that is the true spiritual teaching you don't teach what you've read in a book you teach what you know for yourself never attempt to teach anything that's not part of your own life experience then it's not a true teaching and others may even resent it or you may get into trouble because you're trying to convince others that you are right and they are wrong and if it's it you can recognize ego if you want to get in there when nobody has asked you there's not an openness and yet you want to get in there change somebody's life because you know the answers that is very probably your ego trying to control somebody else's life and telling yourself that this is a good thing so on the other hand anybody who awakens as you begin to live this spiritual realization this awakening the way in which you interact with other people changes and the way in which you interact with other people begins to affect other people even if you do not specifically say anything about anything spiritual so you cannot not teach when you begin to become transformed and you go through the shift in consciousness gradually you begin to teach in a wider sense not in the narrow sense of me teaching you no but it's the presence spreads and sometimes no words at all sometimes it can just be being with a person and listening to them in presence and perhaps you don't say a single word it could be lives sitting with a dying person and just being there as a still presence and you haven't uttered a single word because you didn't need to and yet it was a wonderful your presence was vital for that moment and that person so the teaching can come in many forms not necessarily verbal the teaching can come in a moment of non-reaction when somebody is unconscious around you or attacks you verbally and the teaching will come when there's absolutely no reaction in you and then the person knows what's happening he's not feeding my ego not feeding my pain but you know the person wouldn't even know that but they can so in many so it can take many forms and some of you are already engaged in a more formal teaching i know that some of you are already practitioners of this or that where you meet with people and that the presence flows into whatever you do and others many others will become here will become teachers if not formal in some other way it may just flow into what you do and all your the people you meet in your everyday life who knows or it could be a total shift that life takes you out it puts you somewhere totally different so there is this desire to teach is you have to be watch within yourself to see so to make sure that it's not your ego that wants to change others and get in there when they haven't asked for any help at all and don't want to know but you may also find that as you teach and the teaching again comes when people ask a question you say something has happened to me and

perhaps is already happening to you or will happen to you you find yourself saying things that arise spontaneously because you were listening in presence then suddenly you say something that you didn't know yourself beforehand it is helpful for this person in this situation and you go oh i said that where did that where did that come from and that's wonderful you discover your own the source of wisdom within yourself and that happens to certain therapists after several years of therapy at first when you're a therapist you apply your particular modality of therapy and if you do it for long enough after a while you you just begin to just if you if it's really working the modality that you have learned to apply to the therapeutic situation becomes less important and then after a while you're just there as an as a presence then it's then that you become an effective therapist at that moment your therapy becomes empowered and then you find you are suddenly of real help to another person but why because you have gone into the state of not knowing rather than being in the state of i know the answers because my look my degree certificate is on the wall i know the answer you have gone into the state of not knowing and that's where wisdom suddenly arises so there have been therapists some famous ones who worked in that way and then other people came and tried to make a method out of it i believe that was the case with nlp there were certain therapists if i remember correctly that worked very effectively and then some people came in how do they do it how do they move their hands what is their body movement and then they discover things like they mirror the other person's body movements the the client or the patient sits there and then the therapist goes if the client does this the therapist does this or the client sits like that but the therapist did that intuitively he didn't even know he was doing it and i discovered i often do that i did that when i sat with people it just didn't there was no decision around it just happened because you tune into the other person in not in on every level and it just it just happened does it still work if it becomes a technique rather than arising out of an intuition i don't know that's my favorite quote of the dalai lama by the way i don't know he often says that because he's comfortable but not knowing and often after that he says interesting things but first he says i don't know and the mind still says i need to awaken where's the awakening it's looking for the kingdom of heaven as if it could be found as an op like a like you find an object science to be perceived well where's the kingdom of heaven oh there it's coming oh no it's over here where's the awakening the enlightenment the fireworks i've been waiting for the fireworks for 10 years nothing's happening so you find it arises spontaneously in certain either when it's things are helpful conditions around you are helpful could also happen when they seem the opposite of helpful and there's chaos around you or drama people are screaming or whatever or something has gone drastically wrong and suddenly instead of reacting suddenly you find you become very still and alert but all that that is an awake that is part of the awakening so it's not really an event that you can take on so this is the this is what happened to me or it for it very rarely happens some human beings go through a permanent shift but that happens very rarely for most humans it's a gradual transition from constantly being engaged in the stream of thinking and being dragged along by the stream of thinking one thing after another including the thought

when am i going to awaken i've been to audit was what's the point in carrying on it's not hasn't happened yet it's all part of the stream of thinking transition from that to at first the occasional arising of something else that heightened alertness or aliveness that replaces thinking in which thinking can still take place but it's no longer compulsive and it's a space with really where thinking is unnecessary you have risen above thinking that is the awakening

[Speaker 6] (8:27:15 - 8:28:17)

i would just like to thank you for this morning's talk my uh mother died friday died on friday i just thought it was so appropriate and the peace of mind that gave me what you said this morning was fantastic that wasn't my question uh the question i had was really related to with all the talks you give the retreats and and advice uh have you ever looked back and thought afterwards that man i wish i wouldn't have said that or boy i goofed up there or this this was a mistake thank you thank you

[Speaker 1] (8:28:27 - 8:33:21)

well only the pope is infallible you know the the teaching if we can even call it the teaching of course is not mainly based on information not primarily based on any kind of conveying of information or facts but on on its most fundamental level the teaching is awareness awareness which is non-conceptual so that can't be wrong uh so on that on the most fundamental level nothing could possibly be wrong because it is it transcends all concepts that's the essence of the teaching the moment you move into concepts the possibility of error of course arises but the first of all the first level of concepts that are used are concepts that point back to that which is beyond concepts and beyond thought so the concepts that i use in the teachings are concepts that are whose purpose is to point back to that which is beyond so and that also there can't be much wrong about that except that it could be that i used a pointer that perhaps uh was not the most appropriate one for a certain person or group of people that could happen if we but you again error doesn't really apply here it just it might not be the best possible point and maybe i wake up in the middle of the night and say oh i could have said that that's maybe possible but usually it doesn't arise next level up occasionally i let information slap in about to illustrate certain things i might talk about something historical or might talk about some fact about something i read in the paper or whatever just as little illustrative stories and of course that's where things occasionally get wrong even in the power of now i wrote for example that 100 million people had been killed in the 20th century alone by other humans and i later realized that was the figure was much too low apparently it's quite a bit higher it could be 140 million nobody knows exactly it's dreadfully high and so i got that wrong and and sometimes in talks i might something may come in a historical fact or something and i later somebody tells me you got that wrong in one talk i talked about depressed antidepressant before taking depressants antidepressants and i wasn't perhaps careful enough to emphasize that you should do

this extremely slowly with the help of a conscious physician and so on and there was one or two physician in the audience who get up got upset and this is all wrong it's all wrong that's usually what happens is that the answer to a question or even the general talk always there's a correspondence between the questioner and the answer or when there's a talk there's a correspondence between the energy field in the room and what comes out and that's not decision based there's no there's nothing in my mind that says oh in this energy field i'll better talk about that because i don't know before the words come out what's going to come out so that doesn't apply and so it can happen though that a person asks a question and an answer comes and i later realized that the answer was not the deepest answer that i could have given but i do know that the answer that comes out reflects the degree of openness in the questioner usually and so if the answer is not that deep then the question wasn't that deep that seems to be often the case occasionally some deep answer comes even when the question is not deep but perhaps there's an intuitive realization then that it is possible to break through the surface layer this question no your question was deep enough thank you

[Speaker 6] (8:33:25 - 8:33:30)

well i do want to say this morning was was perfect you were right thank you thank you

[Speaker 1] (8:33:30 - 8:57:43)

thank you the so there's an ancient saying of course which you may have heard that which is the teacher and the taught together produce the teaching so it's a two-way process it comes out of presence it doesn't really come out of a person it comes through the person who is empty enough spacious enough so that it can come through it's not off the person so on the surface level then yes mistakes are quite possible on the most essential level no i had a i knew a person many years ago uh i only knew her for about a year then she died she was a psychotherapist and she would sometimes come me come to see me i was still doing a private sessions then she would often come to see me once a week or so to ask questions and her questions were so wonderful like the deepest answers came with that person always and i said to her maybe we should record because your questions seem to be so draw out these wonderful answers and she agreed and then a little later she was too ill and she died and just before she in the months before she died she went through this shift where she didn't need to ask any more questions she went through a complete presence shift surrender to what is and her body became virtually transparent and luminous and she was just there and then she didn't need to ask any more questions so it was too late for recording anything just the shift happened and the flowering happened and that was enough thank you thanks this question has a contains a slight misunderstanding of presence but it's a fairly common misunderstanding it can probably be explained very briefly the question is i'm afraid that if i become enlightened i will not be able to relate to others i will not say to my son you can't do this or that i will let him do whatever he wants even if it is wrong how can i be

enlightened and have an agenda on the present moment point i just allow everything to be a common misunderstanding of presence when you respond to the present moment you don't have an agenda that's not an agenda as the questioner here says you have an agenda when you have a pre-planned sequence of things that you want to happen or want somebody else to do then you're not in the present moment but responding to whatever it is that the present moment requires that is not an agenda that is a freedom from an agenda so there's an error in the question and of course to be able to tell somebody like a child to stop doing something for a good reason not because you want to exercise control but because whatever the child is doing may be dangerous so you have to respond to the need of the present moment and this is what happens in presence so presence and again there's a misunderstanding here which is allowing everything to be that is misinterpreted by some people as if it meant that you never say no to anything or anybody so you if your child climbs on a on a high wall and to the other side there's a cliff i allow the present moment to be as it is the the allowing to be is an internal thing rather than an external thing so allowing to be is it often happens you may have observed a child goes into a dangerous situation the parent suddenly panics and they run and grab the child they might even hit the child i've witnessed it and they shout don't you ever go there again you could it could kill you don't you see that this is a curb you shouldn't cross it there's a traffic you could have been killed and they shout at the child you don't ever do that again that is non-acceptance and the acceptance is that a child does these things and you take effective action you don't fight against what is you take effective action there's not an internal resistance which is a totally misinterpreting how a child behaves and the the shock that some parents in their panic or their fear give their children leaves a dreadful trace inside in in the children contributes to the formation of the pain body of emotional suffering because a child is very sensitive when you scream at a child even though your intentions may be good because you wanted to protect the child but you're screaming at the child and of course it's it's like even if you don't physically hurt the child you are hurting the child energetically it's extremely harmful and this is part of non-acceptance of what is so when a child does something dangerous as you're present you take effective action without fighting against the isness of that moment which is what the child does so you pull the child back and you explain this is this is very dangerous and there's no anger the anger always comes when there's a non-acceptance of what's going on it's internal and that puts you in opposition to the with the to the present moment and so you and then anger arises and resentment arises because this shouldn't be happening so the action you take is much more effective in the absence of inner opposition then you can take truly effective action and you're not causing in eastern terms bad karma because when you there's an outflow of negative energy you you are causing suffering to yourself and others and that's karmic and if you shout at a child many times to your child many times during childhood then most likely he or she is going to do the same to their children until somebody finally comes who discovers the power of presence and then breaks the cycle of karmic whatever they inherit karmically so allowing the present moment to be as it is does not necessarily

mean that you cannot say no but you say no in a clear non-confrontational way not aggressively you just say no oh there's no negativity behind that very different from the aggressive no that is against what's happening you may have seen the movie with Jim Carrey i think it was called yes man uh he he goes to a he goes to a new age guru and listens to a seminar and this is a the character that he plays is very negative he loves saying no to he's a mortgage consultant or at a bank and his favorite occupation is to say no to people and he's a continuously negative state no no straightforward no you can't have a mortgage no and somebody takes him to the new age guru who teaches that whatever life gives you say yes to it say yes to life to everything to everything and at first he they make the character resists and then he says oh that might be interesting and then the rest of the movie shows you that from then on whatever happens he says yes and he goes with it and gets into the most incredible and absurd situations and of course it's a misinterpretation of of a basic truth of an inner yes to the present moment which does not necessarily mean an outer yes to the present moment so when somebody says okay offers you a okay do you want to i have this great drug i mean they don't call it drug i don't know what the the words are the hit you want the hit or whatever you don't say i'm not in touch with these things but uh you don't say okay i need to accept the present moment say okay i'll i'll have it now in the movie that's what the character would do and he does all kinds of things like that that's a misinterpretation you can clearly when you say when you're present you can say no to something which is non-confrontational no it you do not make the other person wrong by saying no to that you're still there is still benevolence there is still kindness and you can say a very loud no and still emanate kindness or benevolence you say no no no i'm not getting into this car with you because you're drunk i'm not i don't want you to drive me home and i would recommend that you don't drive home either to get out of the car so you say what's needed you i call that in the in the power of now i called it a high quality no no as opposed to a low quality no so and coming back to the movie as if you haven't seen it i'm not taking away the pleasure of seeing it by telling you that at the end in the end he he realizes that it wasn't quite right and i think if i remember correctly he comes to he realizes it doesn't necessarily mean doing everything that somebody asks you to do it's an inner thing rather than an outer thing so that is very common often been asked that question a very common misunderstanding of what allowing this moment to be what that actually means in practice and saying yes to what is it's an inner yes whether it's an outer yes also or whether it's an outer no depends on the situation but if you don't have the inner yes then you have a loss of goodwill a loss of kindness as like in the example of the parents shouting at the child if we say the world is crazy are we judging no it actually is crazy so how is that not a judgment what judgment really means in spiritual terms is to equate something that you see in another a deficiency a characteristic that is regarded as not so good to equate that with who that person is in their essence their identity you if you make if you see unconsciousness in another human being which you can do easily unconscious behavior either in an individual human being uh they get insanely angry they get depressed they misinterpret everything they project their

insecurities onto you they project their fears onto somebody else they want to they make enemies everywhere complete and when you it would be absurd to say oh no this person is fine i'm not judging you but you can clearly see that the behavior is totally irrational and insane and creates continuous suffering for themselves and others so you see that whether or not you verbalize it is secondary but you see it and you might say this person it is unconscious which it does not mean you equate their behavior or what they do with who they are if you make an identity out of it then it's a judgment so if i said human beings are crazy that would probably be a judgment but if i see their behavior as crazy and realize that is the egoic mind operating in them they are manifesting behavior that corresponds to the present evolutionary stage of human consciousness it is not who they are it is the way in which they manifest the unconsciousness that is still part of the collective human consciousness that's all so basically the answer is when it's not equated with who they are when it when you are not making an identity for them out of whatever behavior they manifest then it's not a judgment the judgment becomes when you say he is or she is such and such for he's a liar let's say that he's a liar that's the judgment judgment he often lies is not a judgment because the you can see that the lying is something that that is a manifestation of his egoic state of consciousness for him he believes presumably that he can gain some advantage from telling things that are not true enhancing himself or whatever many egos say things that are not true to enhance themselves for example but the moment i make it into an identity he is a liar that's a huge trap i have put myself in not just him i've put myself in because i've made an identity for another human being out of their unconscious behavior once i've done that once i have attached a huge label mental label onto another human being next time i meet this human being i'm not not really meeting them anymore i'm meeting my judgment i'm looking at them through the screen of the label that i have already given them that i've mentioned to others do you know what do you do you know that he's a liar don't you yeah okay here next time he comes you're not meeting a human being you're meeting a liar and by doing that you have yourself reduced yourself you get trapped in your own judgments the way in which you relate to this person is diminished you're not relating freely anymore to that person you yourself become constrained by your judgments because it will then control this the the mental concept will control your behavior towards him also so as that's why i believe it was desert when you judge you you judge yourself or something like that so there we need to be careful when you when we make pronouncements about others when we transform their behavior that we deem unconscious into an identity for them okay now that becomes extreme when somebody's extremely unconscious even then it applies he's a thief now it may be true that he is living is by stealing things but you need to be careful with these things because it could be that this person suddenly realizes perhaps in prison realizes the transcendent dimension in him or her and wakes up and even a murderer could wake up and it has happened and does happen that if they suffer enough as they will a moment comes not necessarily in this lifetime but for some it has come they wake up people who have murdered even more than one person they have

they wake up and suddenly the unconditioned consciousness emerges and it emerges because the suffering that afflicted not only on others but on themselves through their actions was so extreme that the ego self-destructed and then something emerges and suddenly they wake up now therefore i would say even to call someone a murderer is a judgment but to say that to recognize that this person may be dangerous even to you that we he may need to be confined to prison because he's a danger to others that's the case but to impose to make an identity nobody nobody is incapable of waking up even seemingly very evil people seemingly very evil people sometimes awaken only through intense suffering in their case but anytime we make an identity for a person out of something that they do that becomes a huge limitation that we impose on them and on ourselves so you see clearly what a person does but it's not what this person essentially is and the same applies to groups of people or humanity as a whole if we say the world is crazy which means of course human beings the human beings are crazy what we are saying is many human beings alive on this planet are still unconscious and manifest behavior that corresponds to their unconsciousness they create suffering for themselves and others and they know not what they do and then when you hear this in the religious book it says forgive them for they know not what they do really forgive them means don't make an identity for them out of what they do they just they but don't deny it either you don't say oh no this this is fine he's just he just kills people it's he's okay right so the deeper meaning of forgiving somebody is to recognize that in essence that's not who they are which does not mean that they do not have to suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness that happens by itself and sometimes this karmic consequences of a person's deep unconsciousness may come through the judicial system and sometimes through other ways not that the judicial system is always just

[Speaker 12] (8:58:04 - 8:58:04)

so

[Speaker 1] (8:58:04 - 9:15:59)

so that has to be the foundation for your life and becoming embracing the isness of this moment how can you run away from it how to how do i strike a healthy balance between simply accepting life as it unfolds and actively working towards and striving towards goals destinations aspirations balance between accepting life as it unfolds and actively working towards and striving towards goals destinations aspirations well accepting life as it unfolds of course is the foundation for conscious and sane living accepting whatever unfolds in the present moment there is nothing else that's the foundation does that mean you cannot have goals you cannot have aspirations wanting to achieve this do this do that it's perfectly compatible with accepting what is arriving in this moment one difference between the unconscious state which denies this moment and wants to make it into a means to an end all the time the difference then is what is the motivation for your doing if you deny this moment can never embrace it honor it appreciate it then the

motivation for your action is basically dissatisfaction with what is and the action is looked towards as a possible way of overcoming the discontent and the dissatisfaction that you feel with the present moment and that's a very normal pattern and that's in for many many people that what is what motivates them they don't feel good enough they don't feel there's something they feel there's something fundamental missing in their lives they don't feel recognized they don't feel loved whatever and so they try to find something achieve something that will bring them that which they feel is missing they don't realize that it's that is not going to work you need to start with the foundation for your life which is this moment and go deeply into that and become okay with it friendly with it realize it's the only thing there ever is just this moment nothing ever exists that's not this moment so you might as well become friendly with it and appreciate it and look around and see how actually it's okay this moment is actually okay and if it's not okay that you can still say well that's what is right now something goes wrong that's what is and then things will come in that you want to do you suddenly an idea comes or you need to do something to make a living and then out of that state of becoming one with the isness of the present moment something rises and wants that wants to take form in the world that perhaps you want to create and then you create it out of the joy of doing instead of out of a feeling of lack that you need something to make you complete or happy so the motivation changes from neediness and discontent to joyful doing it's not stressed anymore when stress is a sign that you've lost the present moment the next moment has become more important than life itself the next moment was being only a thought so the future is a thought in your head nothing else let me know if you if i'm wrong if you ever meet the future let me know so you have to in your own experience you have to see whether i'm right whether whether the future can actually be which seems so important doesn't it more important than this moment surely isn't it well if it's so important then where is it does it ever come as i said i'm let me know if you find it you won't of course there's only this moment so that has to be the foundation for your life and becoming embracing the isness of this moment how can you run away from it there's nowhere to go except in your mind and the mind does it all the time it always goes somewhere else so you can still do because you enjoy doing and you you see how it contributes to the awakening in one way or another if you if you live if you practice present moment living you cannot not contribute whatever you do you cannot not contribute to the awakening you can have the simplest job you can have a job at a toll booth at the bridge and the cars come up and you say five dollars please and even there you interact with hundreds of people every day for a few seconds even there if you are completely present something will flow as you take their money and say have a nice day something will flow out of you to the other person and you contribute to the awakening no matter what you do your present state of consciousness spreads affects others so discontent discontent as the motivation for doing is replaced by the enjoyment of doing what you do because what is the point if you are not enjoying what you do what is the point now sometimes you may say oh i can't possibly enjoy this but you may be surprised how many things you can enjoy doing and if definitely if you find that

absolutely you cannot enjoy something whatever your job is then of course you need to walk out and don't stay with unhappiness live with unhappiness and do something that you cannot tolerate and be and surrender to and do with if not with joy at least in a state of acceptance the world is full of people who are doing what they don't really want to be doing not only their jobs but also at least any action they do at the moment if you really look closely into them they're going about their daily business and a lot of the time what they're doing there's something inside them just doesn't really want they don't want to be where they are but they are there but and they're doing this but they really don't want to be doing what they're doing so there's a reluctance often in people there's a resistance to what they're doing to where they are where they have to go it's so common people many people have lived with it their whole lives and they don't even know it anymore because when you have lived with it's an inner state for so long you don't even know it it's like the the humming of the refrigerator it goes on for a long time you don't even hear it anymore but when it stops but suddenly then you say wow was this noise there all the time didn't even know it anymore so their inner states that people live with of discontent and resistance but they've become so familiar they don't even know it anymore is presence possible for me if i have problems with my attention i'm burnt out and depressed and it is very difficult for me to be present with people and situations and this is the same person as far as i can see who somewhere else asked me something like i've been following your teachings for 10 years and no change has happened in my life the same person you say i am burnt out and depressed and it's very difficult for me to be present with people and situations one thing that you can that is not a help but a hindrance is the thought i am burnt out do you need that thought is that actually true it may be true that your energy level is low yes yes even the thought i'm depressed again these are concepts that arise in your mind you identify with them and you already you believe there's nothing i can do not if you're if i'm burnt out how can i be present but that's just it's an idea in your head you start with the reality of this moment which is not an idea about it but to simply face what is without the carrying some identity in your head that you are a burnt out and depressed person that's a conceptual identity it becomes can become a conceptual identity so let's you start with what is not a story about what is or a story about who you are because the story may be so negative that it that you believe in it and it becomes a closed door your entire sense of identity becomes a closed door so you begin with what is you can say you can't be present with people and situations is that true or is that just a thought because you have to find out for yourself you go into a new situation a place somewhere can you be present can you look around go to a cafe have a cup of tea or coffee sit let go of the i'm burnt out i can't be present just be and look perceive you can do that you don't need the highest energy level for that perceive look feel the energy field of the your inner body anybody can do that you can feel some life in your hands starts with a tingling sensation perhaps or warmth and in your feet and your legs and your arms and then you feel that not a big deal and then you look around and you your senses are awake you look you listen noises people you breathe in the air perhaps you taste the tea or the coffee and you're entering

the present moment no big deal just entering the present moment and then you become aware of the fact that you are here that you are a conscious presence that perceives the world around you well that's that's a good start and it's not a challenging situation but that's how you start when you're not being challenged and so the next time you talk to someone can feel the inner body you've been following this teaching for 10 years and your mind keeps telling you that because you're burnt out and depressed you can't do it that's an illusion it's it's very simple don't believe in any idea in your head that what your mind is saying about who you are and then it becomes very simple then listen to your friend speaking to you feel the inner body as you listen if you can only feel the inner body feel that a little bit of aliveness in here throughout the body that means it's beginning to work for you and perhaps it's started to work already but your mind continuously denied it otherwise why would you carry on for 10 years so it's quite possible that it's there's already a beginning of an awakening but because you're listening to your mind it's denying it so I just wanted to point you in the the right direction here I'm sure I will hear from you again and you let me know how it goes this mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation

[Speaker 10] (9:16:32 - 9:17:11)

I take care of patients from surgery chemotherapy hospice end of life and there's that that same pressure on all aspects not to spend the time and take care of them maybe the way that we would like to if we could so I'm doing this to help take care of me which is great but my question is related to all the other physicians that I work with who are suffering and I can see it in them and it's the more that I learn your teachings the more I see the suffering in them and I don't

[Speaker 1] (9:17:11 - 9:17:49)

know what to do to help them I think I saw your question I had selected it to answer it if it was written question that might have been yours that was good so I'm glad you were chosen have you had made any attempt to somehow convey this to your colleagues maybe unsuccessful attempts

[Speaker 10] (9:17:50 - 9:18:18)

so far to some degree just over the last couple years there's been real research showing you know burnout and that's a definable thing and so we can use the term burnout which doesn't seem to offend people to talk about it and then I can we I've introduced some mindfulness strategies because that's another term that doesn't seem to offend people I was just going to say that mindfulness

[Speaker 1] (9:18:19 - 9:19:45)

has become almost acceptable so you can if you use that word that might be more acceptable than presence it's the same thing of course but I don't use mindfulness because it implies that your mind is full but that's okay so what about creating a support group for people who work in similar capacities both people that you know personally and perhaps other people because nowadays here the strange thing is the wonderful thing about the technology that we have nowadays not only it amplifies human madness because any person can put out any thought and immediately no matter how crazy it is there will be a few thousand people in the world who will respond to it and agree with you and participate in the craziness but on the other hand there's also you can reach so many people through the media those things internet and so on but you would start on a small scale what about a mindfulness group for physicians you could call it that you can become the leader of that because

[Speaker 12] (9:19:53 - 9:19:53)

okay

[Speaker 1] (9:20:00 - 9:25:39)

sometimes life asks you to do something it may ask you to do something before you may think you're ready for it but life knows better and the strange thing is you as a person would never really feel ready for this because it's it's hard to do but if you can become still and get out of the way because becoming still means getting out of the way if you can become still you'll be amazed and i'm not only talking to you but many others you'll be amazed how empowered suddenly the words that you speak become or the energy that flows through you and how inspired you become and what it might lead to because things need to change if we the the system not only in medicine but in many other areas is bribed for either collapse or complete change it cannot go on the way it's going because it can only become more disintegrating and the no matter where you look it's a question of it'll either collapse or change and if it collapses that's fine too now i'm talking about social systems and so on in general eventually something more conscious will arise or something more conscious may arise and transform the old before it collapses completely so what is it that you could the ideas will come to you you can just offer to them for example have an a meditation show show them what mindfulness is see if they like it and then go on from there and then transmit it go on the internet contact others uh it may suddenly spread there are people in mainstream who are doing this i got invited by a scientist to stanford university a couple of years ago i gave a talk there and you would have thought they would not be interested in what i have to say but that i was wrong they were very interested now not everybody came but many people did come and this is a scientist who actually he is a i believe he's a neurosurgeon and he teaches at stanford he is extremely interested in mindfulness and spreading the message he's connected also to buddhism and buddhist teachings so maybe he can also you can talk to him and see what feedback you get from him it's good if you can i don't know if you've

met other physicians here if you can build up a support network of people who can then support others um there are infinite possibilities but you anybody who is here would have to consider themselves as a leader in this because you may not yet be fully present all the time um and fully enlightened continue on a daily basis but you know much more than most i mean and i don't don't mean conceptual knowledge there's a knowing in you of that dimension of consciousness that is still new still many and i believe that the world desperately needs you and you start in your world you can reach the most appropriate place for you to reach others is within your sphere of influence and that is your work so what exactly what form that will take only you can know it will be helpful to connect with others get feedback talk about it what can we do and then the person at stanford i believe is professor james doti doti unfortunately i don't know how to spell it d-o-t-y something that i can let you know um so see yourself as a spearheading this movement of awakening because they need you so not only your patients need you your colleagues need you and then the work that you do which is wonderful will be enhanced immeasurably by bringing a different state of consciousness to it and once that happens then the entire system may begin to undergo a change change always begins within how do you feel about this

[Speaker 10] (9:25:44 - 9:26:09)

i'm a i'm a little speechless but it's a crisis and and i think that uh it really is a crisis and so if i know you're speaking not just to me but to others that are here and and and i think that we need to do this in all aspects of of medicine so if i can help

[Speaker 1] (9:26:17 - 9:27:10)

so thank you for giving me the the push thank you i know that dr patel and his wife is here he's been coming for many years and have you met him he i believe he has a in his cancer clinic in field he introduces also counseling and mindfulness maybe you can connect with him thank you this mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation

[Speaker 5] (9:27:49 - 9:35:28)

namaste so i can feel the energy kind of rise a bit in the room so let's release some of that energy some of you know what's coming okay we won't stand because there's not much space except for the front row so you can kick off your shoes if you like leave them on it doesn't matter if your feet don't reach the ground sit forward a little bit some of you may wonder why what is she going to do if you've never experienced this so energy gets trapped in the body the belief in any forms thought forms emotions events that happen in our day-to-day life so we're just going to release that a bit it's like releasing the past so we become that empty vessel for consciousness so let's just start by just wiggling a little bit maybe wiggling our sit bones in our seat so the whole body is relaxed and then

allow the head to wiggle and the jaw to drop and maybe the shoulders to wiggle and your hands to wiggle your fingers wiggling and just wiggle wiggle wiggle no thought just wiggling and sigh if you'd like ah just release that energy ah and you can do this at home too for those who are watching through that wormhole and now we begin to just stomp our feet a little bit you can raise your arms up if you'd like and just stomp and let's release vocally feel different yes yeah and then we can just settle right into our bodies into the stillness that goes beyond the conceptual mind i can feel the stillness returning and from this place of stillness let's just do a meditation a short meditation or who knows maybe it'll be long okay sitting comfortably in your chair body is relaxed eyes are closed if you wish imagine the crown of your head being lifted towards the ceiling your sit bones rooted on your chair your feet planted on the floor your hands could be facing face down on your lap or face up or your hands clasp together whatever feels natural and comfortable for you in this moment let's just let go of the concepts let go of names labels ideas just become aware of your breathing oh and become aware of your body is there any tension tightness or pain just let go of those labels and just simply feel because all they are is sensations experienced in the body okay relaxing your body from head to toe if thoughts arise just notice just let it go return your attention to your breath to your body let's bring your attention to the inner body that feeling of aliveness within if you don't know what that feels like just simply raise your hands off your lap just hold them up in the air palms facing up and then you can ask yourself how do i know i even have hands and simply feel

[Speaker 1] (9:35:29 - 9:50:00)

just a quick reminder of very easy access to the present moment dimension easy access is sensory perception alert sensory perception in breathing inner body awareness inner body i sometimes call it a portal into a presence and of course breathing and inner body awareness are closely related almost they merge into one as you may know i often recommend to start with the hands when for people who have never experienced inner body awareness and you can do that with people that you know who are not especially not open to any anything else that's so-called to do with so-called consciousness spiritual whatever can you feel your hands oh that's not too spiritual nobody should be object to that and say i'm not into that spiritual stuff well your hands just your hands and that works with people who otherwise have no idea what it is that you're talking about you ask them to close their eyes are they are your hands still there yes how do you know you're not touching anything well i can feel feel them it might take a while before they can because they may be so much stuck in their heads that they can't get their attention down there and then at some point you might say children can probably do it fairly quickly can feel them oh well if you can feel your hands and you perhaps you can feel your feet too yeah okay well then and then gradually the rest of the body that's one entry point another one is you start with breathing as you know i don't give many techniques this is the closest we are getting to a tech technique you start with breathing

conscious breathing now you may know that that's just a part that i sometimes recommend in daily in your daily life to occasionally take a conscious breath so that you break the incessant stream of thinking if only for five seconds and two conscious breaths even better but that's not where i'm going right now this is now entering the inner inner body awareness starting with the breast rather than starting with your with your hands and you you breathe consciously don't without overdoing it it'll be a little deeper than your normal breath and the the quickest way most is to do abdominal breathing so as you breathe in you feel that the air is going all the way into your abdomen of it isn't really but because i don't think when you breathe in the air will actually go into the abdomen but what goes into the abdomen is your conscious attention because your conscious attention is following the breath and as it goes when it is in the abdomen it rises slightly because now the abdomen is full of air not really but that's what it feels like uh hopefully it's not full of air it feels like that but it's actually an energy suddenly is there that you didn't notice before because your attention is moved there so you you ride so to speak your attention rides on your breath as you breathe in and then as when it's in the abdomen it's good to when you feel it's full then you hold it just for a few seconds it could be three seconds it could be up to five before you start breathing out again when you reach the end of the out breath a short cessation before you start breathing in again that's also a very calm point the end of the out breath is basically you've died so the it's a miniature miniature death because every out breath is a is a miniature death and then the start of the in breath you're born again and you grow up reach maturity belly is full and then you start declining again so the end of the out breath is also just a short pause just to notice the end of the out breath there's a still point when the in breath hasn't started yet and then again you breathe in hold it and out now the next thing is while you hold it in the abdomen the you can feel the energy spreading from there into other parts of the body there's an energetic point i believe in japanese and sometimes used in zen is called hara which must be where the word hara kiri comes from but we're not going there hara is the belly and so as if you feel that then from there it's easy to feel the energy spreading into your legs and into the rest of your body so this is the energetic point and so a few times abdominal a few abdominal breaths and you are in the body and out of your mind in a good sense you're out of your mind thank you i am i take it as a compliment in particular when you're being plagued by thoughts that are futile perhaps even destructive negative unhappiness inducing and you realize that these thoughts are futile destructive and unhappiness inducing so you they are they fulfill no purpose whatsoever which applies to most thoughts that occur to you when you're lying in bed between midnight and six or seven in the morning and you wake up and she's there one can say almost any thought that happens to then is futile unless you have a wonderful incredible insight suddenly which happens on rare occasions too particularly if you go into the body first but mostly people are plagued by thoughts in their mind first of all you need to know then that's already you need that minimum of awareness to know that you don't want those thoughts if you don't know that you don't want those thoughts that means you're so identified with the thoughts

that you aren't even there so spiritually speaking you are asleep or unconscious as we call it so when you are so completely identified that you your thoughts become your reality and there's nothing else your thoughts become your reality then you are not there your thoughts occupy the place where you should be and this is like a state of being possessed by mental formations like little gremlins they live in you so you need a minimum of awareness to know that these thoughts are useless and that you don't want them but you can't push against them because by pushing against them or try to suppress them you actually would strengthen them and you might even create another set of thoughts their mind creates another set of thoughts that fights the set of thoughts that you don't want and all that doesn't work very well also to eliminate thought through willpower is also not a good idea because it doesn't work except work for a short period of time they're holding your breath let's say you have a strong yang energy in your body you're i'm going to make it and i'm going to stop thinking now it's happening it's happening i'm not thinking but at some point you have to let go again and that's like you take the lid off the pressure cooker and then and then you think even more than before and then you have to do it again and it will damage your body if you do it too often so that doesn't work so instead of fighting the thoughts just take your attention away from the thoughts but then you initially you need to put your attention somewhere else and that is the inner body so you don't fight the thoughts you recognize them as not useful that you don't want them then you simply remove attention you don't feed them with your attention with your consciousness so you break that you break this this cycle of compulsive not only compulsive but actually addictive thinking one of the greatest addictions for most humans probably on the planet is the addiction to overthinking excessive thinking unhappiness inducing thinking and you won't believe or maybe you do how many millions make their lives miserable by unnecessary addictive and destructive deeply negative thinking millions it's an enormous amount of unconsciousness is generated not only people do it to themselves it's also when you're deeply identified with obsessive and negative thinking it also of course influences the way in which you act so if habitually your uh the thoughts that go through your head are destructive and you have enemies up there that you're fighting not realizing that your greatest enemy lives between your two ears so you have enemies that you're fighting and then you get actual enemies in life so if you externalize this and this becomes the world that you create and this this becomes the way through the screen of thinking you experience so-called reality that becomes your reality and it's not a pleasant reality and if let's now imagine millions of people who are living in such an unconscious state then they create their collective reality a lot of that is on the world news every night and on the internet so once you know you don't want them then you have a choice this is where freedom comes in one could say you have a choice now without awareness you have no choice you are an automatic you are you're run on auto you are pre-programmed and what is running through your mind is the programming which is the conditioning of your mind since childhood created by your

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[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 25:10)

environment, your personal environment and your cultural environment. So just a just a program, then you are a walking program and you have no choice because you're so identified with the program you are asleep. So as you become aware choice, the element of choice comes in.

And this is an interesting topic of free will of sometimes people ask philosophical questions. Is there such a thing as free will? Well, yes and no.

We can see that when you are totally conditioned, your mind is totally programmed and conditioned, there's no free will, then it seems that there is free will because you can make choices. But you don't exist as an independent autonomous entity, you just seem to, you're connected to the totality of consciousness. So when it seems to you that you are making choices, for the first time you're making intelligent choices when the awareness comes in.

It's good to believe that you are making the choice. But if you look more deeply, the consciousness moves through you and is making the choice and you realize that you are an inseparable part of it. So we, even though we, it seems to be free will, especially compared to what was before.

But even that, free will would only make sense if you are a totally autonomous entity, totally separate from the rest of the world and other people and the universal consciousness. But that's not the case. So you're connected to the totality and so the universal consciousness really, when you begin to awaken, then there's an intelligence that is greater than the accumulated knowledge of the mind, which is borrowed.

It also uses universal intelligence, but it becomes trapped and limited. It forms an illusory entity. So free choice, you do feel that for the first time you have free choice.

In ultimate terms, you don't, but that doesn't mean you don't have to worry about that. So you have free choice for the first time and you can choose to, you can become responsible for your state of consciousness. And then, of course, you forget again.

And something happens, you lose yourself again in the conditioning of the mind. And then you notice again, the waking up is part of the awakening process that you are going through, is that it's a process because it's, you're not continuously at the same level of presence. Sometimes you're very present, perhaps here, hopefully, I believe you are, can feel the energy, the collective energy field here is an energy field of presence.

You may not be this present when you leave here and you arrive at the airport or whatever you do, or you arrive home and you're faced with your daily life again, all kinds

of demands come up again. And you lose yourself in all the things that you have to do. And really, it means you lose yourself in your mind.

And then suddenly you notice this has been happening. And then you wake up again, and you take a conscious breath. And you don't believe your mind when it says, I don't have time for a conscious breath, there's too much to go do here.

Now, a conscious breath is five or six seconds. So it must be a lie if you say, unless you're in absolute emergency, everybody has time for one conscious breath. And almost everybody has time for two conscious breaths, even the busiest person.

And so a conscious breath is just, if it's abdominal, then immediately it puts you in touch with the energy field of the inner body. And it's a short cessation as you breathe out. Hold it for a few seconds.

And it's so lovely that you might even want to take a third conscious breath. You feel alive. The body is alive, but it's not just what you feel, it's not just the physical body.

It's an energy field behind the physical body. And for a moment, you have transcended the person, the personality, the ego, whatever you want to call it. For a moment, something has opened up within you.

And then, okay, what's the next thing they have to do? So this is being and doing. But some of this, for a little while, remains with you.

Some of the attention, even if you start doing again, especially if you do this several, frequently during the day, two or three conscious breaths. As you see, I started with one, now I'm saying two or three. Two or three conscious breaths, many times during the day, makes an enormous difference to your life.

And gradually you learn not to completely lose yourself in the activities, whatever you do in your doing, so that you can be... There is still a point of awareness, a point of stillness, a point of rest, a point of power within you that is not disturbed by anything that happens out there. And so you can still do things.

And then you do them, by the way, you do them more intelligently, then because this connects you to universal intelligence. It's also the seed of the source of creativity. When you use your mind to solve a problem, and you think about it, the possibilities, this, that, you might talk about it to somebody, or you do it by yourself, and you think, and then you can't find a solution, then it's the time to take two, three, four...

Oh, I've gone up to four now. Four conscious breaths. So it's stillness.

You become still, and you feel this power that lives in you. And when you then start thinking again, very often you come up with a new insight, or a solution to the problem.

And if not immediately, you do it a few times, and then at the moment that you would least suspect, suddenly you have an insight of this is the solution, or this is what I have to do.

That frequently happens. And another thing that happens, this is a little mysterious, or some people might call it weird, but when you are connected with this, the point of power that is the entry point is the inner body, it does often bring about so-called chance events, or encounters, or synchronistic events that happen that seem to be just the right thing for the right moment. Just helpful events happen more frequently.

Just meeting the right person, a chance encounter, nobody can predict in what way. And when you find this actually does happen, that's an amazing thing, that life becomes more helpful, cooperative than it was before. But I'm not implying that life will be free of challenges.

No, challenges continue to come, and you need them, because now, as you're undergoing the awakening process, every challenge is a great help, because a challenge forces you to be more present. And you will then begin to recognize the challenges as opportunities for being more present. Then you turn up the light, the inner light.

Chhh. Chhh. And then suddenly there's an earthquake, and everything is collapsing around you, and then you go, chhh.

Or it could be your own, your death instead of an earthquake, that's a kind of earthquake too. The awareness of death is a wonderful thing, and we've talked about it before. Die before you die.

So whenever you take identification away from the egoic mind, it is a kind of death. But it's quite a nice death. If you resist it, it becomes painful.

And this is when life is forcing you to experience the ego death, that can be quite painful. But that's ultimately good too. The universe wants to create.

It wants expansion. But why is it that so often it seems to put obstacles in the path of expansion? Things go wrong.

Difficult situations, difficult people, loss, confusion. Why do some people experience life as one damn thing after another? Why does life leave me alone?

Why does expansion seem to be blocked so often, if the universe wants expansion, which it does? The universe not only wants to expand externally, it also expands internally. So every obstacle potentially is a deepening within, so it goes in two directions.

So if somebody's, let's say a child grows up with a handicap or very difficult life situation,

it doesn't have to be a child or any human being encounters a huge obstacle. Either they overcome the obstacle on the external level, or they transcend that obstacle on an inner level. So this is a universal thing.

I just have to give one example. Let's say a child is weak, gets bullied at school, very unhappy because of that. Then the child could generate so much energy that he or she would take up martial arts, go to a teacher, just as it's shown in those movies.

And then eventually, he or she can defeat the bully, generate energy that would not have been generated if the bully had not been there. So it becomes stronger on that. That's expansion in a way.

Or the child is just too weak. It doesn't generate expansion on that level. It can never defeat the bully, but the energy goes within, develops other abilities, perhaps the ability to be creative, to think, to create.

And 20 years later, the child that was the bully works in some menial job, and the child that was bullied is a great creator. That's expansion too, or becomes a spiritual teacher. So the universe wants to expand, but it also wants you to experience obstacles to expansion, which are part of the expansion.

It goes in two directions. So welcome all the obstacles in your life, the obstacles to whatever. And collectively, if you listen to the news, continuously things go wrong, dreadfully, on the planet.

It happens to be the case that the news focuses on all the things that go wrong. It doesn't focus on the things that don't go wrong. So, of course, a distorted version of what life is like, but undoubtedly things do go wrong.

Humanity is being challenged through, sometimes through factors that seem to have nothing to do with, it just, things just come at you. And other factors created by humanity's unconscious mind, dysfunctional, egoic thinking. And so it's only through experiencing the effects of that unconsciousness collectively.

If you look at humanity as a whole for a moment, as one single expression of consciousness divided into billions of little entities, one new array of consciousness divided into billions of smaller arrays of consciousness, one of them is you. So humanity is evolving. One consciousness expressing itself as the human being is undergoing a process of evolution.

It's like birthing and gradually becoming more conscious. Seems to take a long time, but every human being reaches a point where the consciousness accelerates. And that's when you become, you consciously embark on the spiritual path as you are doing.

That means you no longer, your primary teacher is no longer suffering. It may still come

in, but it's no longer your primary teacher. You grow, you awaken voluntarily without being pushed into it through suffering.

But you have been, otherwise you wouldn't be. You've had your suffering. It may be a bit more, but not like before.

And for many of you, suffering is coming to an end. It doesn't mean that you don't face problems anymore, but you don't transform them into suffering. The I am practice, I am, there's no doubt about that.

Everything else could be an illusion. And one way of looking at it is to say, well, it is a kind of illusion because nothing lasts for long. Everything here is impermanent.

Be aware in your daily life of the gap between two thoughts so that your mind doesn't drag you along in an incessant stream of involuntary and compulsive thinking. Invite these gaps into your life. So look, by looking at something without interpreting it, by listening to something without interpreting, by taking conscious breaths occasionally, observe the air flowing into the body, out of the body.

No thought. You become aware of the underlying presence. And only then do you become a true human being.

So humans are still undergoing an evolutionary process. They're not finished. They're not even fully human yet, most of them.

You're fully human when you are both, when you are conscious, not only of your humanness, but also of your beingness. And when the two come together, you are a human being. Before, you're only a human, unaware of being, only a personality.

A human being lives in two worlds, the manifested and the unmanifested. And that would mean you would, when humans, more and more humans begin to live like that, of course the world would look very different, the world that we create. Be not only human, but be the being so you become a true human being.

[Speaker 12] (26:22 - 27:52)

For the past several years, I've been making a concerted effort to live a especially sort of conscious, present spiritual path, and doing yoga and meditation and retreats and that sort of thing. And now when I hear people talk about spiritual stuff, I kind of cringe. It's like, I feel like there's this spiritual thing that's like separate from this, this special dimension.

At first, it was really great because I was meditating 10 hours in a weekend, and I could tell everybody how cool it was and how special and unique I felt practicing this special spiritual life. And now I listen to what you say and other people say, and I just want to

hear about how I'm no one. And I mean that sincerely in being in this, but just not having to.

Even though I am conscious, all these words that just seem to get in the way a lot of the time, I mean, they're concepts and everything. But I feel the sweetness of just really not having to be this special, unique, spiritual person on top of being a regular person. It's like this double-decker sandwich that I got to carry around, and it's getting stale, and I don't know.

I don't know if there's a question in there, but maybe you could speak to that. Thank you. Yes.

Okay. Thanks.

[Speaker 1] (27:54 - 28:52)

Well, you overdid it a little bit with your spiritual practice. And hence the reaction now, because you have to get back to some normality after all that specialness over, of course, your spiritual practice where you thought of yourself as special and your practice as special. You went quite far to an extreme, and you're now experiencing the reaction to that extreme, and that's good.

In other words, you don't want to hear about anything spiritual anymore. I've had it, right? So you overdid it.

Now there's a reaction. Don't mention to me anything spiritual anymore, you say. But of course, you know the famous expression, what is it?

The baby in the bathwater. Don't throw out your baby with the bathwater. It's all spiritual, so to speak.

[Speaker 12] (28:52 - 28:53)

It's all spiritual.

[Speaker 1] (28:53 - 32:39)

It's so separate. So first you went to that extreme. Now you go to an extreme of reaction, and eventually you end up in the middle where every moment is spiritual as it is.

There's nothing special. Spirit is not separate from daily existence. So when we say spiritual, we're not referring to some realm out there that is to be achieved at some point where you become more special than you are now.

It's not going to happen. It's here and now. We're going deeper into the here and now.

That's spiritual. Now you are a little bit tired of these words because you went too far,

that extreme. So you have to realize if you're a little bit perhaps like a Christian who was once very religious and suddenly got fed up, and then occasionally I have people in talks who are ex-Christians, and the moment occasionally I say, Jesus said, they go, oh, don't talk to me about anything that's remotely Christian.

I don't want to hear that. I've had all that. So they don't realize because of course they had a somewhat distorted view of what the whole thing was about, so they didn't, but they can't stand the terms anymore.

And that's fine. It's a phase. You will come through that.

Maybe it's happening already. It's the ordinariness. Spiritual means the more spiritual you are, the more ordinary you are, the more non-special you are.

And again, for the ego, that means, okay, I have to become more non-special. How do I become ordinary? Okay, I need somebody to teach me to be ordinary.

So I understand your dilemma, and perhaps you understand it also. And so this, nothing special, chopping wood, carrying water, as Zen defines spirituality, ultimately, what is the spiritual life? Chopping wood, carrying water, which is the kind of thing you do in Zen monasteries, daily doing.

In my case, it's buying some food in the store, going to have a cup of coffee, taking the dog for a walk in the forest, listening to the BBC World News, having a glass of wine occasionally with a meal, watching a movie, nothing extraordinary, and so quite an ordinary existence. And so it's hiding in there, the spirituality is in there, it's not away from there, just this. And so I'm sorry about these words that we use, but language is limited, so we have to use certain words.

And perhaps the emotion around these words then eventually is going to go and become neutral again, and you can use them for what they are, which is simply useful pointers no more. Thank you.

[Speaker 4] (33:10 - 33:38)

We talked about it off the top, right? Are you one of those people who worries about everything, what happened yesterday, what's happening tomorrow, and your mind just keeps going and going and going and going, and there's always somebody in your life that says, you've got to live in the moment. You've got to live in the moment.

If you worry so much about yesterday and today, you're missing the now. Well, chances are, your friend who told you that read our next guest's book, because he can help teach you live in the moment. Millions of people have read his work.

Oprah loves him. Spiritual writer, teacher, Eckhart Tolle will be right here. Here's his bio.

[Speaker 1] (33:51 - 33:56)

Who you are and stillness are one and the same.

[Speaker 4] (33:56 - 34:59)

Now, if you're into this guy, you consider Eckhart Tolle one of the world's most influential spiritual leaders. People say he's a master of inner calm and peace. Was he born that way?

Is he some kind of a Buddha? Well, no. Here's how it happened.

Eckhart was born in Germany, spent his teenage years in Spain, then headed to Britain for university and grad work. Now, up until that time, Eckhart said he was depressed, he was anxious, he was often suicidal. But at the tender age of 29, his life suddenly changed.

He says he woke up one day feeling an overwhelming sense of joy and peace, and it took him years to figure out what had happened. It took him even longer to teach others how to get to the same place. So, in a nutshell, here's what Eckhart says.

You are not your mind. In fact, he says your mind is your worst enemy, that it overtakes the real you and creates thoughts that make you miserable. So, if you want to achieve peace, well, then you've got to disassociate yourself from your mind.

Eckhart's key? Live in the present. Because, according to him, dwelling in the past only leads to guilt and regret.

Thinking about the future brings anxiety and worry.

[Speaker 1] (35:00 - 35:01)

You may have noticed that already.

[Speaker 4] (35:02 - 36:01)

And it's all summed up in Eckhart's enormously successful book called The Power of Now. He wrote it in Vancouver, where he currently resides. That thing came out over 10 years ago and sold more than 5 million copies.

Yeah, you know, thanks in large part to this person. She's also a big fan of Eckhart's follow-up book, A New Earth. It was one of her book club picks.

This is the most exciting thing I've ever done. And last year, she made it the basis for 10 weeks of seminars with Eckhart on Oprah.com. Thank you.

Everybody, say hello to Eckhart Tolle. You know, when you first published that book,

Paranay, with a small independent publisher, 3,000 copies, I can imagine you would have no idea that this was going to happen to you.

[Speaker 1] (36:02 - 36:58)

No, I thought the book would only appeal to people who were already deeply into spirituality or had been meditating for many years. And after about three or four months after it got published, I realized that many people were phoning and writing in to tell me they'd bought more than one copy for friends or relatives. And then I began to realize that it was a kind of snowball effect and it would be growing and growing.

That was a surprise. Another surprise was that for quite a few people, that was the first spiritual book they had ever read. And it made sense to them.

And so I hadn't realized the degree of readiness in people for this message. And that was the surprise. And then more surprises came later.

The book became what one reviewer called an underground bestseller for a while.

[Speaker 4] (36:58 - 37:02)

Usually in music, underground means people like it, but no one buys it.

[Speaker 1] (37:02 - 37:53)

Well, here underground means people buy it, but there's no publicity, there's no advertising, nothing on television about it. And so word of mouth. So it grew for about a year and a half.

It grew through word of mouth. Gradually it got to some cities. There was a time, at that time I would take a few copies of the book to little spiritual bookstores in Vancouver every couple of weeks.

And then they would phone me again and say, we need another five copies. I would carry five copies. You did it yourself?

Yes. That's fantastic. That was enormously satisfying to have this personal contact with the book.

And at that time also, there were not that many readers. People could phone in and say, oh, I'd like to meet you. And I said, okay, what time do you want to meet?

And then as it grew, after a while I couldn't do that anymore. Yeah.

[Speaker 4] (37:54 - 38:04)

Rule number one, man, if someone wants to meet you on Facebook, don't. That's the

trick. Do you have horror stories?

Horror stories. Where you met somebody and you went, oh, I got to get out of here.

[Speaker 1] (38:06 - 38:35)

No, nothing that comes to mind, but the book does seem to, not only The Power of Now, also the later book, A New Earth, for some reason it does seem to upset some people. I remember my office getting, they told me, they don't show it to me, but they told me they got the open one package and somebody had shredded the entire New Earth book and sent it in the shredded version back to my office. So something must have triggered something in here.

[Speaker 4] (38:40 - 38:46)

If you go back a few decades, you're 29 years old, A Fateful Night, is that what started this whole thing?

[Speaker 1] (38:46 - 41:25)

Yes, a night when I'd had many unhappy nights, but that night I was just so deeply depressed again and I'd spent the previous weeks in anxiety and the, what happened, a thought came into my head which said, I can't live with myself any longer. And at that moment a separation happened between myself and that thought and I looked at the thought and said, I can't live with myself, what does that mean? There must be two of me, there's an I and there must be some unhappy self that I cannot live with.

And through that, although I only understood the full implications years later, a separation happened between the unhappy self, which I later realized is a mental construct consisting of repetitive unhappy thoughts about me and my life, an unhappy story. I was continuously retelling myself the unhappy story of me and I was so identified with the unhappy story of me that there was no gap between that and me and that was the self that I couldn't live with. And when I realized that there is a self I can live with, something separated and I became the consciousness behind the unhappy self and I could see that the whole structure of the unhappy self was a kind of fiction, a narrative that I was kept repeating in my mind.

So the separation happened and I realized that in essence I am not my story, whether happy or unhappy, I'm the consciousness behind the story. The consciousness or the space, whatever you want to call it, there's not really a name for it. And I suddenly realized myself as that and with that I was in a state of peace.

From then onwards I never again identified with this unhappy mental construct, the me with its story. And that's what I call now the shift in consciousness that happened, or you could also call it an awakening. And then later it became the teaching because I tried to

explain, after a few years later people started coming to me, just casually asking questions.

And gradually a spiritual teaching developed, but it's all based on that disidentification from this continuous stream of thinking that you take to be yourself, but it's no more than a stream of thinking. It's not who you are in essence. Well one other thing we know, but however it is we are or we act, ultimately we are all affected by where we come from.

[Speaker 4] (41:25 - 41:37)

That sort of sets the table for who we're going to be in the next phase of our life. And I wondered for you to get to that point, what were your folks like? I never hear about what your childhood was like that would have set these sort of dominoes up for them to come falling down that one night.

[Speaker 1] (41:37 - 42:06)

Well the childhood was already unhappy. There was always almost continuous conflict in my parents' marriage. And I was the only child that makes it even more difficult, because if you have siblings then you can kind of relate to them.

And so I suffered a lot, I think the beginnings of the deep unhappiness and depression are probably there. But again I'm glad now that it did happen, because otherwise the shift wouldn't have happened.

[Speaker 4] (42:06 - 42:40)

You know the idea of being in the now, it's something that my friends, they've sort of stopped asking me to be in the now because they recognize it's not a reality for me, because so much is like, I'm sort of in the now, but I'm going here trying this. The one thing we know is that our society is constructed in a way where we have a history and we have things to look forward to. How do you almost approach the unlearning of a people to change the way that this structure, that this society is built?

This society is built on here's my past, learn from my past, if I don't learn from my past I'm doomed to repeat the mistakes. How do you, how do you put all that together realizing how society is?

[Speaker 1] (42:40 - 43:26)

Well this is all true. Of course it's good to learn from one's past mistakes. On the other hand, if you identify with your past and your memories and that forms the basis for your sense of self, that becomes a kind of prison.

So nothing wrong with learning from the past, but the very essential thing is the

realization that your life is always this moment. Your life is never not this moment. And whatever you think or experience has to be in the now.

So life and now are actually inseparable. It's tomorrow never comes right? Yes, when it comes it's today.

As they said in the British pub there was a sign which said free beer tomorrow.

[Speaker 4] (43:30 - 43:46)

And that is so unfair to drunks. That is so unfair to drunk people. You said Tiger Woods lives in the now, right?

That Tiger Woods is a great example of the now? Yes. What's the difference between being in the now and just being simply focused?

Because I don't, when I watch him golf, he golfs like a man who's chasing something.

[Speaker 1] (43:47 - 45:05)

So what's the difference between in the now and being focused? I don't think he is chasing anything. I think he is present.

There's a nice story of a Zen master who was watching a sports person perform and he was watching very closely and the person wasn't quite making it and the Zen master observed him and said the need to win drains him of power. The need, because if you have the need to win, now the West of course subscribes to that. It says you must want to win, but that's not the Eastern way and I believe that that's the truer way because the need to win, you project a goal to some future moment.

You cannot fully be present in what you do if you have the need to win. You want to get there. But if you're a pro athlete, you only have to win, right?

That's the challenge. But the great ones, when they actually perform, when they are, as the expression goes, in the zone, they don't think about winning. They're absolutely and totally present.

And so I believe that's where mastery arises, in that state of absolute and complete presence. There's also a nice film, The Legend of Bagger Vance, where it's about a golfer who learns to be present.

[Speaker 4] (45:06 - 45:16)

You said that there are certain people or things that are better at being in the now than others. You said animals are great at being in the now, but then you also said women are better at being in the now than men. Is that true?

[Speaker 1] (45:17 - 46:24)

Yes, to some extent. Women are not quite as much in their head as men. Women tend to be, they are in their head too, but not quite as much.

They tend to be still a little bit more connected with the body, the energy in the body, with their feelings. So they're not as mind identified, not quite as, of course, always exceptions, not quite as mind identified as man. And therefore, it's a little easier.

And so the many talks that I've given, often there's always more women than men. This is beginning to change a little bit occasionally now, but still the case. And the new earth is just taking the idea of the power of now to a much bigger level, right?

Yes. New perspectives on it and an elaboration and a new, also indicating what it is that prevents you from being present. Structures in your mind, the ego, the identification with the voice in the head, to become aware of that.

If you're not aware of it, it'll take you over again and again. I know you've got a lot of traveling to do.

[Speaker 4] (46:24 - 46:34)

When you come back to Canada, please come back on our show. Thank you. That's what I want to talk about.

Eckhart Tolle.com is his website and there's a lot more to see with what he's got going on. And of course, he's got them books. Good to see you.

[Speaker 18] (46:34 - 46:35)

Thank you for coming out.

[Speaker 4] (46:35 - 46:41)

Eckhart Tolle, everybody. Thank you very much for watching the program tonight. There's an awful lot more to come.

Thanks for watching.

[Speaker 1] (46:42 - 1:42:48)

No, you are intensely alive. And in the depths of that aliveness, you are not a form identity. And in the depths of that aliveness, you have no needs of other forms, but you can enjoy other forms.

Should you engage in intimacy, even though now that you are awakening and understand you don't need a human being to complete you? Should you engage in

intimacy? Now, of course, should doesn't come into it at all.

Neither should you engage in intimacy, nor should you not engage in intimacy. Should is not, there's no should. You either do or you don't.

Maybe the question means, do I have to? Only you can know that, whether you feel that that is the right thing now, then it arises. But the fact that you no longer need to be completed psychologically does not mean that necessarily you no longer engage in intimacy.

It just means that the egoic part of an intimate relationship is then no longer there. And that's a great relief. You can still have an intimate relationship on a physical, emotional level, without the psychological need that says, I need you to be the answer to my life, psychological completion.

Because it is that delusion that there can be a human being who is psychologically going to complete me that creates all that, a lot of the conflict in relationship, because after a while you realise that the other human is not living up to your expectations, because no human being could. But you can still have an intimate relationship, even without the need to be psychologically completed. You still, you have a physical form.

So the physical form may, for example, have sexual desire. And again, it may also have emotional feelings, which exist within the greater context when you are awakened, or even the spirit dimension is already there in your life, then there's the greater context for all that, in the spaciousness of who you are, those things appear or happen, not as an answer to your life's problems, and not as an absolute need, not even on an absolute need on the emotional, physical level, not as an absolute need.

But the form as which you appear may feel drawn to another form, and that's fine. And if it doesn't work, or if there is no other form because you are in prison or some other reason, then you can live with that without turning into an unhappy being, because you are in touch with that which is beyond form. The unfulfillment on the level of form creates, yes, there's some area then in your life that's unfulfilled, and you can feel that, and yet it does not turn into, it doesn't make your life miserable or makes you unhappy, or creates a mental interpretation that tells you that your life is dreadful and meaningless because that need is not fulfilled.

Because as presence enters your life, that need exists as a small manifestation within the greater spaciousness that you are. And if it's met, it's fine, and if the need is not met, you can live with that also without turning unhappy or feeling that you're not alive anymore. No, you are intensely alive, and in the depths of that aliveness, you are not a form identity.

And in the depths of that aliveness, you have no needs of other forms, but you can enjoy

other forms, but the absolute need is not there, because all forms are already contained in that, in you. You're ultimately from the deepest, seen from the deepest level, you're always meeting yourself in another form. So, no should or shouldn't, you may or you may not engage, as you put it, engage in intimacy.

I assume that the belief that there's a human being there that's going to make you happy has dissolved, and you realize you don't need that, not to make you happy, or to fulfill you. And so, with the psychological need gone, you can appreciate another human being, and you can appreciate emotional or physical levels, if they are there. So this, you need to work on this in everyday life, invite presence in ordinary situations that are not particularly challenging.

For some people, even a red light, a traffic light is challenging. Having to wait in line somewhere is challenging. Why not use this precious moment and bring, oh, invite, become alert, if, feel the energy field in the inner body, and just be there as an observing presence.

And then you have the two dimensions. You have sense perceptions, hearing, and you have the formless presence. So you have, there's a light and that which appears in the light.

It's always the same, the light of consciousness. So then you grow in presence power, as you use all those situations that before were never good enough, you're always on your way somewhere better, use those situations to bring presence in, and then that power grows in you. And if that hasn't, it's only then, if that power grows in you, presence power, that you can deal with the heavy, let's call it, use an Eastern term, the karmic stuff, those accumulations in you that are old patterns, some of which originating in your present lifetime, in childhood, but in many cases, patterns that go back a long way in time.

Your ancestors acting out patterns that your ancestors acted out 500 years ago, 1,000 years ago, 2,000 years ago, and still the same conditioning. Or you can look at it in terms of whether you look at it in terms of genetics that you think that come or in terms of past lifetimes, whatever approach you want to use is fine. The fact is, there are accumulations in you, there are patterns of unconsciousness that have been there a long time, we could call them karmic.

Karmic meaning unconscious patterns that you identify, usually identify with as yourself, that take you over completely. And the truth of the real karma is not the external events in your life. The external events in your life really trigger the karma that you carry inside, and they become your reactions.

And your reactions determine how you experience your life. So in a way, you could have the same thing happening to one person, creating a certain response and the same

event happening to another person, creating a totally different response. I can have, for example, when I first, when I had just written my first book, the publisher said, why don't you sign some books for some famous people, they might give you an endorsement.

So I did, and they were sent out, and almost nobody replied. And I didn't realize at the time that those famous people, how many books and manuscripts they get sent every week and every month, but now I'm getting them. And now I'm the one who doesn't reply.

Because you just can't, it's impossible to read it all, even dipping in, they pile up, there's a backlog, I have now already several months of backlog to get through. So it's very hard, if not impossible. But I didn't know that.

But fortunately, I was not, I didn't take it personally. Without having read the four agreements, I already knew this is not a personal thing. So it was not problematic.

But I had some instances where people have sent me books, and they got extremely upset, because they didn't get a reply. And they get more and more upset, and the letters became more and more angry. And then I became some great, the worst dreadful person in the world.

You can, and those are old karmic patterns that people carry, the external event triggers the pattern. For some people, what becomes a huge drama for one person is an insignificant event for another. So how you experience your life is not really so much to do with what happens to you, but it's how you react, because every reaction determines the next thing that happens.

So something goes wrong, you create, make drama out of it. And that creates more stuff. And this is how more karma gets created.

Your, how you react to a person determines how that person reacts to you. And so it's a reflection. In other words, you kind of, you create, to a large extent, your life, not to a large extent, completely, your life experience, unconsciously.

And so to break the old patterns that create so much suffering, unnecessary baggage, I sometimes call it, that you carry around with you, that you, so you meet it, you interpret situations and people through the unnecessary baggage in your mind, that, for that to be transcended or dissolved, that requires presence power. The presence needs to be there when the old patterns arise in your life. And that is there, so you don't wait for the challenge when hoping that you can stay present because you won't.

Use it when you're not being challenged and invite presence into your life. All those moments that are really precious, and that generates more than you, it's like a, almost like a, the equivalent on the physical level would be working out. You get stronger, so to speak.

This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. So our entire retreat is about deepening, for most of you, and discovering, for some of you, the ability to live from a deeper state of consciousness, a, we could call it transcendent state of consciousness, instead of the thinking state where the person resides, the movement of thought that gives rise to the personality, the person, what most people identify with as themselves, me, me and my story, me and my history, my opinions, they are very important, my likes and dislikes, desires, fears, experiences, accumulated experiences, knowledge, possessions, sufferings, bad things people have done to me, bad things I did to other people, all those things that make up the personality, and that's fine, you're not, this is not going to disappear while you're, just like that, just because you're in a retreat center, suddenly you're free of yourself. No, because as you know, wherever you go, there you are. And you can leave behind many things, your home, your usual environment, the people you live with, your work situation, but what you cannot easily leave behind is your mind, it travels with you.

And then you're in a new place and you arrive, let's say here, the retreat center, and if your mind is all there is to you, you will very quickly find a discrepancy, a gap, a conflict between the expectations of your mind and what you're encountering. You will also find old patterns quickly reassert themselves that you thought you had left behind, reactive patterns, repetitive thoughts, habits, mental habits, complaining, for example, favorite one for the ego. Oh, I'd imagine the retreat center to be different, wasn't supposed to be like that.

First of all, it wasn't supposed to rain. And then it's too big, I'd imagine something more intimate. It's impersonal, I don't like it.

Let's see what else I can find that's wrong with it. There are too many people. How can I be on retreat with all these people?

They're all talking, why are they all talking? And the food, that's not what I expected. And my place is not, it's too small, the bed doesn't come, the shower doesn't work properly.

And I had expected to be at peace and I'm not at peace. I suppose it's supposed to be a retreat, why am I not at peace? Well, because yes, you are on the level of the person and you can't expect much change there.

You can rearrange the furniture a little bit. Must think positive, must think positive. It's actually very nice here, it's nice.

I like it here, I like it. I should be feeling peaceful, I should be feeling peaceful. So that's the thing that travels with you, your mind.

I'm sure I haven't exhausted all the possible things that it can say to you. So if you remain stuck in that dimension while you're here, it's not going to be a terribly satisfying experience. And you might even be longing to get back home.

And then you can look, might look on your smartphone on the weather forecast at home, it's so much better than here. So we are here in order to experience a deeper level to who we are, rather than we, you. You are here to experience a deeper level to who you are, deeper than the personal personality, which is not going to go away completely, no, it's there.

But there is an unconditioned state of consciousness underneath all that, much vaster than the conditioned. The analogy applies that are often used. The unconditioned is the ocean.

The conditioned is the ripples on the surface of the ocean. And that's you. You are the ripple, you're also the ocean.

And to live more from the level of depth, the unconditioned consciousness is why we're here. So in order not to get trapped in the repetitive activity of your mind, we need to invite the unconditioned consciousness. You need to invite the unconditioned consciousness into your life at every moment.

Use this opportunity here to do that. And we already did it when we started just now, when I said, listen to the silence in the room. And you went, that is the something that's deeper than the personality that emerged for a moment when you went.

Your degree of attention rose a little and you went. Now the strange thing is, when you're listening to silence like now, there's nothing to listen to. So what are you listening to?

And as I say, listen to the silence, I'm basically saying, listen to nothing. Because there's no sound except my voice. But when I'm not speaking, it just goes, unless your hearing is better than mine and there is some sound that I can't hear, but I can't hear it.

So listen to the silence. A seemingly very simple thing, a seemingly very insignificant thing. But all the things, all the practice that we do, our retreat here is really, this is only one version of the same practice, which is the step from the thinking mode into the presence mode or awareness mode, whatever you want to call it, the unconditioned consciousness and experience yourself as not only the person, which is the thinking mode, experience yourself as the depths of awareness.

So you, the transcendent you emerges more as you're here. So, listen to the silence and you go. And you're not really listening to anything because there's nothing to listen to, but something happened.

It goes far beyond listening. That was only the entry point. We use the auditory perception as an entry point into a different state of consciousness.

Now, the wonderful thing is when you're listening to silence, when you're listening to sound, there's something there that you can be aware of whatever sound you're listening to. A musical sound, a bird song, any sound, the rain, my voice, when you listen to a sound, you listen to, you're conscious of something. So that's the normal state.

But when you're listening to no sound, what are you conscious of? You're not conscious of anything because there's nothing there. You are just conscious.

And when you're just conscious, the historical you has, for a moment, subsided. Because when you're just conscious and listening to the silence, you don't even remember your name, nor do you remember your date of birth, nor do you remember whether your life up to this point has been a big success or a huge failure. It becomes irrelevant.

If you listen to the silence, it's irrelevant whether your life up to this point has been great or miserable. Well, for most of you, it's a mixture. For some of you, one predominates, for some others, the other predominates.

But the moment you access that deeper consciousness, you are that deeper consciousness, that becomes irrelevant for that moment. You are still there, but not the historical you. The historical you, for a moment, has subsided.

There you go. So you're not listening to anything. You're not conscious of anything.

You are just conscious. You're not aware of anything. You are just aware.

So you are, the object has been removed when you listen to the silence because silence is nothing there. And so another way of putting it, when you listen to silence, you can become easily aware that you are aware. Usually you have a ray of, let's say, a ray of sunlight is looking for stuff and it goes, bzzz, bzzz.

Oh, there, and there, and there, and there, and there. And then suddenly there's nothing to look at. And only then the ray of sunlight suddenly becomes aware of itself.

And it may even become aware that it's connected to something vast, the sun, in our analogy. And that's a moment of transcendence of the self, which is kind of Buddhist terminology. And, or we could call it self-realization of it.

Do you realize that the transcendent self, rather than being stuck in the personal self, the transcendent self is what the Buddhists call, just to confuse you, what the Buddhists call the no self. There is no self. The Buddha says, and some Indian teacher says, yes, there is the great self, the transcendent self.

No, you're wrong, there is no self. I'm telling you, there is a self. They're talking about

the same thing.

This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. Don't, please don't think, okay, I'm going to become an alcoholic.

Then I'll go into AA and then I'll experience spiritual awakening. The ancient Romans believed in vino veritas. What do you believe about the effects of drink and why do different people react in different ways?

In vino veritas, they said. In wine, there is truth, I think it means. I suppose it means when people get drunk, they start telling the truth.

Well, I have partly answered this question already. The effects of alcohol. Once you are disidentified from the mind, awakened, I won't say, not even necessarily totally permanently awakened, but relatively awakened, you will be able to drink alcohol if you want to.

It will not affect your state of mind and the desire to overindulge will most probably not be there. From my own experience, I enjoy more recently than before a glass of wine with dinner and sometimes even two, but almost never more than two and usually just one. That's all, and that is a pleasure.

If it's more than that, it's no longer a pleasure. It feels wrong. The body doesn't want it.

The body even rejects it. And there's not the slightest desire to have more than that. For those people who are awakening, alcohol can be a hindrance, especially overindulgence in alcohol.

As presence arises and you drink, you quickly lose the presence again, and it can activate and reactivate a lot of the unconsciousness in you, even pain bodies in some people. In some people, more men than women, getting drunk, overindulging in alcohol activates their pain body, so some men become violent when they drink, and they become even more unconscious than they are in their normal state, much more unconscious. But even if that's not the case with you, if presence is arising in you and you get even, let's say, you overindulge once a week in alcohol, that can represent a significant setback in the arising consciousness.

So you have to be very careful there, and if you know yourself and you know that you cannot stop yourself once you've had one or two drinks, then it would be better not to drink at all. So once presence becomes your normal state, you don't need to be concerned anymore about drink. You may or may not have drink occasionally, and even if you were drunk, awareness would then still be there.

Once you are established in presence, the awareness would still be there. I know that if I

drank a whole bottle of wine, some people do that, some people drink a whole bottle of wine every day. Not that I could ever do that.

If I drank a whole bottle of wine, I would probably collapse, but until I collapse, the awareness would be totally there. Ram Dass, the famous story, had a guru in India, and Ram Dass, of course, was into LSD, heavily into LSD, and he gave his guru, what do they call it? Hits, pills, whatever.

He gave his guru two or three, normally you take one. He gave him three or something like that, and the guru says, oh, I'll have another. Gave him four, let's give me another.

Gave him five, and the guru put them in his mouth, and then Ram Dass sat there waiting for something to happen, and nothing happened. The guru sat there for a few hours, and Ram Dass was disappointed and also very impressed. On the one hand, disappointed because nothing happened, but very impressed because nothing happened.

Wow, he took all that, and I believe that the guru did see or experience strange things, but he didn't show it externally because it did not affect his awareness. So his awareness, his witnessing awareness was always there. So he didn't act on anything that he, perhaps visions or whatever he saw.

The awareness remained undiminished, and in the meantime, he experienced strange things, heightened sense perceptions, visions, whatever. It makes no difference. When the awareness is there, it makes little difference whether you see an actual person or whether you have a vision.

It's just things that appear in the space of awareness. So the guru knew that, and the guru was dwelled. It was the awareness, and so it didn't matter what he saw.

It was just another spectacle to him. Nobody said that, but I know that's what he experienced. I took it once.

So that's all. So awareness was not touched by that. Now, probably if he had taken 10 or something, I don't know what people, he might have collapsed, but even then, awareness is there.

So that's the... Sometimes people are surprised when they see that I occasionally have a glass of wine and say, you drink alcohol? Well, if my state of consciousness is so fragile that I can't even have a glass of wine, then what's the use of awakening?

But if you have an addictive pull towards alcohol and presence is arising in you, and you're pulled towards awakening, then it is very important to refrain completely. If that is one of the main areas that makes you unconscious in life, the addiction to alcohol, and you cannot continue to have occasional drinks, because as you know, when you have that addiction, an occasional drink is always more than an occasional drink. Because the

moment you have the first drink, already awareness diminishes.

You have the second drink, it diminishes even more. The third drink, it's gone completely. So if that is your problem, then it is of absolute importance never to touch it.

Otherwise, you'll be going up, you're going up the escalator, and then it takes you down again. It's like, no, I think this analogy doesn't work, but... You would continuously fall back.

So this is what I mean. You continuously fall. You make a little bit of progress.

You go to a retreat. You come to a talk. You practice in daily life.

Wonderful. A few days later, you go to a bar. Okay, I'm just going to have one drink.

Just one, because it makes me feel I deserve a treat. I've had a rough day. Okay, just one more.

Oh, this feels so good. Third one can't do any harm, can it? Okay, I'm losing it already, so I might as well.

This is the last time, but I'll do it again and again and again. And the next day you wake up, totally in your mind. Body feels sick, totally in your mind.

And you have to start all over again. So don't do it. Quite a few people over the years have come to me and have come to talks and retreats who, if they had not been alcoholics, would not be undergoing spiritual awakening.

Quite a few people have come through AA, Alcoholics Anonymous. They do a lot of good work. They've come, for the first time, they got in touch with the spiritual dimension through AA.

And so if they had not been alcoholics, and of course, AA encourages you to admit to yourself and to others, I am an alcoholic. And as long as you don't believe that that is the reality of who you truly are, it is a useful recognition, temporary recognition. Because it's always good to face the reality instead of deny the reality.

So once you face the reality, as they do in AA, and then several people have said to me, if I hadn't been an alcoholic, I wouldn't be here now. But I suggest a more direct way rather than the long way around. Don't, please don't think, okay, I'm going to become an alcoholic.

Then I'll go into AA and then I'll experience spiritual awakening. So usually happiness exists as part of the play of opposites. You experience the happiness because something makes you happy.

And then that thing that made you happy either leaves you or the very thing that made you happy suddenly makes you unhappy. Marriage, for example. And for some reason, by some strange synchronistic event, I have two questions here, which may be by the same person.

Are you happy? Then the other one, with so much sadness in the world, how can I feel joy and happy? Be happy.

Am I happy? Uh, no. I wouldn't call it happy.

Some people might use that word to talk about, to point to a very deeper state of connectedness with being. But conventionally, happy really is the opposite to unhappy. And so you go from happy to unhappy is...

And then something happens. You know the two masks that, for theater, comedy and tragedy, the two masks, one is a comedy and then there's a tragedy. So usually happiness exists as part of the play of opposites.

You experience the happiness because something makes you happy and then that thing that made you happy either leaves you or the very thing that made you happy suddenly makes you unhappy. Marriage, for example. Or a relationship.

A relationship. Before you start living together, you're happy. When you start living together, you're unhappy.

So what is, if it's not happy, what are we talking about? There's a, if you let go of thinking and remain as the awareness, then there is, in that awareness emanates a certain peace, alive peace, joy, peace, a peaceful, joyful sense of aliveness. Inner peace may be a better word than happiness, but one would have to add to it.

It's an alive peace. It's not the peace of having deadened yourselves to emotions or anything like that. It's an alive, intensely alive peace.

You can sense it even if it's only just a glimpse right now. Surrender thought. And of course, right now, if you're not thinking about the problems of your life, there are no problems in this moment.

There's only a sense of beingness or aliveness. And that is the connectedness with being. And so you transcend the opposites between happiness and unhappiness.

I have a chapter in the course, not in the course, in America, I didn't write that. Well, in a way I did because all books are written by the one consciousness. But anyway, let's just, in conventional terms, I didn't write it.

I don't claim ownership, causing miracles. But in a deeper sense, of course, I did write it. And you did too, because we are the one consciousness.

So in the power of now, there's a little chapter called beyond happiness and unhappiness, there's peace. So instead of being subject to the fluctuations of happiness and unhappiness, there's that peace where you realize the essence of who you are. And so you're no longer ego-based.

Form identity, yes, but not identification with form identity. So it doesn't turn into ego. And then you function in this world from that place of inner peace.

And whatever you do or who you come into contact with, that your actions, your thoughts become a manifestation of that. And that's more people enter that place, then more people become peaceful human beings. And do not contribute to conflict in the world, the madness of the world.

Don't contribute to the madness of the world. Come back to the question, with so much sadness in the world, how can I feel joy and happy? Now, yes, there is a huge amount of suffering in the world.

Why is there suffering? Because humans are disconnected from the source of who they are. And that is the fundamental source of suffering.

That's how it arises. So if you say, I refuse to be happy until there's no more suffering in this world. Okay, so the end of suffering, then I'm waiting for it out there.

And you might even become very active. I'm going to bring about the end of suffering. You do good things, but you haven't brought about the end of suffering in yourself.

So how is the end of suffering going to happen? Even if you do good deeds, which is a wonderful thing, but if you are unhappy doing good deeds, then that unhappiness also flows into how you do those things and your interactions with other people. It has to, the shift in this world, the end of suffering, to use the Buddha's terminology, the Buddha described his teaching as pointing the way to the end of suffering.

That's the Buddha's teaching. He never used a negative term, end of suffering. Jesus talked about the kingdom of heaven, which is within you.

He used a positive term. They're both talking about the same thing. So the end of suffering has to begin with you and then it spreads.

Then, because that changes the way in which you experience the world, it affects others. And then what you, your relationship with other human beings changes fundamentally because only when you are in connectedness with the essence of who you are, can you have harmonious relationships with others. And can you have feel this deep sense of goodwill towards other human beings, not conditional upon whether they happen to agree with you or belong to the same political party or belong to the same religion or belong to the same nation.

It doesn't depend on that. The same tribe, no. To have a goodwill or benevolence towards all humans that you come into contact with, no matter what their conditioning is.

That can only come from that deep connectedness with being and where you do not automatically and unconsciously judge others the moment you meet them or even in an abstract way, judge an entire group of people as less than human, as evil. I mean, even in Europe, that was not that long ago, first half of the 20th century, entire nations came into violent conflict. And so there was unbelievable unconsciousness of collective ego on a massive scale.

So it needs to start with you. Then this benevolence, this goodwill changes the way in which you interact with other humans. And that changes on a small scale.

And then gradually others, other human beings here and there can also go to that place within and then start to live it. The end of suffering, let's forget about happiness. Let's talk about peace.

So it starts with you. Be the change. Somebody said it, was it Nelson Mandela or Gandhi?

I don't know. The one consciousness said it. Be the change that you want to see in the world.

So if you want to see peace, you have to embody the peace. But the end of suffering needs to start with you, your suffering. That's the end of suffering on the planet.

And then you can show the way to others too. You don't necessarily have to become a spiritual teacher, but you may. But in some way when you, even you don't even need to fully embody that shift in consciousness, fully enlightened master.

No, even just to be undergoing the transformational process you already begin to teach, so to speak, even though you might not teach in a conventional sense of the word, but whoever you come into contact with, you affect with your state of consciousness. The Course in Miracles says, you become a teacher of God.

[Speaker 15] (1:43:15 - 1:44:14)

Namaste, Eckhart. My name in this form is Rena. And my question is about euthanasia in pets.

And in February, my little dog was diagnosed with lymphoma. And, oh, I'm sorry. And there's nothing that you can really offer.

It's a matter of making him happy until his time. And I was pretty upset and panicked by it. And my vet said, you know, when he starts to be symptomatic, bring him in.

We'll give him a shot. He'll go to sleep and all that. So when I was so upset, I thought, well, this is a good answer.

It's a good plan. I, you know, have an idea of what to do. But then I thought about it and I thought, you know, I have power over his life.

He's a little guy I bought. And I have power over his life. I can end his suffering.

But really, am I ending my suffering? I mean, I don't want to see him suffer. But on the other hand, doesn't he have the right to really go through the dying, the work of dying and the process of dying?

And I guess that's my question about feeling what is right action. You know, what is the right thing to do?

[Speaker 1] (1:44:15 - 1:50:49)

Thank you. Answers to questions like that are difficult to find when you start thinking about it, because as you know, your mind can assume different positions and you might have one voice in your head arguing one way, one course of action, and another voice in your head arguing another course of action. And suddenly you're stuck.

What is the right thing to do in a situation like that? And so the answer always has to come from within you, but you have to go beyond the mind that is putting forward either the yes or the no, arguing for or against some kind of position. I never, or very rarely, probably never, I don't know, I can't remember, give advice as to what actually a person should do.

Because I believe when you get in touch with the unconditioned intelligence within you, in other words, become still, then the answer will come through you. It may not come the very first time, but it may come the next time and as you take it into stillness. I know that probably I would, if our dog were suffering, I would probably be inclined to, if there were no way beyond the suffering and you can, if I were sure that the animal is actually in intense suffering, I would probably feel the pain.

The compassionate thing to do would be to end the suffering, but that is every individual's decision, but not so much decision, but it has to come from a deeper place where it's not a decision, it's a knowing. And any individual case, animals and pain is a strange thing. The animals are very much surrendered to pain.

And when we took our dog to the vet a couple of months ago, the vet discovered a broken tooth and said, oh, she must have had this broken tooth for quite a long time and probably had a toothache for several months, never knew it. The only thing we knew that she didn't, wasn't interested in chewing bones anymore. And so, and the vet also said, it's amazing how animals can be with pain, where humans would complain and all

kinds of, humans, of course, has a psychological level of suffering on top of the physical suffering.

There's an entity that comments and resists, feels sorry for itself and all those things. So humans, animals have capacity for surrendering to pain, but also animals are surrendered in death also. The same way that animals don't make life into a problem, they don't make death into a problem either.

There's something in animals that knows, that is connected with the life itself. And so they know in some non-conceptual way, they are rooted in being, so they don't have that fear of death that humans have. So take that into a meditation, become still, maybe with your animal there, and then perhaps what the animal needs will come to you from within or from the animal itself.

And then the painful decision-making process then no longer determines what action you do. I was at the vet and when the tooth got extracted from Maya, of course, with an anesthetic, and the same afternoon the receptionist said, this is very sad for us, there was a dog that had to be put down and I could hear it was being done in a room and there was a little girl crying. And I never saw the dog or the girl, but I cried a little too, but I didn't even know the dog or the girl that cried, but that's how it is.

The end of form comes to all beings, including ourselves. So becoming familiar with death is a good thing so that when death comes to someone close to you, and even a dog. Some people who don't have animals, they say, how can you make such a fuss about an animal?

But there's a deep, very deep connectedness with that being. It's not only that being, because through that being you sense the entirety of being. And so that is not something you can lose.

That remains untouched by death. So in a way, don't believe that you lose that. That would be very painful.

In a way, the dog is only an opening for that, as are you.

[Speaker 18] (1:50:53 - 1:50:54)

Thanks.

[Speaker 1] (1:51:21 - 1:56:05)

Oh, yes. Surrender. Surrender to the light.

A slight modification of the dictum, accept what is. We could also say, it's a slightly different signpost. Accept your experience of this moment, or accept whatever you're experiencing at this moment.

So if you're experiencing resistance, mental, emotional resistance, then you would have to accept that. That seems to be a contradiction, almost an impossibility, because can one accept non-acceptance? You will have to find it out.

Similarly, if you feel unhappy in whatever form, instead of wanting not to feel unhappy, and thereby, as you can't get rid of your unhappiness, feeling even more unhappy, you could also try to just be okay with being unhappy, so you no longer complain about being unhappy. I'm not saying, let me be unhappy. It's just, I'm suggesting it as an experiment.

Next time you're unhappy, what happens if you are okay with being unhappy? Because the essence of unhappiness is not being okay. So if you're not okay with whatever it is you're...

And some people are unhappy about something abstract that they call my life. They're not necessarily unhappy about a single event or a few things that should be happening, but they have this entire huge thing they call my life, and they're unhappy with it, which means you're a large part, if not the entire part of your identity, the entirety of your identity is unhappy. And there are people walking this planet who are almost or literally permanently in a state of unhappiness.

And they may be... The strange thing is, it is often not the people who have the least in the world but it's often possibly the case that there's more unhappiness to be found in the wealthier parts of the world. So if you, whatever it is, experiment with it and see to be totally okay with whatever you're experiencing at this moment.

So I don't mind being unhappy. It could be that something happens to the unhappiness when you're completely okay with it. It could be that the two states of being okay with something with the unhappiness and the unhappiness cannot coexist.

[Speaker 17] (1:56:17 - 1:56:18)

Strange.

[Speaker 1] (1:56:30 - 2:01:00)

You might have noticed that the thin layer of ice on the lake is slowly beginning to dissolve in the sunshine, forming beautiful patterns like abstract paintings. It's just like the patterns in your mind, conditioned mind patterns, slowly dissolve in the sun of awareness. But it's amazing that it does take quite a while for this ice to completely go away on the lake.

One could use this ice as an analogy also for consciousness. We could say, ice, of course, is water in a particular state. And we could say, talking about consciousness, that ice is like inanimate matter.

Things, so-called inanimate things, are like frozen consciousness. And then water can become liquid. And that would be, in this analogy, consciousness becomes a living thing, something that is alive, rather than so-called inanimate matter.

Although inanimate matter isn't all that inanimate. It only looks inanimate. As we all know, there's intense movement, even in a stone and a pebble.

There's continuous motion of atoms and molecules with vast spaces in between. So it is alive in its own way. So frozen consciousness, matter, and then it becomes liquid.

And then that means it's living things. And then what can happen to water is it can become vapor, and then it rises up. It becomes invisible, unless it's very close together.

But a lot of this moisture in the air, and you can't see it. And that would be mind. Consciousness manifesting as mind.

So you have those three stages. It's interesting, if you look upon matter as frozen consciousness, then you have a different relationship with matter. Nothing is totally inanimate.

So everything ultimately is alive. Probably even a physicist would agree with that. But there's a big difference between something that is, there's a big difference between a pebble and a worm.

There's already what it is. Nobody knows exactly what, how does so-called inanimate matter suddenly become something else? And there's a big difference between a worm and you, I think.

Because you have a mind.

[Speaker 8] (2:01:10 - 2:01:40)

Thank you for spreading such a positive, shining light. My question is a fun kind of question. I was wondering, is it possible to have a conscious conversation?

[Speaker 1] (2:01:42 - 2:01:50)

Yes, yes. Have you experimented with that?

[Speaker 8] (2:01:51 - 2:02:05)

Yes, I have. I came to the conclusion that maybe two people wouldn't actually be talking to each other in a conscious conversation. They would be sitting opposite each other in awareness.

[Speaker 1] (2:02:06 - 2:04:41)

Oh, well, that's even better. But a conscious conversation is basically a conversation where there's at least between two people. Each person is not identified with their viewpoint, their perspective, their mental position.

They put forward their perspective, their positions, their viewpoints without any sense of self in it because they don't need that because their sense of self is derived from the presence that they can sense throughout the conversation in the background of their being. And then they can play with concepts. They can play with opinions.

They can play with words. They can play with arguments even. My argument is this and then the other person, well, and mine is that.

There's the famous saying, we, what is it? We agree to disagree or something like that. That sounds relatively conscious because if at least you're not identified with your positions, then that's fine.

We agree. That's okay. It's interesting.

Self-identification with mental positions is the unconsciousness because then you will be defending your mental positions, but you're really defending your sense of self. And this is why these conversations become easily and very quickly become very unpleasant. They are unconscious.

So in unconscious conversation and with very unconscious people, it can even happen. I mean, you can probably read about it in the papers all the time. They get so defensive and aggressive about their respective mental positions.

They start physically attacking each other. It even happens sometimes. You can see it in certain parliaments in some places.

And suddenly all these members of parliament start attacking each other. Washington sometimes gets close, but it probably hasn't quite had that where it could happen there too. Who knows?

So what is your experience with being engaged in conversation? Do you easily get into that position where you start to defend your sense of self?

[Speaker 8] (2:04:42 - 2:05:11)

In my case, I've been experimenting with thoughtless awareness. Yes. And I've been present, appreciating and being aware of the essence of the individual in front of me.

Yes. Listening to their words, but just allowing that presence of acceptance. However, I've struggled with returning a conversation point in that state.

[Speaker 1] (2:05:11 - 2:05:12)

Yes.

[Speaker 8] (2:05:14 - 2:05:15)

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (2:05:17 - 2:05:55)

And that's where the real practice begins. Because if you kind of withdraw from engagement, then it's relatively easy to sustain presence. But when you begin to actually interact verbally and thoughts, of course, thoughts become words.

Yes. Then the real practice begins. And especially if you engage in a conversation with certain things that you feel strongly about.

And ideally you choose somebody who has totally opposite viewpoints. Then you can really practice.

[Speaker 8] (2:05:59 - 2:06:45)

It's funny you should mention that because I'm an acupuncturist. Sorry? I'm an acupuncturist.

Oh, yeah. And I've just started a position in a hospital in central Sydney. And the way I operate with energy medicine is in an opposite position to Western medicine in many respects, from a thought-based point of view.

And so I'm meeting a lot of individuals who have got a very strong position. And I'm trying my best to allow this concept into this new institution. So I should imagine I'll be facing a lot of challenges.

[Speaker 1] (2:06:46 - 2:08:37)

Yes. So you can, there's a lot of, we'll be practicing conscious conversation, especially with physicians who say, I don't believe in all that. And I know that's an old, it's a load of rubbish, but you do what you do.

But then that could be an interesting conscious conversation. So it can be challenging. But the art is to remain present even as you put forward your point of view so that, and this is important, I've said it before, but I say it again, so that you don't identify with whatever thoughts you are expressing.

Identify meaning that they constitute your sense of self, and that's unconscious. That is self-identification with thinking. That's the essence of unconsciousness.

And so in order to counteract that, because there is an enormous pull when you start arguing with somebody or they argue with you, you need to, there needs to be a high

degree of alertness in you. And that alertness is presence. And that alertness needs to be there.

And then the words need to come out of that state of alertness so that you don't get, and that gives you your sense of who you are. Your sense of self is in the presence. Then you can play with concepts and words.

Then you can put forward your viewpoints. And even if your viewpoints are being challenged, you will not feel attacked in your sense of self. And so that is the essence of conscious conversation.

I wish you luck.

[Speaker 8] (2:08:37 - 2:08:41)

Thank you very much. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (2:09:06 - 2:29:03)

We'll have some questions, but before, just read two or three questions that people have been sending in questions for people who are watching us, who are with us, but elsewhere in time, in space, and eventually in time too, except that it's always the present moment. So time ultimately is an illusion, but on a conventional level, we talk about time. So I forgot to say hello to everybody who is not physically present here, but present somewhere else on the planet.

This question has been asked in the past a few times and tends to come up very often. So it is a question that quite a few people have. If we live with a person who is unconscious a lot of the time, is it possible to have a harmonious relationship whether the person totally awakens or not?

That seems to be a recurring problem for many people. Now, if you have brought your unconscious partner here, that means, and he or she actually came along, that means not all is lost if he or she is still here. So it depends in what way the unconsciousness of the person that you live with manifests.

There are many ways in which it can manifest from being in negative states and misinterpreting what you say or do, anger, and then it goes up on the scale of verbal abuse, and then it goes higher up on the scale of unconsciousness to physical abuse. So if the unconsciousness is not too high up on that level of intensity, it may be possible to live with a person who may not share your, not only not share your interest in spiritual evolution, but have no idea what you are practicing or reading or talking about if you try to point something out. That person may just be uninterested.

And then if you go up on the scale of unconsciousness, then another person may be

hostile towards what you're doing, and there's a big difference. But in both cases, there's unconsciousness. Your partner may just have no idea what it is, but say, well, yeah, go listen to that guy, Eckhart.

I don't know why you go there, but that's okay, I'll be fine. That's fine. So that should be, you can live with that person.

And then another one gets angry. Why do you always have to see me like, I can't stand it anymore, or whatever, criticize. So you might be able to live with that.

What you can live with, only you can know whether you can continue your presence practice and bring surrender into the situation with this person. And miracles are possible. Miracles do happen.

And sometimes the seemingly most unconscious person can suddenly shift. Now, if that person is very unconscious, usually what is required is some blow, not you physically throwing it. I'm speaking metaphorically.

Life administers some blow in the form of big loss, accident, illness, and then deeply unconscious people very much trapped in their ego can sometimes suddenly open up. The ego gets cracked. You may sometimes observe that when a person with a big ego is unconscious, it happens not to everybody.

When they become ill, they're lying in bed, and they're ill. Sometimes the ego gets even stronger, it seems. But for some people, the ego, there isn't enough energy left to keep the ego going in that, because the illness absorbs so much energy, so there's not enough energy for it.

And suddenly this person who was never a genuine person that you couldn't talk to heart to heart because there was always egoic posturing and egoic role-playing there. And suddenly this person is ill, lying in bed, and there just isn't enough energy for posturing and role-playing. And then for the first time, I've observed it a few times, people have told me and have personally observed, for the first time, you can communicate with that person in a deeper level of presence.

This can also happen when people who had a huge ego all throughout their lives, when they're approaching death. Sometimes miracles of transformation can happen in the last moments, in the last days, or in the last weeks of a person's life. When resentments that had been building up over a lifetime and other narratives of an extremely negative nature are let go of, can happen.

It can also happen when a person is ill that when this person recovers, that shift that you observed doesn't last. And the moment strength returns to that person, the old egoic patterns are back. And it's like, oh my God, you're your old self again.

You were so nice when you were ill. Loving and present and open. Well, just wait, things will happen again.

So if there's abuse, and these are more pronounced manifestations of unconsciousness. If there's verbal abuse, can you live with such a person? Only you can know whether you're prepared to do that, whether you can sustain your presence practice.

Perhaps not physical abuse. If you stay with physical abuse in the hope that this person will become transformed, that is probably a delusion. But I cannot tell you what to do.

But if you are alert and vigilant and observe yourself in the presence of that person, you will know what to do. You just have to see that what you, the right course of action is not being sabotaged by certain patterns that remain in your mind, mental, emotional patterns, such as fear of being alone, fear, loss of security, perhaps the security of being with another person. Even if it's fear of the unknown, stepping into the unknown.

So you may be held back by certain patterns in your mind. And if you are present enough, you can recognize that and then go beyond it. I've been a model for 10 years.

Somewhere deep inside, I kept hoping for a big break. It never came or has yet to come. Is it time to move on to another job if this job is not making me money?

It's time to move to another job if this job is not enjoyable anymore. If you're unable to enjoy what you're doing, then it's time to move to another job. But you have to look to see whether your inability to enjoy the job you're doing now has something to do with the particular job you're doing or has more to do with your inability to enjoy the present moment.

In which case, the next job that you find, you will also not enjoy. So if you can't enjoy your job, either one of these is true, either there is something for you to change, there's something inherently not right anymore with this particular job, does no longer corresponds to what, to who you are or your state of consciousness. Or you cannot enjoy your job because you haven't learned yet to be present enough to enjoy what you're doing now.

And you always think, oh, the next one is going to be much better. And if you don't know which one it is of those two, you may have to get another job and then see if you can enjoy that one. Many jobs that the mind tells you cannot be enjoyed actually can be enjoyed.

Also, the mind telling you if you enjoy this job that you really don't want this job to be permanent, and if the mind tells you, no, if I enjoy this job, I'll be stuck with it for the rest of my life and I don't want to be stuck with it. Let's say you got a job working, working in a diner as a waiter or waitress, but you really want to get your job as an actress or you really want to be a writer, you really want to be whatever you want to be, a senator,

successor of Donald Trump, whatever your mind says. And so the mind says, I'm not going to enjoy this job because I really want to be somewhere else.

And if I enjoy it, then I'll really be stuck. But you may find that the opposite is the case. If it is freeing to enjoy what you are doing, even if it's not something that you would want to do for the rest of your life, all you have to do is enjoy the present moment.

Your energy field then shifts. And when this energy field shifts, you become open to life only if you no longer resist life. You cannot be open to life without the greater consciousness coming through you if you resist life.

And you resist life if you resist or resent the present moment. That's where life is. So the shift happens.

You need to be in the state of alignment with the present moment, no matter what activity you are doing in the present moment. And if you absolutely cannot be in alignment with the present moment, you need to walk out. So if I got a job as a bartender in a disco, I would walk out.

I could surrender if they shut me in there and it's impossible for me to leave the building, I would still surrender. But since there is still a door that I can open, I would walk out. Because although I know how to surrender, I wouldn't want to surrender there if I can help it.

So when we use the expression to enjoy what you do, we get this little word joy here again, enjoy. To enjoy, this is the English language, to enjoy what you do. So when you enjoy what you do, joy arises from within.

And I would say it's not the doing, it looks as if what you do perhaps gave you joy, but it's really your presence in the doing that allows the joy to come from within you. And then it flows into what you do. So rather than the doing giving you joy, because you are present in the doing, the joy arises from within and it flows into what you do.

And so you can say, I enjoy this work. I enjoy doing this. Now, if you cannot enjoy it, try first just to accept it, that this is what you're doing at this moment.

Let's say you start off with, you're working at Denny's, or you're not from the United States. Denny's is a chain of diners throughout the States. Not bad.

Okay, often there's nothing else if you're driving along. You work at, let's say you work at Denny's and you absolutely are resistance. You don't really want to be there, but you have to earn money.

You're a graduate, let's imagine you're a graduate. You've applied for jobs, but because of the recession, you can't get any jobs and you've had 50 rejections and you're getting

frustrated. And here you are stuck in this menial job.

What did I study for all those years? All for nothing. All these thoughts go through your head while you're serving people.

Okay, and then you come into contact with a spiritual teaching or this teaching that points to the possibility of enjoying what you do. And you say, I can't enjoy that. Okay, then try something else.

Can you at least accept that right now, this is what you do? Don't try to get yourself to enjoy it. It might become unnatural.

You might play a role to yourself. You may go to a workshop, a new age workshop and say where they teach you, I'm happy, I'm happy. And then you can kind of, you go, I'm really enjoying this, but you're not.

So can you at least, can you accept that this is what you're doing right now? Not for the rest of your life, not even perhaps for the whole year, who knows, but just right now, this is all there is right now. So I might as well accept that this is what I'm doing right now.

Can you accept it if you can't enjoy it? Okay, I can try that. Feels already better, feels much better.

And sometimes from there, before you know it, there is no clear dividing line between acceptance and enjoyment. Somewhere they merge. So if you begin with acceptance, you may find suddenly there's even some enjoyment there.

Acceptance just means there is an absence of resistance. You're just, well, that's what is. And that can sometimes take you suddenly, before you know it, there's an enjoyment that arises.

[Speaker 18] (2:29:03 - 2:29:04)

Oh.

[Speaker 1] (2:29:05 - 2:41:34)

So if you think you can't enjoy it, don't force yourself to enjoy that doesn't work. Accept that's all first. This is what is right now.

I talked about that in the New Earth where I had three modalities. It's just come back to you. I haven't read the book in a long time.

Three modalities of doing. You can have acceptance. You can have enjoyment.

Or the most intense is, and this is usually when there's a creative process happening through you, I call it enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is an intense energy stream that flows, is

part of creativity. And so if you are, in order to live consciously and sanely, you have to be in either one of these three modalities.

If you're neither in acceptance, nor enjoyment, nor enthusiasm, you are somewhere in dysfunction. And you're creating unhappiness and suffering for yourself. And that usually implies you're also creating suffering for others because unhappy humans make others unhappy too.

So if you cannot accept, enjoy, or be in enthusiasm, remove yourself. Remove yourself. And then try again somewhere else.

But acceptance, in a way, is the most accessible, of course, to. Just try that. That's it.

My sons drowned in the sea 10 months ago. I did surrender, but when I felt the peace and calm coming over me, it felt wrong. It was not right to feel peace and calm with such a loss.

That's the natural way of being after death of a loved one is there's suffering at first, and then there is a deepening. And in that deepening, you go to a place where there is no death. And the fact that I'm not talking to the questioner who is not here, the fact that you felt that means you went deep enough to the place where there is no death.

But their mind, conditioned as your mind is, of course, by the society, the contemporary world you live in, which knows nothing about that dimension, your mind then tells you that there's something wrong about this. And your mind says, I should not be feeling peace. It's not what one feels in a situation like this.

But that's a conditioned thought by the culture that you live in. So instead, you can recognize when this happens, when that thought comes, and recognize it as a conditioned thought that is not true. It doesn't mean that the waves of sadness don't come back from time to time.

But in between the waves of sadness, you sense that peace. And as you sense that peace, you can sense the essence of your children also, the timeless essence. So death is a very sacred thing, not just a dreadful thing.

When you react to the loss of form, it's dreadful. When you go deep enough to the formless, the dreadful becomes, it's no longer dreadful, it's sacred. Then you experience the two levels when somebody dies close to you.

Yes, it's dreadful on the level of form. It's sacred. On the deeper level.

And death can enable you to find that dimension in yourself. And you're helping countless other humans if you find that dimension in yourself, the sacred dimension of life. So death can help you find the sacred dimension of life, where life is indestructible.

Surrender can open that door for you, complete acceptance of that. So honor that sacred dimension and realize that what your mind is saying that this isn't right, is just a form of conditioning. It's not the truth.

It is supremely right. Death is always a window into the formless as you accept it, surrender, because the form is gone. Your mind becomes still when you surrender to death.

There's nothing, explanations are, it's not through explanations that you accept death. You could have explanations, mental explanations that say, well, he or she, they will move on, reincarnate or go to a place of rest. That can be comforting, but there's a deeper, you can go to a deeper place than that where you don't need even explanations and a state of immediate realization of the sacredness of death, because what opens up when the form dissolves is life that is beyond form and that's sacred.

That's the only thing that is sacred. It's not a thing. The only, that is the sacred dimension.

You can get tiny glimpses of that, tiny glimpses of that when you lose something and you completely accept that it's gone. This is a tiny glimpse of death and can give you a tiny realization, maybe even more than tiny if you're ready. This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive.

To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

[Speaker 17] (2:42:07 - 2:42:09)

Thank you all for this opportunity.

[Speaker 16] (2:42:09 - 2:43:02)

My question is nearly all spiritual and spiritualists and religious traditions refer to some sort of life after death. The idea of living on after dying seems to me like an idea that egoic structures would come up with in order to support or enhance the ego. Some sort of life after death might still be true, but it seems to me that the idea could instead possibly be one big narrative lie created and propagated across human civilization by the ego.

Our embodied consciousness can be realized while we are alive, but upon death might actually become completely non-existent. Can you please speak to this?

[Speaker 1] (2:43:03 - 2:49:51)

Right, a very profound question. The ultimate answers, reincarnation, of course, there are many traditions that speak of reincarnation. And it's always good to just, whenever you are asked a question, you can speak from your own experience or realization.

And this is what I am also going to do mostly. The first thing to discover experientially is, as I've said before, it sounds a little strange, is that you are essentially invisible. Not only what I can see of you is the body, and sometimes I may be able to see certain things in your mental, emotional field.

I can hear words that you speak or your facial expressions. I'm talking to everybody, not just to Tina, but I can see facial expressions that kind of give me a hint of what you're feeling or thinking. But anybody who was looking for you in the realm of physicality would not find you.

And if that's too much, let's just go for a moment to, let's talk about, this perhaps makes sense to anybody who has a dog or a cat at home. When the dog or cat dies, which can be a very sad thing for people, and we come to humans later, it might be a little bit easier to start with the dog or cat. You may realize in that moment when suddenly the dog is dead or the cat is dead, but everything is still there, the fur, the body.

There may even be some warmth left in the body, and there it is. But that which you essentially loved and related to in the dog or the cat isn't there anymore. So you can still, the touch is still the same, but something essentially is gone, and that was always invisible.

What you love in the dog is ultimately, or the dog, you might like, love the way the dog looks and what it does. But when you relate to a dog, you essentially love, or you know what it might have actually if you expressed it like that consciously, you love the consciousness of the dog. That's what you love in the dog.

And when you look into the eyes of the dog, what's looking back at you is there's a consciousness of the dog looking back at you. And when that's gone, the dog is, and same with the human. What you love in the human is the consciousness of the other human.

And now you yourself, all that is invisible because consciousness is the greatest mystery in the universe, that science still has no idea what to do with it, cannot explain consciousness, in most cases avoids talking about consciousness. The greatest mystery is the fact that the universe is conscious and that you are conscious. A surgeon looking for you by cutting open your skull and analyzing your brain will not find even a trace of you, will not even find any of your countless, hundreds of thousands or million memories that you have somewhere.

What, in what form does a memory survive in you? Is the memory of your first teacher at school? I just mentioned the word and suddenly an image of the first teacher you had at school comes to you.

The memory of your grandmother who passed away, the memory of the bed that you

slept in when you were eight or 10 years old. I just need to mention it. It was somewhere, but where did that live in you?

Was that in a molecule or an atom? One atom was your bed? Or what is it?

Nobody knows, and nobody can find even the memories that you make up the person that you are, even on that level, let alone the deeper level of the unconditioned consciousness, nobody can find you there. You don't exist in the realm of the visible and not just the deepest essence, even as a person, even the person that you are, which is a mental, emotional construct or entity, even mind and emotion, you cannot find a thought as a material form. So this is why the downloading as some science fiction predictions, downloading your mind into a computer, I don't think that's going to happen.

It's an interesting idea, but it's not going to happen. You don't even know what a thought is. Nobody knows, and it doesn't exist in the realm of the visible.

So you are essentially invisible. Now that you can, you can sense that, that you are essentially invisible. The moment there's a cessation in the stream of thinking and all that remains is even though, even all the thought is already invisible, but if you go a little deeper, there's the consciousness.

[Speaker 17] (2:49:53 - 2:49:57)

And you cannot see it, taste it, touch it.

[Speaker 1] (2:50:02 - 2:52:18)

Now the important question that arises, is this consciousness a product of the physical brain? Is it produced by the physical brain? Is it possible that the physicality of the brain, which is on one level chemistry, on a deeper level, the atoms and molecules.

So on the chemical level, the soup, the chemical soup that makes up the brain, can the physicality produced something non-physical that is consciousness, or is the entire consciousness an illusion? As some scientists say, it's an illusion that the chemical soup is having. But who knows that?

Who is the one that knows that the chemical soup is having an illusion? It's getting very complex now. Is consciousness an epiphenomenon?

That's a fancy word for by-product. Is consciousness an epiphenomenon of the brain, the physical brain? Or undoubtedly there's a connection between the physical brain, physicality and consciousness, because you can knock somebody out, or somebody could give me a substance that makes me unconscious, or I could fall suddenly on my head and stop talking.

Is that proof that consciousness is produced by the brain? Would it be proof, is it if I

smash the TV, that whatever you have been watching, or let's say the radio, I don't know if people still have radios, if I smash the radio, which had been playing the Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, and suddenly Beethoven's Ninth Symphony disappears. And then I say, ah, this is proof that the radio produces the music.

[Speaker 7] (2:52:46 - 2:54:49)

So I have a pain-body question. And the basic is, how do I know if I've dissolved it, or if it's just gone dormant? My experience, like prior to four years ago, when I discovered the power now, is that when it would come up, I wasn't even aware of it, and I drank and drugged and managed emotion that way, and then I got in recovery, and I would share and talk about the pain, and it seemed to dissolve in those moments, but upon discovering Eckhart's work, I was thinking, well, maybe it's just gone dormant.

And so in the last four years, I noticed certain suggestions or triggers. They still bring it up. And I think, okay, in the moment, I can dissolve it.

I've used some of the techniques right out of chapter two, maybe three, where, you know, try not to feed it with thought, and just, you know, look where it's at, put attention there. But then, and I've had some success with it dissolving. I didn't have to go share it with another ego, but I wasn't sure if it was Eckhart's ego through the reading that helped put it dormant or not.

So this idea of dissolving, my hope is like, I want my pain body gone for good. Yeah, and we all do. And I'm being told if I can just stay present 100% of the time, then it is dissolved.

But then I can't seem to stay present. I tend to go to sleep all the time. And then all of a sudden my pain body wakes me up.

So I don't.

[Speaker 2] (2:54:49 - 2:54:50)

So you know it's not dissolved.

[Speaker 7] (2:54:51 - 2:54:51)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:54:51 - 3:01:44)

Yeah, yeah. Then you deal with that in the moment. What a drag.

But I want it gone. That's what the ego says. I want it gone.

Why do I have to keep on dealing with this? It's ego. The moment that we can just face it

and when it comes up and not even think about whether it's gonna be gone forever because you know what?

Forever is now. There is no forever. There is no time.

There's only this moment and what arises in this moment. Are we gonna choose to deal with it consciously or unconsciously? And then the mind will bring up and the ego will bring up that oh, but I've gotta have it, you know, stay away forever and I can't have it come back.

Huh. You know, it could be gone for years. And then life will say okay, you're ready for another test to see if it's really gone.

Who are you committed to? Are you committed to consciousness? Are you committed to being unconscious?

Which means bringing in time, bringing in the ego, bringing in thoughts such as I don't want this ever to come up again. That's a thought. We are dealing with a lot of baggage, not only personally but collectively because we are all connected.

We're one. So we've got our personal unconscious actions that we have dealt with and that personal could be in your family life and your upbringing and stuff and then we have the collective unconsciousness within our own community, within our society, within our country, different egos. And it is interesting because when you say you want it gone, I mean, that's a nice thought to have but it's not the reality of this moment because even when you dissolve your own, you're going to feel, you actually become more fine-tuned, okay, where you will begin to feel the collective unconsciousness and the collective pain body.

Yeah, because you are awakening and you are meant to awaken and not only bring healing to yourself through that conscious being but we are also meant to bring healing to others. That's how it works. That's the cycle and the gift of awakening is now we have to be present for others and we are there and whether we become formal teachers or informal teachers, we will be teaching because life, the evolution of consciousness is happening through the human being and that means all human beings, including the ones that are severely unconscious.

So even when you dissolve your own pain body or when that happens, maybe it's not you as in the ego you dissolving it but when it happens through you that it's actually dissolved, your work isn't finished. You'll find life might bring you somebody that comes along who has a big pain body and you're there as that aid, that assistant, that helper. I've told this story before and the reason why I keep telling this one is because it was the most profound and the first time I really understood what Eckhart meant was that how we can bring, help somebody dissolve their pain body.

I went to a Starbucks, got my tea and there were several empty seats but I happened to sit down in a particular seat and right next to me was this young girl and an older man, maybe her father, I don't know. But she was really upset, angry. You could feel that burning energy coming off her and I'm like, well, there's other seats.

I guess I can move, that was my thought but my body wasn't moving and I recognized, okay, my body's not moving so I guess I'm staying put. And all I can do is drink my tea and feel this sensation that was happening because energy knows no boundaries. It won't go, hey, you know, I'll stop here.

It just, right? It's all one. So here I am feeling it as I'm drinking my tea and suddenly, and I don't know how long it was, whether it's 15, 20 minutes, 30 minutes, I wasn't aware of the time but suddenly what I felt inside of me, that energy that I was feeling that was inside me suddenly burst.

The moment that it burst, she started laughing and I understood what Eckhart meant by how we can help dissolve another person's pain body. If you are truly unaffected and it doesn't touch your own pain body, so meaning your start to get activated, you can sit through somebody's pain body and help them dissolve it. But as soon as it activates yours, then you need to be more conscious, more aware because you're really not gonna be much help because it's within you unless you can sit with both that's happening at the same time.

And if you can't, then I suggest that you remove yourself because you don't want your pain body to become fully activated because then you'll go into full unconsciousness. So you can remove yourself and then dissolve it within your own body. So life will bring you an event to show you whether or not it's dissolved or not.

And if it isn't dissolved, wonderful. It just means you've got more work and that's okay because it's what's happening, it's what is.

[Speaker 1] (3:02:19 - 4:05:15)

You mentioned that pain is necessary for growth, but in one of your talks in the past, you mentioned that pain is necessary for growth until we realize that it is not necessary. Which one do you agree with more? Which one do you agree with more?

Let's see. Let's see. Well, pain is necessary for growth.

There are exceptions. It's usually true. I just forgot to add until you realize that it's no longer necessary, that's all.

It's the same statement. It's just the first statement was incomplete. So it's the same thing, pain.

At some point you realize your further evolution no longer requires pain. All of you are here because you've reached that stage. But if pain should still come or suffering still come, then all it'll do is it'll lead to greater deepening of where you are already.

Title of the question is, is it possible to go to the state of presence directly? The question is, is it possible to be in the state of presence without before having questioned all our stressful thoughts? I think that Byron Katie would say no.

Thank you. Okay, I'll read it again. Is it possible to be in the state of presence without before having questioned all our stressful thoughts?

I think that Byron Katie would say no. Okay. For those of you who don't know Byron Katie's teaching, it's about questioning your stressful thoughts so that you don't believe in every thought that comes into your head anymore.

So you ask things like when a thought arises and you make a statement about a situation, a person, about yourself, about life, you ask yourself, do I know absolutely that this is true? Example. Example.

And other questions with which you address that thought. Now, the questioner says, can one be in a state of presence without before having questioned all our stressful thoughts? Well, there is no, the questioning of your stressful thoughts implies that there's already an awareness that's arising.

Without an awareness of your thoughts, you can't even question your thoughts because you would be your thoughts. So you wouldn't be able to step outside the thought. Consciousness would not be able to at least partially step outside the thought and from there, look at the thought and question whether this is absolutely true or whether this is just one of many possible perspectives.

So the questioning of your thoughts is inseparable from the arising of presence, although not for everybody in whom presence arises. It applies that they question their thoughts. It might, the disidentification can happen in various ways, but the arising of presence always implies disidentification from thinking.

Questioning your thoughts is a way in which that happens, one particular way in which that happens. So you cannot question all your thoughts and then enter the state of presence as the questioner implies. It's a simultaneous process.

As you question your thoughts again and again, as they arise, especially stressful thoughts means thoughts that cause you upset or suffering, then you begin to disidentify and with the disidentification, presence or awareness grows. And when it's grown enough, thought loses its power to make you unhappy, loses its power to bring about a state of stress inside you, to make you suffer, basically. So as awareness arises, awareness grows, the power of thinking to make you unhappy and to distort your

experience of reality diminishes.

And so, and that's the transitional stage. And then you come to a stage where stressful thoughts don't even arise anymore. But the most important thing is already when thoughts, if they do still arise, the intermediate stage, they're recognized as stressful thoughts, so they lose their hold over you.

In other words, the mind loses its hold over you. There's no longer total identification with who you are and your mind. And then in the awakened stage, stressful thoughts don't arise anymore.

In other words, you don't tell yourself stories that make you unhappy or upset. And so then to a large extent, you can let things be. To a large extent, you can move around life without an excessive interference of thinking.

You can approach situations and people and let them be, even interact without judgments. That's an enormous sense of freedom that comes in. And you become free of external conditions.

The external conditions no longer have power over you. You no longer give them that power. You only give them that power through your involvement in them, and the involvement in them happens through judgment and reactivity, which are unconscious.

It's a wonderful thing when you don't need to judge people anymore. You'll just let them be. And one thing you notice then with people who are conscious in an awakened state, you don't hear them say, commenting negatively about anybody.

It's not ultimately true. Any negative comment just strengthens the ego. Don't complain about anybody.

They do what they do. What can you add to that by complaining? Situations are as they are.

What can you add to them by upset? Should, shouldn't, all those mind structures. He should have, he should not have.

They shouldn't, they should. I should have, why didn't I, why didn't he? That complicates life.

But that's the most people's reality. So with the awakened state, you become very simple and just very clear, and really no situation is complicated anymore. And you don't even try to figure out what people's motivations are.

They do what they do. And today's thief or dishonest person, or whatever they do, maybe 10, 20 years from now, they may be enlightened. So when you call a thief a thief, then you fixed him in your mind.

You've created a conceptual reality for that person and stuck it on his head. But you cannot stick a conceptual reality on somebody's head without sticking an equivalent one on your head. And since the mind manufactures a conceptual reality for everybody with fixed ideas and opinions about people, often with a focus on the negative, often with a focus on their shortcomings.

So you get trapped in prisons. You have a prison for everybody, a conceptual prison, not realizing that the more conceptual prisons you create for everybody else, the more you yourself get trapped in your own conceptual prison. Somebody else said that 2,000 years ago in slightly different words about judging others.

But it's so prevalent, that mind pattern, and it's so satisfying to the ego, the false mind-made sense of self. With every conceptual prison that you make for somebody else, it feels strengthened in its sense of identity. The more you judge, the stronger the ego feels, because you have the authority.

You are then the authority figure that judges. You are morally superior to every person that you judge and to any situation that you judge. This is the implication, the unconscious assumption.

And imagine then millions of humans living in that way, forming a nation or forming a religion or any entity, collective entity. So the world cannot change unless those patterns change. And they do not change with the collective entities.

They can only change with you. And it requires vigilance on your part to know whether or to what extent you're still doing it. As a spiritual practice, you could say, next time I complain about somebody or say anything negative, I'll notice it.

Let's see if I can catch myself. And when you do, you don't need to beat yourself up. It's a success.

It's not a failure to catch yourself in a negative conditioned thought, to notice it. You don't say, oh, you see, I'm doing it again. How dreadful.

No, it's a great success to catch a thought. And then, oh, well, there it goes again. You don't even need to say, go away.

It's enough to see it. And then it loses its power over you. That's all.

♪♪♪ Presence and stillness are really synonymous. There are different words you can use to talk about it. Another word you could use is awareness.

So let's look briefly at what presence is, both conceptually and experientially. Knowing something usually involves these two levels. So to know what presence is, it helps to understand it conceptually to some extent.

But there's also a different way of knowing something, not only presence, anything, knowing it directly without concepts. The example of, given, I think it originated in India. Some, I don't know which spiritual teacher gave that example.

So you can ask, do you know what honey is? Yes, I know what honey is. You could know a lot about honey.

You can write a PhD about honey, and I'm sure people have done it. There's a lot to know about it. That's knowing through conceptualization.

And then there's direct knowing, which is tasting the honey. Now, it could be that you know honey only as a taste, so you might not know anything about it conceptually, and yet you might experience the taste of honey every day. And you have an intimate relationship with honey without knowing much about it.

Maybe you don't even know that the bees produce it. That's already conceptual knowledge. So for many things, both are needed.

But in our world, we have placed excessive emphasis on conceptual knowing, cutting things up into little fragments, interpreting it through the veil of concepts, interpreting your entire reality. Every moment, every experience is immediately conceptually interpreted, and that's the mind. There's a place for that, we need it.

But we should not be consumed by it, possessed by it. That's the danger, and this is where presence comes in. Presence is another way of being, a way of knowing that is non-conceptual.

So if I talk about it conceptually, I could say presence is a dimension of consciousness that is accessible to a human being, although many humans don't even know that it exists or that it is possible. But quite a few humans occasionally experience moments of presence without knowing what it is. They may experience it as a moment of just inner peace or clarity or an intense sense of aliveness.

A feeling totally at one with the present moment and your surroundings and other human beings, a sense of oneness. For most humans, when it comes, it doesn't stay for too long, and then you are back in what is really the ego state, which is you identify with a conceptual self-image, a narrative in your mind, and the narrative you call me or my life, and you think that is your true identity, but it's not your true identity. It is a superficial kind of identity.

There's a deep identity that connects you with something that far transcends who or what you are as a person. We don't necessarily need to name it, but it connects you with something deep, profound, the source, and that is presence or awareness. And it's a state of consciousness or a dimension of consciousness that all ancient spiritual teachings have pointed to, spoken about, using different words to talk about it.

So people have never tasted the honey of presence. They think all those different teachings and different spiritual traditions are totally different. They don't realize that they talk about the same thing, just using different terminology.

So if you hadn't tasted honey, you could read different books about honey, and they use totally different words or different languages to talk about, say, oh, they're all totally different. No, they all point to the one thing that honey is. So let's taste the honey then.

We've spoken about it. Presence is when you're able to experience this moment without a screen of mental concepts and interpretations and judgments, clarity of perception. That's the beginning of it.

So they would mean, it implies that perhaps briefly, the stream of thinking that is usually behind your sense perceptions, continuously interpreting, calling it this or that, that stream of thinking temporarily subsides, and there's a moment of not thinking. Maybe it's just a few seconds, but you haven't fallen asleep at all. You're completely awake, but you're not thinking.

So to even have a taste of that, even here and now, to be completely awake and alert, there's a moment of, a space of no thought, just awareness or presence. You can take everything in, all the visual, auditory perception, any of the senses, and there's a stillness around every thought, sense perceptions, or behind the sense perceptions, a still presence. You can look at a tree, a plant, see it, even know it through presence, not conceptually.

You might not know what this plant is called. It's concepts, and yet you can look at this plant, and there's a background to the sense perception that's called stillness, because you're not thinking, and that enables you actually to go deeper, to relate to things, seemingly external things, without a sense of separation. You can sense, for example, you can sense the being of the plant, there's a stillness in it, or a tree.

Natural things are helpful in this. Trees are very still, plants are very still. Some trees have been there for hundreds of years, and there's always, they can just give them some attention without concepts, and they almost, they don't speak to you, but there's almost a sense of communication, or oneness.

You can sense their being, because you can sense your being. Being recognizes itself, that's presence. So it's a moment of no thought, of awareness.

Thought subsides, awareness arises, and replaces thought for a little while. Thought comes back when you need it. It'll probably come back even when you don't need it.

It'll push its way back into your mind, until you become a bit more familiar with presence, and it stays there for longer, and after a while, even while you're using your mind, there's still a sense of presence in the background. As I'm speaking now, I'm using

the mind, or maybe even that's not the correct way of saying it, not I as a person is using the mind. The deeper I, which is presence, is using the mind, and talking about presence.

The deep I, I call it. The surface I is you as the person with a history, a personal history, some good, some bad, personal problems, everybody has them, but there's a deeper I. The deep I, that's consciousness itself, that's presence.

And so that is the most important realization in any person's life, in anybody's life, the discovery of that dimension within them. Is religion necessary if only presence matters? Is there a place for going to church and following in the steps of Jesus if only presence is important?

The question is specifically about focusing on Christian religion, but the answer, I suppose, I don't know what the answer is going to be, but it's going to be probably also referred to other religions, or religions in general. Is religion necessary? It depends who you are on the level of the form.

For some people, it can be necessary or helpful. For two reasons, it can provide the more superficial reason. It can give your life a certain amount of structure, which for some people can be helpful.

Regular practice gives you a feeling of comfort. Some people have too little structure in their lives and others have too much already. More importantly, on another level, religion can either obscure the spiritual dimension within yourself, and often it does, or if used rightly, if approached rightly, if understood on a deeper level, it can help you access and stay in connectedness with that deeper level of yourself or the transcendent dimension of consciousness.

Whether or not you need it, only you can know. Whether you find it either helpful or a hindrance, it can be either, depends on you as a person, your past, what function it had in your past, and so on. It is a hindrance if religion becomes an ideology.

Then it operates only on the level of the mind, and it's very similar to any other kind of ideology that you may believe in, whether it's communism as an ideology or any political theory or anything that explains the universe. It could be a metaphysical system that you completely believe in, philosophical system, and so on. So an ideology is something that takes possession of your mind, and exerts a controlling function, and it can influence almost your entire mental functioning if it becomes something of overwhelming power in your mind.

It's a little thought that grows into a huge thing in your mind, and the tentacles reach into every aspect of your mind, and there are religious people like that. Usually you can recognize that it is an ideology by the fact that they are not peaceful human beings, and by the fact that they have enemies, either even within their own religion or another

religion. Anybody who does not agree with their ideology becomes an enemy.

In the same way, the people who were not nowadays that many were deeply believing in communism, which was a wonderful idea to start with, of course. The road to hell is paved with good intentions. It was a beautiful idea of equality.

Everybody would say, well, that is wonderful. No personal possessions, sounds wonderful too. And the only mistake was it was imposed from outside by people who themselves has not gone beyond the egoic state of consciousness.

They just played it in their mind as that's a good idea, and then it was imposed on other people who also were not in that state of consciousness, but most importantly, those who imposed the idea on others forced them to live it out. The ideal became contaminated with ego. So when these people came to power, their egos became inflated to an enormous degree, almost to absurdity, and without realizing it, they reenacted the same evils, and in some cases worse than those that they were fighting against.

Like in Russia, they saw the injustices associated with the Tsar regime and so on, and they truly saw that, and they truly wanted to remove that, and that seemed a good thing. But they had overlooked their own state of consciousness, and the great challenge is for people, power. You can have that very meek person that seems, oh, this is what a lovely person.

He seems to have no ego or very little. He's so, give that person power. Then the latent ego, which was there in a, let's say a person's very poor, has no power at all.

Give that poor person power, then the latent ego will no longer be latent. It will suddenly come to life, and that happens, is repeated, and has been repeated many, many times in countries where frequently the government is overthrown, and then the previous rulers are accused of corruption, and the new people who overthrow the previous, they truly believe that now they have a just, more just society is going to arrive, because they, again, they don't know themselves. They have not observed themselves, and the moment they achieve power, they are seduced by that, and their ego suddenly grows, and they reenact the same thing again.

Ha, ha. So ideology, religion can turn into, and often does turn into ideology. You can recognize it, as I said, by the fact that these people are not peaceful.

They will condemn other people or other groups of people as evil. They may verbally, even physically, attack others, and if it's not that extreme, it might be that they simply are extremely intolerant towards anybody who does not share their belief system, their ideology, and so that's a clear sign that that kind of religion is a hindrance to the spiritual dimension, to knowing who you are, to being a peaceful human being. It's in the service

of the ego.

It's an egoic creation. The ego can take scriptures that are beautiful and point to the truth and can corrupt them, completely misread and misinterpret them, and then they're used in the service of the ego. So that's how religion can become a huge hindrance, but religion can also become an opening into the spiritual dimension.

So a religious practice or a religious reading, a reading of a sacred text, an ancient spiritual text, can be a wonderful thing. The questioner mentions Jesus, following in the steps of Jesus, is that or is only presence important? When you use it in a deeper sense, following in the steps of Jesus means becoming present.

How? First of all, Jesus taught presence in quite a few of his utterances, starting from the flower, that you said you should really look at a flower and see how it lives in the present moment without worry and anxiety. He taught egolessness, deny thyself, which means recognize the unreality of yourself.

He spoke of the I am as the foundation and which is misinterpreted. We have, let's just for a moment, in Christianity, we have a historical person, probably Jesus, and we have Christ. Now, Christ was not his actual name.

It was a title given later. And that's already mentioned in the more enlightened parts of the New Testament, that Christ is a dimension of consciousness. And I believe it's St. Paul who says, I must diminish and Christ in me must grow. This is a mystical, deeper interpretation of Jesus who was an historical person who realized his kinship with the transcendent dimension, the divine, whatever you want to call it. He realized his connectedness, his kinship, his oneness with that. And as he realized that, he became the transcendent dimension emerged in him as it does in you.

It emerged in him. And then the historical person, Jesus, became the Christ. Therefore we have in mystical Christianity, the term Christ consciousness, which is the transcendent consciousness that emerges where before there was only the person.

And we have in certain Buddhist traditions, the term Buddha nature that says that every human being and everything that's alive has at the core of their being is Buddha nature or the Buddha as the reality of who you are. That's the teaching in some Buddhist traditions. And it's a beautiful teaching that your true nature is Buddha nature.

And you just have to realize your true nature is Buddha nature. Isn't that what we've been talking about? It's just a different name attached to it.

In mystical Christianity, it's Christ consciousness. And so Jesus was a precursor who showed the way to Christ consciousness. And if we're focusing on the historical figure of Jesus and realizing that he embodies both the person and the Christ can become a vehicle for you if that is suitable for you.

And if you still feel drawn to Christianity or any other religion, that is the way for you to go deepen that rather than think you have to move into something else. But if that doesn't work for you, then fine. Then walk away and find Christ consciousness somewhere else.

And some people don't need any religious structure anymore. This is for the first time, perhaps in the evolution of humanity, there's spirituality that exists outside of formalized religions. And that's an amazing thing.

So many of you may not need the formalized religion anymore and others may need it. And that is a beautiful thing. You can deepen the way in which you live, practice and understand your religion so that it becomes an opening into the transcendent dimension within yourself.

If you are a Christian and want to deepen certain readings, I would highly recommend there were certain teachers who expressed the truth of Christianity from a deeper level than the conventional church Christianity. The most, in the past, Meister Eckhart, who lived in the early middle ages, the most wonderful, his writings are superb and in fantastic depth to them. And he uses Christianity to take you very, very deep into the core of it all, the core of all things into yourself.

Other mystical writers in the middle ages are good too. Some Spanish ones, some more German ones. And more recently, I would recommend Course in Miracles, which uses Christian terminology throughout, which to some people is obnoxious, can't stand it.

And others say, oh, now I understand Christianity much better. And Joel Goldsmith, he was a teacher in the fifties and sixties, also reinterprets Christianity and makes it deeper, discovers the depth dimension that's there. And other religions have the same.

You have deep teachings in Judaism. You have deep teachings in Islam. You have deep teachings, obviously, in Buddhism.

So there's the superficial level to religion. And if that's all there is for you, it will probably become an ideology and then it becomes a barrier. Or if understood more deeply, it can become an opening.

This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. Sometimes when I hear you talk about presence, it seems like you're describing a person or describing a state in which there's no mental or emotional content.

And yet I experience emotions in presence, perhaps sadness when something happens that is difficult for another person or at the news of the death of someone I love. And I experienced that emotion happening in present time. Isn't this possible for him?

Isn't it possible for emotional experiences to arise in presence? Yes, you can have presence while the emotions are happening or even while thoughts are happening. It means you're not totally lost in, totally identified with, totally drawn into the emotion or the thought.

There is in the background a space of awareness that in the foreground there is a space of awareness where there may be anger, sadness, and you're not totally lost in it. There's a space for it that you still sense and you are essentially not the emotion. You're the awareness behind the emotion.

You know that this emotion is there. The same thing can happen when the mind is active. You can talk and the mind can completely take over and you become lost in your mind, in a stream, either a stream of thinking or a stream of speaking.

You can observe it. If you can't yet observe the mind stream in yourself, you can occasionally just quietly observe people talking to each other and especially people who are having a discussion because when you're having a usually discussion or a disagreeing about something, there is not only the mind, there's also an emotion that goes with the mind stream. That's the disagreement.

Why is there an emotion when people are having a discussion and a disagree? Why is there an emotion that goes with their mental positions because they're identified with a mental position that identify means their sense of self has become one with the thought. The consciousness, the I, has identified with the form rather than realizing that it is formless in essence.

It has lost that knowledge so consciousness is in a dreamlike state, I could say. Consciousness identifies with I, with the form and so there is a self-identification with a mental position or thought which means anybody who questions or doubts or contradicts this mental position or thought is unconsciously regarded by the self-identified thought structure which you have become. The ego is part of ego.

Anybody who disagrees, contradicts, doubts is unconsciously, not in so many words, but unconsciously regarded as an enemy because you are threatening, it's a delusion, but there's an unconscious belief that the other person is threatening my very being because the person is threatening my mental position with which I have identified. So you can, it's a very deeply unconscious process and it requires quite an alertness to see it in the moment that it happens in yourself. But perhaps next time somebody comes to you and you're having a kind of disagreement about something and suddenly you can feel an influx as you defend your position or contradict the other person or justify something, feel the emotion that flows into what you say.

It will be some kind of either aggressive or defensive emotion that goes with it, either some fear or some aggression. If you can be aware of that at that moment and realize

what is happening that you have identified with something in your mind believing that that is you, believing your very existence is threatened by somebody contradicting you, it's unconscious. That's why people get aggressive and negative energy flows the moment somebody contradicts you.

It just means somebody has a different opinion, but the ego can't allow a different opinion because the ego feels its existence is threatened by a different opinion because ego's identification with thought and a mental position. This is on a personal level, this can become an entire war between nations, the similar pattern. So you can, at first you can see it, let's say you're observing two people having a discussion and of course, let's say you are not involved, then it's easier for you to see that process at work and realize that usually both of them become drawn into a very negative confrontation simply because they hold different opinions, but for them it's more than an opinion, it's their very self that's threatened. It's an illusion, but that's how it is perceived.

So it's very fundamental and very basic to the huge amount of conflict that arises in human interactions. And it's basically so simple that it's just quite incomprehensible that people haven't realized by now that this is how it works. And so, but the pattern is so deep seated that even people who are engaged in spiritual work for years still get drawn into that when their mental position is threatened.

No matter how much spirituality, there they are defending their very existence because the pattern is very deep. So alertness is required. If you don't want to carry on in that way for the rest of your life and be part of that, madness ultimately, dysfunction ultimately, because it creates continuous conflict and negative feelings and so on, and interferes with the true relationship with another human being, be aware in yourself of this process when and as it happens.

And for that, you have to wait until the moment comes when somebody contradicts you or says, no, you're not right or I don't agree or whatever they say, and then you have to be alert. What is it that comes up and wants to defeat the other or protect itself? So that is a very vital thing, but presence is required.

The pattern is deep, very deep-seated. Without the presence, each time, every time it will take you over and you'll be lost. So alertness.

I can't remember what the question was, but this is vital. Ah, yes. Sometimes when I hear you talk about presence, it seems like you're describing a state in which there's no mental or emotional content, and yet I experience emotions in presence.

So we've been talking now just about experiencing the absence of presence and there's a mental-emotional stream that comes up. You can do it to yourself also. You can have a discussion with yourself.

You can doubt yourself. You can have an argument with yourself. You can have one part of your mind accusing another part of your mind of being lazy, for example, of being not good enough.

And then you have to have a similar argument with one part of your mind split in two and says, you should know better by now. You should do better. Why did you do this?

Well, I couldn't help it. No presence. So, yes, there can be presence when there are thoughts and emotions, and it is vital that there should be presence in the background, which means just you're aware that certain emotions are coming through you and you're not the emotion, but you're the awareness.

You're aware that certain thoughts are there. You're aware that you have an opinion. You're aware that you're voicing your opinion.

That's fine, but you are not in the opinion. Your sense of self isn't in the opinion. Your sense of self is the awareness.

And then you can express an opinion, and you can say, the universe is, in essence, consciousness. And then the other person says, that's a load of rubbish, or whatever they say. Mumbo-jumbo, you are talking mumbo-jumbo.

Where is the, show me the consciousness, or whatever the flat-footed materialist is saying to you. And then observe. See whether you actually know that you, the universe, which means you, ultimately comes down to you, as this is where you experience the universe as yourself.

Do you know that the universe is consciousness, or do you just believe that the universe, at that moment, are you the consciousness, or are you the belief that you are consciousness? If you are the belief, then you are the thought, and then you'll be defending yourself. So you'll be shouting back at the other person, that they are narrow-minded bigots.

Or there is an awareness in the background, and then you say, the universe is consciousness, the other person says, that's a load of rubbish, then you say, well, I'm sure in your perception, that the universe is not consciousness, and that's fine. Why should you believe that the universe is, that's not within your reality? Fine, you are entitled to believing that the universe is a soup of chemicals, that's fine, that's your reality, it's perfectly, I'm perfectly comfortable to allow you your reality of living in a soup of chemicals, or whatever, atoms floating around, whatever it is, or the gray matter of the brain producing the illusion of consciousness, whatever, it's fine.

No defensiveness anymore, and no negative feelings. This is why I liked the, when Obama said, you don't need to be disagreeable to disagree, you don't need to become disagreeable when you disagree. The deeper implication is, you're not identified with

your mental position.

He couldn't say that, because nobody would understand what he's talking about, so, well, only some people would understand. There's awareness in the background, so presence or awareness is there while things happen in the foreground. The foreground can be your thoughts, the foreground can be your emotions, the foreground can be whatever is happening around you.

And so, the perceptions of whatever is happening outside, there's also, you're not perceiving this through the screen of concepts or thoughts, you're perceiving through, you are the awareness, not the thoughts, and even if a thought comes and says, that person looks weird, then you realize it's just a thought in your head, and when you're finally communicating with that person, you can still be the awareness, and communicate as awareness, rather than communicate as if the thought, this person is weird, where the reality, you realize it's just a thought that came into the head, and you don't impose the thought on the person, and then relate to that person as if it were true, and you say, and then suddenly, you're talking to this weird person, what are you going to, everything, it'll distort everything, or you want something, but the thought says, this person could be helpful to me, or whatever the ego says, that's a thought, be there as the spacious presence. Now the question is, yes, of course, there can be presence while thoughts happen, or emotions happen, including sadness or anger, but the questioner asks, it seems like you're describing a state in which there's no mental or emotional content, there's also the possibility of presence becoming so intensified at times, that all thoughts and emotions become obliterated. This is very different from suppressing emotions or thoughts, it's simply that the presence that arises becomes so intense, that just thoughts or emotions don't arise, and usually, it could happen in a limit situation, as existentialist philosophers call it, life or death situation, it could happen that presence sometimes can become so intense, or it can become, for no reason at all, it can happen, and you're simply sitting in your room, and suddenly, there's no thought whatsoever, there's no emotion, there's just an intense aliveness, it's not you haven't deadened yourself, because that is, sometimes people believe if you have no emotion, you're dead, you haven't deadened yourself, there's an intense aliveness, a different kind of aliveness than the emotion, a vibrantly alive field of intense consciousness, so that can arise sometimes, and it's beautiful, I sometimes spend periods of time without thought and without emotion, and it's beautiful, nature, walking around nature, or with nothing particular to think about, why think, or sitting in a cafe, drinking a cup of coffee, why think, be, just be the alert presence, so you have the presence can be there without thought and emotion at times that will happen, or presence can be there as a background to whatever emotions or thoughts are there, so, and presence can be lost completely, in which case, all you have is thoughts and emotions, and you will believe that you are the thought and the emotion, that's the unconscious state, so for us, it's important to be there as the emotions happen, and I suggest you work particularly with

people, talking to people, exchange of opinions and viewpoints, observing aggression, observing defensiveness, observing negativity flowing into, just because somebody has not the same opinion that you have, and then don't condemn yourself and say, oh, I shouldn't have, I shouldn't be feeling this, no, just again, observe that, observe that, suddenly you've become angry with this person, and instead of saying, oh dear, that's, I failed miserably in my spiritual practice, no, just say, okay, I'm just noticing that, you're no longer in it, you're already out of it when you notice it, so be compassionate with yourself, and just, but the important thing is you're aware, so we all know the famous joke about the person, when you tell the person, why are you so angry, the person says, I am not angry, and that's, of course, a typical example of somebody who doesn't know, has absolutely no awareness, in the middle of anger, denies that there's anger,

[Speaker 2] (4:05:52 - 4:07:01)

and just, is there a particular region of the body that is rooted in and senses our eternal, unchanging nature, yes, I think so, and where that is, it's between the eyes, not on the outside, but on the inside, let's try this experiment, look around the room, and point to an object, so I'm choosing these flowers, you can choose anything, so I'm aware of my finger pointing to the object of the flowers.

[Speaker 1] (4:07:18 - 4:48:46)

There are thousands, or hundreds of thousands that you go on, every day, they look on their screen, waiting for the next thing to be offended by, and the ego loves it. The transcendence of thinking means the transcendence of the egoic mind, it means that you're able to spend part of your time relatively free of compulsive thinking, certainly free of self-serving thinking and destructive thinking that continuously creates unhappiness for yourself and the people around you. How many people live the compulsive narrative in your mind that for many people is very negative, constantly critical, constantly complaining, never at ease with what is, there's always something wrong, fault finding because the ego grows through constant opposition, constant antagonism, never at ease, always looking for the next thing to complain about, and it strengthens the ego itself.

The more you complain, oh, offended is a new version these days, it's very popular on the internet. I'm very, very offended, outrageous, how dare you? There are thousands, or hundreds of thousands that you go on, every day, they look on their screen, waiting for the next thing to be offended by.

And the ego loves it. And for many of them, it's the only way they can inflate their ego by sitting on the screen and sending out tweets. The transcendent of thinking is not any kind of regressive movement, we are not regressing to the state of somebody who is, whose mind is relatively undeveloped and who does not have a problem with egoic thinking because there's very little going on in their minds, what used to be called,

before it became politically incorrect, idiot, or fool, the fool was, they were always, you could see, happy fools, there's not enough thinking to make them unhappy, so they are below egoic thinking. In the medieval times, every village had at least one village idiot or fool, and none was accepted, essential part of the community.

And even the royal courts had a fool. Very important figure, although that figure probably was just pretending to be a fool, and that was one of the most, sometimes very influential position in the royal court, but also one of the most dangerous jobs you could have because you could lose your head at any moment. But only the fool was able to tell the king or queen what was wrong by making it into a funny story.

But the fool is more deeply connected, as we know from mythology, the fool is more deeply connected with the source still, hasn't gone as far out as a normally developed human, he's more simple. He, the fool, for example, relatively speaking, is a simpleton, it's like the hobbit in Lord of the Rings. The hobbit is a simple guy, doesn't think in complex terms, loves the simple things of life, loves eating and enjoyment.

But why the fool has to go on this important mission that nobody else can carry out? That's a mythological motive, that's often the case, because the fool has a connectedness still with source that the more developed humans don't have. Similar motive in Forrest Gump, the movie, the fool does great things, this guy, Forrest Gump, but he's, because he's, and life always supports him.

If you watch that movie again, he always, he saves people in the war, he does heroic things, but he doesn't claim credit because he doesn't have much of an ego yet. And all his life gives him the next thing and the next thing supports him. But we don't want to go there.

When I say cessation of thinking, I'm not talking about regressing to the stage, this is the pre-thinking stage of humanity. I'm thinking about rising above, pointing to the possibility of rising above thinking. So you stop thinking, which is normally associated with the diminishment of consciousness, and transcendence of thinking is an intensification of consciousness, turning up the light.

This is why the term attention and alertness, those terms are extremely important. They're also used in Zen very frequently. The Zen teachings could be described, if you wanted to summarize Zen, it would just, you can just say simple things like pay attention.

There was one Zen teacher who would, whenever they asked him a question to explain Zen, he was, became quite famous. He would always raise his finger, please explain Zen to us. What is Zen?

I haven't quite understood yet. He was calling people to attention. Now, this attention,

there's a state of attention that sometimes people experience when they're engaged in dangerous activity, you can climb a mountain.

Do you think you're doing much thinking when you're hanging on this wall? No, you can't. You have to be absolutely present.

In that moment, you have transcended thinking and the situation has forced you, is forcing you into complete presence, this highest degree of alertness. Without it, you slip and you're gone. And so this high degree of alertness however, has no tension in it.

In the case of somebody practicing dangerous sport, yes, there is physical tension, but the state itself has no tension in it and you do not need to engage in a dangerous activity in order to enter that state. We are entering it here because even as I talk about it, I hope, well, I don't really hope anything, but I trust that as I speak about it, simultaneously to listening to it, you can verify in yourself this state of attention, which is a state of very high alertness, but there's no tension in it. It's not the alertness that sometimes goes with fear and you go, but it's not, ah, ah, that's really a contraction of the entire body.

It's not really alertness. So that's not it. It's a relaxed alertness.

There's both yin and yang in it coming together and it's that. I also mentioned the other day, when you first look at something for the first few seconds, a new vista, a new landscape, you enter a room or you step out of a room into the open or whatever it is, or suddenly something new comes into your field, into your perceptual field. In the first two or three seconds, you don't know what it is.

You have to first take it in. There's a moment of alert presence in this, but usually you're only aware of the sense perception. You're not aware of the background of the alert presence itself, but you can be aware of the alert presence itself as you take it in, and that's the key.

So you're not just alertly present. You're aware of the field of alert presence in yourself, so to speak, as yourself, and the awareness of it and it are the same thing. Cessation of thinking.

Now, you can try it. Let's, even now, I would suggest that as I'm speaking, you may find, you may not know this, yet in the moments when I'm not speaking, like now, and now, and now, if you're alert, you're not thinking. You're just present.

And now, it's just an alert field of presence. So some of you may not be able yet to be totally free of thinking, but I believe that most people are able to, they have short gaps of no thought, pure awareness, but no thought. Just to show.

So, and then you look around. In that moment, your whole, your personal sense of self

has receded. In the moment of pure presence, which is just this, you have no memories, and you have no expectations for future, because you have no thought, but you're not, you haven't fallen asleep.

You're very awake. In that moment, you're not a person anymore. What are you?

Just a field of consciousness, conscious presence. Something has emerged from within you, and has taken place of the person. The person is still there, it's just gone, receded.

If the only thing you achieve in life is this, that you are able to be free of compulsive and addictive thinking, if you're able to almost, one could say, to choose not to think when there's nothing in particular to think about, when you can just be present. In other words, if you can step out of thinking into aware presence, that alert space, then that is the greatest thing you could achieve in this lifetime, that any human could achieve in this lifetime. And yet, there's nobody left to say, I have achieved it.

That's a problem for the ego. The ego would love to say, oh, I have achieved the state of presence. So it's not an achievement.

I'm just saying it's an achievement, but it's not really. Because you didn't do it. You got out of the way, and then it happened.

And if I reincarnate again, it will be a kind of service to humanity or an offering. But, I mean, who would want to go? Would you want to go through your childhood again or some other kind of childhood?

My God. Well, I haven't gone through physical death yet. As the Zen master who was asked about life after death said, I don't know.

And they said, why don't you know? You're the master. And he said, yeah, but I'm not a dead master.

But I've gone very deeply to what one could call death to identification with form. So in a way, I have gone into that realm from where I can say and know that ultimately what we see as death is the dissolution of form, that the eternal in us, which I know that firsthand, cannot be touched by that. So what exactly happens, I would say, depends on whatever state of consciousness you were in.

That must be a predominant state of consciousness in this lifetime. If in this lifetime, you were continuously identified with form, your body, or the psychological form of me, that means consciousness, this expression of consciousness was still in a somewhat dreamlike state, which is identification with form. And you can easily extrapolate from that if the tendency of consciousness to identify with form was still there, which in other ways, the awakening had not happened, this tendency will continue.

There will be further identification with form and the process will continue as the consciousness that is not yet fully awake will continue to identify with form again and then gradually come to a place where awakening happens. Or if there has already been a disidentification from form in this lifetime, then you can extrapolate from there that the compulsive urge to identify with form and to seek another form or another cycle of form identification, this compulsion to seek further experiences through identifying with form, then would either be much weaker or be completely absent, in which case the consciousness that you are is no longer bound to this realm and will not seek to re-experience the realm of form. But in either case, you really, I know, I can tell you that all is well.

It does not really matter whether this person now needs further experiences of identification, in which case this will happen, or whether he's already free of this urge, in which case he will move on and live in a realm that we can't even conceive of from where we are here. I get a sense deep within in the forms of what that is, but we don't need to talk about it here. All we know is nothing, this is the beginning of A Course in Miracles, which is the entire Course in Miracles summarized in two lines.

Nothing real can be threatened. Nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of God.

That which is real in him is beyond form. Anybody can know that when you see a dead body, you realize that this is no longer whom you knew, this is not the being that you knew, this is only a shell. So nothing real can be threatened.

Nothing unreal ultimately exists. This is why sages from all traditions speak of this realm of form as ultimately illusory. It ultimately, it depends what level you look at.

The important thing is all is well beyond the appearance on the level of form, which is the only level where death exists. It is a transition from one form into another form or from one form into formlessness. That is what death is.

No more than that, nothing real dies. Nothing real dies, which is to say, ultimately, there is no such thing as death. There only seems to be.

It's a transmutation of form. Either form dissolves or seeks some other form, some other identification with form. That, as you know, Buddhists and some others are striving towards the end of reincarnation.

They are striving towards merging with the absolute Buddha nature. And you can find in yourself, perhaps, people sometimes ask, would you like to reincarnate again? Or have you had enough?

And if you looked into yourself, you may find also that depends how fearful you are of death because there's an urge, there's an unconscious urge in humans, and that makes part of the personality and the ego. The urge for sensory experience, the urge for

asserting your form identity and to experience more of the sensory realm. So for some people, it would be dreadful not to be able, not to reincarnate again because there's a longing for more, more of that physical sensory experience and the experience of all kinds of things associated with the personal selfhood.

And so there's still the unawakened entity or semi-awakened entity that still is drawn towards reincarnation. So, which means to take form again. And when the urge is not there anymore, you can find in yourself, do I want to reincarnate here again?

Well, I certainly have no urge for further sensory experience. If I reincarnate again, it will be a kind of service to humanity or an offering. But I mean, who would want to go, would you want to go through your childhood again or some other kind of childhood?

My God. And then I hear some people say, I definitely have had enough of this and I do not want to reincarnate again. And then you say, oh, maybe that human being is very advanced, but then it might be the next day that human being is talking to the bank manager on the phone and gets very upset about something.

Now, I thought he or she had said they don't want to reincarnate again, but they are reincarnating again into complete identification with an arising mental emotional reaction. Every time you identify with a thought and emotion completely, you reincarnate, you take form into that. So ultimately the end of the cycle of reincarnation in Buddhism has to take place in your lifetime rather than having an idea that at some point you will reach the end of the cycle of samsara and you will not.

No, the question is, are you still continuously reincarnating into form, which means you're losing completely awareness of yourself as awareness. The essence identity is not lost, but totally covered up. So you don't really know whether or not you are going to reincarnate.

You have to observe yourself in daily life to know whether or not you are ready to go beyond the continuous cycle of reincarnation. The question is how often in the course of one day do you reincarnate? The first thing to discover experientially is, as I've said before, it sounds a little strange, is that you are essentially invisible.

You, not only what I can see of you is the body and sometimes I may be able to see certain things in your mental emotional field. I can hear words that you speak or your facial expressions. I'm talking to everybody, not just to Tina, but I can see facial expressions that kind of give me a hint of what you're feeling or thinking, but anybody who was looking for you in the realm of physicality would not find you.

And if that's too much, let's just go for a moment to, let's talk about this perhaps makes sense to anybody who has a dog or a cat at home. When the dog or cat dies, which can be a very sad thing for people and we come to humans later, it might be a little bit easier

to start with the dog or a cat. You may realize in that moment, when suddenly the dog is dead or the cat is dead, but everything is still there, the fur, the body, there may even be some warmth left in the body and there it is, but that which you essentially loved and related to in the dog or the cat isn't there anymore.

So you can still, the touch is still the same, but something essentially is gone and that was always invisible. What you love in the dog is ultimately, or the dog, you might like, love the way the dog looks and what it does, but when you relate to a dog, you essentially love, or nobody might have actually expressed it like that. You love the consciousness of the dog.

That's what you love in the dog. And when you look into the eyes of the dog, what's looking back at you is there's a consciousness of the dog looking back at you. And when that's gone, the dog is, and same with the human, what you love in the human is the consciousness of the other human.

Now, you yourself, all that is invisible because consciousness is the greatest mystery in the universe that science still has no idea what to do with it. Cannot explain consciousness. In most cases, avoids talking about consciousness.

The greatest mystery is the fact that the universe is conscious and that you are conscious. A surgeon looking for you by cutting open your skull and analyzing your brain will not find even a trace of you, will not even find any of your countless hundreds of thousands or million memories that you have somewhere. What, in what form does a memory survive in you?

Is a memory, is the memory of your first teacher at school? I just mentioned the word and suddenly an image of the first teacher you had at school comes to you. The memory of your grandmother who passed away, the memory of the bed that you slept in when you were eight or 10 years old.

I just need to mention it. It was somewhere, but where did that live in you? Was that in a molecule or an atom?

One atom was your bed? Or what is it? Nobody knows and nobody can find even the memories that you make up the person that you are.

The great thing, the vital thing about the book is you receive it as a kind of inspiration. Then your mind has to give it form. So it's again, it's a form and formlessness giving birth.

How do I know if a continuous thought is intuition or ego? I've been thinking about writing a book for a long time. When I sit down to write, there's great resistance in me, but still I cannot seem to drop the idea of writing it.

Now you need to look within to find out whether you have an idea that writing a book would be a good thing to do, or whether there's something in you, perhaps you've not clearly formulated, whether there's something in you that wants to be written or wants to be given birth to. So if it's just an idea in your head that it would be great to be a writer, wouldn't it? Okay, I think I'm going to write a book because it would be so great to be a writer and to have written a book must feel wonderful.

Of course, that's an egoic thought. I asked a 17 year old girl once, what do you want to be? What do you want to do in your life?

She said, oh, what I really want to, I want to become a brain surgeon. Also I said, are you interested in brains or in the human mind or in the body or biology or medicine? No, I just want to, I think brain surgery is the greatest thing.

It must be the most wonderful thing, the most complicated thing. She wasn't interested in any of the things that are the essence of being a brain surgeon, but she had an idea that it would be great to be a brain surgeon. So there was just an idea, there was nothing behind it.

You have to see whether, do you feel that there is something valuable in you which may not yet be formulated very much on the level of form, but whether you can sense something that wants to be born through you that would then become a book. Then it comes from deeper level than the ego. Or whether you just have an idea that it would be great to produce a book.

That's of course an egoic thought and it's not going to be very good. Now, let's say there is something that wants to express itself through you. I don't even know whether this book that you feel you want to write, whether is it fiction, is it nonfiction?

Do you have a story that, do you feel that these characters already exist in embryonic form somewhere in you? Or is there a story, something that already you can feel in embryonic form existing in you? Or do you have something to say to this world?

Maybe it is nonfiction, who knows what it is? Something spiritual, perhaps it's a spiritual book, but is it? And so if let's say there is something that you feel wants to come out through you, and when you sit down, yes, you may, even then you may still find resistance.

Because it's a totally, there's a momentum to your normal life and to bring out into form that which is only still largely exists in the realm of non-expression, halfway between form and formlessness, half, to give birth requires an intensity of focus and to, so you have to first of all, give yourself the space where this intensity of focus can be there, not sit down at a desk or whatever and say, okay, I can't think of any, it's not coming, it's not coming out. I better have a cup of tea first. And then just go back.

Oh, I need to, I need to polish that window. Oh, it's not happening today, I can't do it. It won't happen, you are not creating the space.

You need to, and this is a recommendation, if you do feel you have something within you that wants to be born through you, you need to provide the space for it to happen every day if possible on a regular basis so you have a space of an hour, two hours, three hours that is set aside for this to come out, to come through you and then you sit there and you, let's say no writing happens, at least you give the space of one hour where it may, you honor that space and if you've only write three words, at least that's a start, maybe one sentence within that one hour that comes or two sentences or maybe nothing at all but it's better to write something, see what comes, whether you can give form to that which wants to come through you and then gradually a certain momentum builds up as you write a little bit more. And there needs to be a total presence and total focus on just that and an openness. The great thing, the vital thing about the book is you receive it as a kind of inspiration.

Then your mind has to give it form. So it's again, it's a form and formlessness giving birth and once the momentum is there and the process starts, you may find as I did when I wrote the books that it consumes your whole life and you're not, it's hard to do anything else so it can take up your entire focus of your energy for a while and there's an intensity there of while the creative process happens, there's an intensity of energy that flows into it. When I wrote A New Earth, I noticed I couldn't pay attention to anything else so my place became more and more messy because there was just continuous focus and even now I haven't dealt with the mess that accumulated then, it's still there.

It's creative disorder. Anybody who wants to create also don't fall into the error. It's an excuse of the mind that says, I'm not, I don't have enough space in my life to be, to do this, to write this book, to be creative.

There's too much going on in my life. If it really wants to come through you and you give it, you can, there's always a time you can choose to give it space even if you have to get up two hours earlier and if the momentum does build up, you have to see whether it can be reconciled with other things you still have to do. Many writers find it can be reconciled.

I was lucky I didn't have any children to look after. I didn't have a job as such and so that was very helpful but I know of great writers who have recently had a dialogue here with Stephen Taylor who is quite a prolific writer of spiritual books and he teaches at the university. They have three young children to look after and I believe he told me that he writes mainly early in the morning and late at night when the children are not running around screaming and you'll find if you look at the history of great books, under what circumstances they were written, whether it's fiction or nonfiction, you often find that they were written not in the ideal conditions that one would think for writing a, would be

for writing a book but in people who lived under great limitations either financial or living situation or health situation, some great writers were permanently ill, almost permanently ill and they wrote in that state from D.H. Lawrence, some of the post-Nietzsche, very good writers, continuously ill and yet they wrote or they produced their creative work under extreme limitation. It's almost as if the limitation created the pressure for the creation to happen.

[Speaker 5] (4:49:10 - 4:49:33)

Why is this process taking so long for me? I've been listening for years and I feel what you say but sometimes I just lapse into my old self. The answer I know is that I lose the present moment but can you elaborate?

Why is this process taking so long for me?

[Speaker 1] (4:49:38 - 5:27:21)

If you consider that humanity has been in this particular state of consciousness for thousands of years, it's not very long. If you can actually go through the awakening process in one lifetime, it's quite amazing. It's an acceleration of the awakening process going through it in one lifetime.

You are shedding or so to speak, thousands of years of collective conditioning, thousands of years. It's an amazing thing that a human being can, and in the past, it's always been very, very few isolated individuals. Not all of them we know of, we know only of some of them who have kind of created a teaching or spoken about, written about it.

But it's now happening on a somewhat larger scale, still, of course, a minority of humans who are engaged in the awakening process. And that's miraculous. There's a gravitational pull still there of the egoic consciousness, both in its personal and collective aspect.

And this gravitational pull is quite heavy. It will attempt to pull you back. It'll create all kinds of, it'll use situations and everything to pull you.

There's no need to regard it as an enemy, but just to realize that the habitual pull of the egoic consciousness of identification with thought is very, very strong. And of the ego, the ego, personal ego and collective ego. The ego is always identification with form.

Consciousness, which is who or what you essentially are, identifies with form, and then it becomes ego. And ego can take on many different forms. It can take on more subtle and refined forms than in the most basic form.

An ego wants power over others. It wants to be admired. It wants possessions.

It wants to be more special than somebody else. And if you cannot be more special in

your power and your victorious pursuits, and then at least perhaps you can be more special in your victimhood. That's another big ego too.

If you can be the victim of others, and then it's, again, it's a mind-created identity, very powerful. The collective ego is even more creative, more insane than the personal ego. The collective ego, once you identify with the collective, has perpetrated unspeakable acts of violence and dreadful things in this world, through warfare and internal mass murder and holocausts and dreadful things in many countries.

So what you are, this awakening process is actually quite miraculous. And don't, it's futile to ask yourself how much longer before I'm completely awake? Oh, that's not a helpful question at all.

Or even the question, am I going to be completely awake in this lifetime? That's not a helpful question either. The only helpful question is, am I awake at this moment?

Am I identified with thinking? Or am I able to think without being identified with the movement of thought? Or am I even able to not think when I don't want to think?

That's an amazing ability. Am I able to stop, not stop, but allow thinking to subside, be just so present that the next thought doesn't come? And you may find that that can get interrupted by the thought that says, oh, look, I'm so present that the next thought is not coming.

But then you can go back to being present again. So don't ask yourself useless questions that actually represent an obstacle on your journey of awakening. Ask yourself the only helpful question this moment, what is my state of consciousness at this moment?

And if it's unpleasant, if you are having anxious thoughts and you can't let go of anxious thoughts, in other words, you are in the grip of anxious thoughts, then if there's a little bit of awareness, then you can know that you're in the grip of anxious thought. Not everybody who is in the grip of anxious thought knows that they are in the grip of anxious thought. They are so much identified with the anxious thought that all they are filled with anxiety.

There's not even a little bit of space that says, oh, look, I'm so identified with anxious thoughts. They are completely possessed by the anxious thought. In other words, the reincarnation, the incarnation of consciousness into the thought form is 100% completely, no awareness left.

In other words, consciousness is completely consumed by the every thought form. Thought gobbles up your consciousness and becomes thought, continuous incarnation and reincarnation. But if there is a little bit of awareness, then you can suddenly realize, oh, this is what's happening.

And that awareness gives you a space of freedom because from that awareness you can say, is this what I want? It's futile, isn't it? That arises, that realization arises out of awareness.

And then you can choose to direct your attention somewhere else instead of following up every thought where it wants to take you. It's to take your attention into your body or to your breathing and then into the body. And then you can notice the pull of thoughts, the gravity, it wants you to reincarnate again into another, into another.

You can feel it's pulling you and you, but you don't exert willpower. You cannot exert willpower against thought. You can only be present so that thought cannot fill your space, but you're present enough.

You're holding thought at bay. Interesting, you're so present that it outshines thought like a sun of awareness. The sun of awareness outshining thought.

And that's amazing thing. You discover that possibility. And once you that, and then very progress is speeded up very closely, very quickly.

And you no longer ask yourself, when is it going to happen? Because it's happening now. And you don't ask yourself, why is it taking so long?

Because it's not taking long, it's happening now. And then the question is, yes, but will I be able to sustain it? I know it's now, but will I?

Okay, it's gone already because you asked that question. You don't need to ask, will I be able to sustain? Now, direct your attention, take responsibility for your state of consciousness in the present moment.

That's enough. And then you look at reality through the lens of the little story. It's not just one story, of course, it comes another one, into another.

And some stories are not little, they may be big stories about yourself. Be aligned with the present moment rather than carry in your head this huge amount of mental content about your past and your future. Because the mind is primarily concerned with past and future.

So while you're walking here, you're already thinking about in a week's time, I'll be home again. And then I'll have to do that and have those phone calls to make, and then I'll have to do that. And then those problems will be, I shouldn't have come here because I've got so much on my plate at home.

Why did I come here? I should have dealt with my things there. I should have waited, gone to next year's retreat.

As I said, that's the self-talk in the head. You may encounter it here too. As you walk

from here to there, you will encounter the self-talk in the head.

So how do you get out of the self-talk in the head? One, you need to know that that's self-talk in the head. If you don't know it's self-talk in the head, you become the self-talk in your head.

You become the voice in your head. You don't know it, you are it. So you have to, the vital step, and I cannot tell you how to do that.

That minimum of awareness needs to be there where you know that there's self-talk happening in my head and it's telling you some kind of story. It could be the briefest of stories, like I shouldn't have come here, or I don't fit in here, all these people are too spiritual for me, or I'm so spiritual, these people are not spiritual at all. It's all little stories in the head.

Even every fragment of self-talk is a little story in the head that goes around. And then you look at reality through the lens of the little story. It's not just one story, of course, it comes another one, and another, and some stories are not little, they may be big stories about yourself and your life and what's gone wrong with it, or what's gone right with it.

So even that's a story. More pleasant than if it's gone wrong. So you need to know when the self-talk happens in the head, the knowing is not part of the self-talk.

The knowing is just an awareness that there is self-talk. The moment there is an awareness that there is self-talk, the possibility of freedom from the self-talk opens up. If that awareness is not there, there's nothing you can do.

You have to wait until life knocks you over the head so that finally some awareness comes in and you go, huh. So you might have to sleep on a banana skin or something because you have self-talk, and suddenly you go, huh. Oh, life told you to wake up.

Awakening, which is a term that's been used for thousands of years in the spiritual context, not in the conventional context. To awaken means to come out of sleep in conventional language, terminology. But in spiritual terminology, to awaken means to awaken, one could say, basically to awaken out of the self-talk in the head because the self-talk in the head is a form of hypnosis, self-hypnosis.

You are hypnotized. You have been hypnotized by society, your surroundings, the surrounding culture, even the language that you were taught to use that becomes a large part of the self-talk, although some of the self-talk is also accompanied by images, but a lot of it is language. And all that, you've been conditioned, and this is, you are possessed by that, which is an energy formation, and humans are possessed by that and mistake that conditioned entity, which consists of thoughts.

They're so trapped in it, they're so identified with it, they believe in every thought that

comes into your head. It's absurd. It's mad, but normal.

Well, another word, rather than absurd, I could say it's mad, but it's normal. It creates incredible amount of suffering, unnecessary suffering that humans create for themselves and for others. You can't create suffering for yourself without making others suffer who are close to you and whoever comes into contact with you.

An enormous amount of suffering is created by not realizing that large percentage of your problems consist of self-talk in the head. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. That's amazing, and once you see that, you say, okay, and then you can have a little bit of awareness and say, who am I?

Am I that story, or am I the one who sees that, who recognizes that there's self-talk? And in order to recognize that there's self-talk going on in you, that's not a thought, it's just an aware presence that, hmm. And then the compulsive nature of self-talk lessens somewhat because some awareness has come in, the light of awareness has come in, and then you realize you are that light of awareness, you are the awareness.

And there's a shift, the head may not immediately stop, it'll want to carry on, the self-talk wants to carry on, there's a momentum to it. You can observe that momentum, if you can't do it in yourself, you can observe it in others. Once they have a story and they're telling you their story, they can't stop, they want to go on, they don't.

And they don't want an end, if they're talking about their problems, they don't want an end to their problems, they want a continuation of the story, which is the problem. They don't know that, that's why we call it unconscious. They don't know that their primary thing is they want the continuation of the story, because that's a continuation of the fictitious person that cannot live without its story, its storyline.

And so those people, do they want an end to their problems? Of course, they will probably tell you, yeah, I'd love. No, they don't, they don't want an end to their problems, because that would be an end to their story, which is their identity.

They don't want an end to their sense of identity. I need my story. All the things that I've been telling myself in my mind about myself and other people and my parents and my relatives and my coworkers and my ex-wife and my ex-husband and what people did to me or what I did and shouldn't have done, failed to do.

Who am I without, I can't let go of that, I need to think about this more. So it becomes a habitual place, the habitual place of the mental noise where you feel that's me. And so every therapist knows that you always reach a point with your clients, patients, whatever, depending on the school of therapy, depends whatever you call your clients, your patients, whatever, there comes a point when you hit that resistance, they don't want to be free of their problems.

And the big challenge is there, is this person going to overcome that barrier? Because that barrier is not just becoming free of my problems, but also becoming free of a very limited and ultimately fictitious sense of identity, the me. So that is what I've described is the next step, one could say, in the evolution of human consciousness is stepping out of self-talk, which is the conditioned mind and realizing there is much more to who I am than this conditioned content of my mind.

And that is the beginning of awakening. It's not, it's not those words, not that you need to believe that there is much more to who I am than the self-talk in my head, because that is still self-talk in the head. I believe there's more to who I am.

And you better believe it too. No, that needs to be, and most of you are here because you already have had, or not only had a glimpse, many of you have already deeply been able to transcend the person. Because the person, the exclusive personal sense of self wouldn't want to be here.

It would feel threatened by being sitting here. It either would feel threatened or it would feel extremely restless and irritated. I need to get out of here.

Or suddenly your legs start twitching. It is quite normal, by the way, many humans have twitching in their legs all the time, or they go. So if you have somebody here who is going like this, and you know their person, the personal self is becoming uncomfortable with being here, doesn't know it, but goes twitching.

And that kind of twitching is very normal for humans, but if it happened to your dog, you would take your dog to the vet. To see how important it is to go beyond victim identity has nothing to do with denial of what happened. You fully see what happened.

You know that, and you know the emotions that it created. Daily, I keep having the same thought loop in my mind. Oh, we've just been talking about similar things.

I keep having the same thought loop in my mind. The theme is one of feeling betrayed, being mistreated, basically being a victim. With the thoughts and images, there's usually resentment and or anger.

This thought loop has been occurring over a year now. I'm having challenges with being the observer. The story seems to be so mesmerizing.

I'm feeling frustrated that I'm continuing to have these thoughts about the past. As I understand, holding onto the past is preventing a higher energy field to come through me. What recommendations do you have for working this issue?

My suggestions, any suggestions on forgiveness and letting go of the victim role so that I can express more of the deep I. The deep I, you see. I don't know if I actually use this term during our sessions here.

I sometimes use it. The deep I is the awareness deriving your sense of self from the awareness rather than from the surface I, which is the personality. So we have the surface I or the deep I.

So the thought loop here that you are experiencing is to do with feeling betrayed, being mistreated, and being a victim. Now, since I believe Susan is not here because it's a written question from New Mexico, but I assume these thoughts and emotions that are recurring again and again refer to actual events that took place. I assume that here.

So there is a reliving of the events in the mind and the feeling of being mistreated, betrayed, being a victim, and there's resentment and anger with it. Been occurring over a year now. So I assume something happened a little bit before that, perhaps, and people did something to you or somebody, one person.

Now, some people have that not only for a year as in this case, but some people have that kind of thinking, compulsive thinking going on for years and decades, sometimes going back to childhood, being badly treated in childhood or abused in childhood. So you have continuing to think about that. And the more you think about that, of course, the more you feel yourself being a victim of events or usually people, other people who did something to you.

And you dwell on it and you can't stop it because the mind has a momentum. These thoughts refuse to go away. And if there's not sufficient awareness because of the continuously recurring thoughts, they become part of your identity, your sense of self.

And so then you become a victim. To see the necessity and the possibility of going beyond a victim identity does not deny in any way that something painful happened to you in the past, that something was done to you, that some people did something to you. To see how important it is to go beyond victim identity has nothing to do with denial of what happened.

You fully see what happened. You know that and you know the emotions that it created. But the first thing is how does a human being, how is a human being capable of inflicting suffering, for example, on a child or on another human?

And it happens all the time. It happens on an individual level and it happens even more on a collective level. The ego, the human ego is dysfunctional enough in the individual, but it's infinitely more dysfunctional and dangerous and lethal when it operates as a collective ego in a group.

This is why people, warfare, internal conflict, killings, and the humans who participate in these dreadful things, dreadful, the perpetrators, when they operate as a collective ego, not a personal, they are capable of far worse atrocities and acts than they would be as an individual. So in other words, the collective ego is even more unconscious and violent

and dangerous than the individual ego. It looks to, sometimes when you identify with a collective, my country, for example, my fighting for my country or the collective might be a political party or it might be a religious group.

And so you, people who belong to these entities, sometimes it seems that they become free of ego because they live completely in the service of these collective entities. I want to sacrifice myself for my country or my religion or whatever. It seems that they are completely free of the personal ego.

And same thing happens in sects, in cults. Often people who live in cults, they're totally selfless. They don't want anything.

They give everything of themselves. They want nothing for themselves. They have identified with the group.

But of course, their ego has actually not diminished. Their ego has become enormously amplified because they now have adopted a group ego and the group ego can only survive and subsist when it has a sufficient number of enemies out there. The group ego needs for its survival and its expansion because it wants to expand and survive, but it needs the other who is the very other.

In other words, the other is the enemy. So that is how humans are drawn into deep unconsciousness by identifying with the collective. It doesn't mean that you cannot, it's nothing to do with, you can belong to a religious group.

You can even love your country without being identified with and then needing others' countries to be the enemy. With awareness, you can appreciate your country and you appreciate other countries too. They are different.

So first you see the need to be a victim. Identity also, unfortunately, is a form of ego because any conceptual identity is a form of ego. And even though you seem to be amply justified in having a victim identity because of the things that other humans did to you, you yourself are finding yourself in a kind of prison that created by your mind.

So there's no denial of that bad things happen to you. Yes. Now, question is, how do you exit this mental prison?

The first step is perhaps to see that unconscious human beings, unconscious human beings in the grip of their own conditioning, their own ego, they have virtually no free will. When you are unconscious, you are controlled by the mind patterns that are lodged in your psyche. You cannot really speak of free will by somebody with zero awareness.

And yet the entire makeup is conditioning from the past. So the famous sentence, phrase used by Jesus in connection with forgiveness on the cross, he said, forgive them for they know not what they do. Now, these two interesting, these points put together,

forgive them.

Why forgive them? They know not what they do. In other words, if he had spoken these days using our terminology, he probably would have said, they are completely unconscious because that's what it means.

They know not what they do. They are completely unconscious. So when you see nobody can act beyond their level of consciousness, then you see that it's almost like, it becomes almost like the evil that was perpetrated becomes almost like a natural phenomenon.

That is like you've been hit by lightning or something, or lived in very unpleasant climatic conditions that injured you near volcano. And my dad had problems with anger, huge outbursts of anger quite frequently. It was living like legs to a volcano that could erupt at any moment.

And he could not help it. It was impossible. There was no possibility of being different.

And so these humans are run by unconscious, conditioning usually goes back to their childhood and what happened there. I know why my father was angry. I realized much later that it all originated in his childhood, the reasons why he was so angry.

And also for a while, also I felt a resentment towards that. And only when I was able to awaken out of egoic consciousness, I saw that there's nothing that he could have done differently because there wasn't enough awareness. Now, when you see that, then you don't personalize or you don't create an identity for other humans out of their unconsciousness, because in essence, that's not who they are.

The recognition that there's first recognition, then step one, you recognize that no human can act beyond their conditioning in the absence of awareness. If there's awareness, they can transcend their conditioning. And then they begin to become conscious of their own conditioned, mental, emotional, dysfunctional, mental, emotional patterns.

Yes. So they couldn't, they can't help it. So that's already a useful step in forgiveness, but you may not yet be able to arrive at full forgiveness because of that.

Another, before I continue with that, does that mean then, a question may arise in your mind, does that mean then humans are not really responsible for what they do? If they are unconscious, how are they responsible? And does that mean then that we shouldn't punish them for what they do?

If they commit a crime, are they not guilty? That's an interesting question. The unconsciousness that operates in human, even if you are able to forgive a human, and we'll go more fully into that in a minute, even if you're able to forgive a human for their

transgressions or whatever they did, this does not mean, and even though the human is not responsible for their unconsciousness, and yet it is built into the structure of human life, they still need to suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness.

[Speaker 5] (5:27:49 - 5:27:56)

Okay. Actually, my question is already being answered.

[Speaker 1] (5:27:56 - 5:27:57)

That often happens.

[Speaker 5] (5:27:58 - 5:28:07)

And I think one day we're all going to come here, and once we're all in presence, we won't have any questions for you.

[Speaker 1] (5:28:08 - 5:28:09)

That's true. That would be wonderful.

[Speaker 5] (5:28:10 - 5:28:12)

You're going to be out of business. Yes.

[Speaker 18] (5:28:14 - 5:28:16)

Yes. Yes. Yes, that would be wonderful.

[Speaker 5] (5:28:17 - 5:28:25)

Actually, my question was, could you elaborate on ego versus healthy self-esteem?

[Speaker 1] (5:28:25 - 5:33:40)

Ah, yes. Eventually, what you would call healthy self-esteem, which is a wonderful thing, eventually that is not enough. And as a human being evolves, that healthy self-esteem is no longer satisfying as you grow older and is transcended.

And what takes its place is healthy, healthy, no hyphen self-esteem. The self-esteem, of course, means that you are reasonably satisfied with who you are as a person and the achievements of the person, what the person can do or what the person knows or what the person possesses. And you compare what the person can do, abilities, what the person knows, knowledge, or what the person has in terms of possessions.

You compare that with others and you come out favorably. So either you can do more than somebody else or others, feel better about yourself. I can do this, but they can't.

I can, but you can't. Or you have more knowledge. Did you know that this and such and such is such and such a case?

You didn't know that? Well, let me tell you. That feels good.

You know, these ignorant people, they don't know anything. Or you have more. How many bedrooms does your house have?

Four? Well, we have 11. Do you have an advanced degree?

No? Well, I have two PhDs. And that's fine.

It starts with a child already. It says, look what I can do. I can jump further than you.

And therefore, the child, it's fine. There's no point in telling a child, don't do that, because your ego is arising. No, the child has to go through that.

And it is better to have healthy self-esteem, as you describe it, as it's usually described, than extremely low self-esteem. I'm no good. Everybody's better than me.

I have nothing. Life has treated me unfairly. There's a self-image there also, as there is a self-image in healthy self-esteem.

One, of course, is much nicer than the other. It's more pleasant to live with healthy self-esteem than with a low self-esteem, or unhealthy self-esteem, one could call it. But they're both identification with some kind of form.

And you compare the form of who I am with the form of others, and you are better, at least in one area, you must be. And that's satisfying. But there's still, you're trapped in form, and you're depending on, for your sense of value or worthiness, you're depending on, ultimately, to put it bluntly, others who have less or know less or can do less than you.

And that's fine. Doesn't mean you shouldn't strive to do great things or to have things or to know things. But the question is, ultimately, is that a satisfying basis for your sense of who you are?

And in the long term, it is not. It is not satisfying. That is why people who are maybe very happy with what they possess, after a while, there's an emptiness that comes, not the spiritual emptiness, the sense of emptiness of what's it all about.

And even things you can do, a time may come when you can't do it anymore. Whatever it is that you do, that's so great. Playing an instrument, the great pianist, wonderful, why not be a great pianist?

But if you derive your sense of who you are from that, then one day you find arthritis in

your fingers.

[Speaker 18] (5:33:40 - 5:33:41)

Ugh.

[Speaker 1] (5:33:42 - 5:38:15)

And who are you now? Or they adjust, the agility goes, it's not there anymore. Oh my God, suffering comes.

Or you invent the greatest new computer, some computer, I don't know the expressions, but program or whatever it is. And everybody says, this is the greatest ever. And what, three years later or two years, these things happen very quickly.

Somebody else comes with, makes yours obsolete. And then you have no new ideas. And there you sit, completely devastated because you got from somebody great, you've become nobody, but it was all illusion because you derived your sense of who you are from something in the world of form, which is fleeting, not reliable, not solid, dreamlike.

And so the true self-esteem comes from not identifying with form. Now, whether we even want to call it self-esteem, I don't know. The true sense of worthiness and of power, true power comes when you realize the formless in yourself, that dimension, and that all power comes from that.

But it's not, it goes far beyond the person that you are. And then you are rooted in the formless, so to speak, or you are it. And that there's enormous sense of worthiness in there, but it's not comparative.

It's not more than. You see the same worthiness in everyone, even if they don't know it for themselves yet. So there's power, but not more than.

There's just the power of life itself. And you know everybody is an expression of that, although they may not know it yet. Everybody.

So this is, you transcend conventional self-esteem. And it doesn't mean you lose your sense of worth. It shifts into something much deeper.

So every human really is, there may even be some children these days who don't need to go through the egoic state anymore that is possible. But traditionally, and humans had to go, and some, many probably still have to go through the stage where they identify with form, develop some self-esteem, do something that you feel good about, you can do it. And then comes the time going beyond.

Except perhaps, as I said, some advanced souls who may be coming into this world, already in this world as children who don't need, even need to identify with that

anymore. A question that comes from there also is, if a person has low self-esteem, in other words, a mental image of not good enough, then does that person have to go through the stage of healthy self-esteem because he can, before they can transcend it altogether? I don't know.

I haven't tried it enough with enough people. It may well be that the unhealthy self-esteem, if it leads to a state of suffering, great suffering, you may be able to, with the help of a teacher, go from there to no self. Because the way from unhappiness or suffering to transcendence is easier than the way from superficial happiness to transcendence.

Superficial happiness keeps you in the dream world for quite a while. It's not that bad. My life, I can't complain.

It's not that bad.

[Speaker 18] (5:38:15 - 5:38:16)

It's going okay.

[Speaker 1] (5:38:18 - 5:38:29)

I'm quite happy, just got a promotion. Or I'm so happy I just got my annual bonus from my Wall Street bank.

[Speaker 18] (5:38:32 - 5:38:33)

Great, I'm doing great.

[Speaker 1] (5:38:46 - 5:56:30)

So from there, transcendence is not directly from Wall Street, probably not. But if you go from Wall Street to prison, much easier. And as prisons gradually, you realize ultimately the most important part of your life is to embody that dimension of consciousness more and more in your daily life, rather than whatever else is personal, personal goals that you have, personal, whatever you feel you need or want to do on a personal level.

It varies a lot from person to person. There's something more fundamental than the details of your life, which is whatever goals you may have, whatever purpose your life may have on the level of the person. There's a deeper purpose, and that is to embody this dimension of consciousness, which is like, I call it sometimes the next step in the evolution of human consciousness, is the arising of that dimension of consciousness.

The only thing that, this critical point in human history, it's the only thing that will save us is that. So it's very important. Everything else is of secondary importance in your life.

If you look at your personal life, there are many things in your personal life you think are very important. Of course they are. Relationships, your health, your professional work situation, your living situation where you live, your relationship situations, all these things, of course they are important, and you should do your best to do things as well as you can to pursue, to make your life as harmonious as possible.

But ultimately, that's only possible if you realize there's something else that is more important than any of those things, which are important, but there's something more fundamental, that's your state of consciousness, out of which you respond to the situations in your life and to people. So your primary function or purpose is to embody presence, and then it flows into whatever you may be doing in your personal life. Relationships, work situation, the way in which you handle conflicts, the way in which you respond to a difficult person or challenging situation.

Then that becomes your main purpose in any situation to realize what is really important, what is absolutely important to you, and that's your state of consciousness. The second thing is the actual situation itself that you may need to either deal with, or in some cases just accept, because there's nothing much you can do right now in certain cases. There's nothing, all you can do is accept this moment as it is, and that already takes you deeper, this deep acceptance of this moment as it is immediately takes you to a deeper level.

And becoming a teacher of presence means to allow presence to flow into your life, and then gradually, slowly, you detect subtle changes in the way in which you conduct your life, personal relationships, work relationships, responding to challenges, difficulties, those things gradually change, and you notice, for example, that in some cases, people who used to trigger you, just to give an example, people who used to trigger or upset you, suddenly you're able to not be triggered anymore, and in some cases, perhaps, accept their limitations, they can't do otherwise, except for especially family members, except that this is what they say is out of their conditioning, and you can love them anyway, but your ego doesn't react anymore because your ego has subsided, and you don't fuel conflict situations anymore. It doesn't mean you become a doormat, so to speak. In fact, you're able to, in some cases, speak out, you're speaking out of presence, not out of anger or fear, speaking out of, or taking action out of presence.

If you're in a very dysfunctional work situation, you've tried to be present, but the environment is so dysfunctional that there's not much you can do, see, then presence will help you to one day walk away, and you do things that arise out of wisdom. In some cases, it means walking away from a situation or relationship without accusing or complaining or playing scenarios in your mind for years afterwards, just to see this situation is no longer right for me, does not resonate with my state of consciousness, and then you remove yourself, or sometimes the situation itself removes you. If you're in a dysfunctional workplace and you stay present as much as possible in that

dysfunctional environment, at some point, they will let you go.

That will be the happiest day of your life. You become a teacher of presence in a wider sense, through every interaction with another human being, your state of consciousness affects another person. So in that sense, teaching and teaching, becoming a teacher of presence, the moment you embody presence, if not fully, at least to some extent, it's there, you are teaching presence, not by telling anybody anything, but by demonstrating that state of consciousness, by demonstrating presence, by, for example, demonstrating non-reactivity when it's totally pointless in traffic, whenever somebody shouts at you, and suddenly, and you don't automatically shout back anymore, it just evaporates what the other person shouted, and there's nobody there to say anything, and the entire energy evaporates.

Whereas before, you would have shouted something back. Unconsciously, the ego trying to defend itself, it's a natural thing for the ego. You shout, somebody shouts at you, you shout back, or you're so fearful that you're totally contracted.

Presence is, you don't amplify anymore very unconscious situations. Unconscious means people are totally trapped in their egos. They produce a lot of conflict.

Unnecessary conflict, because the ego loves conflict. So you come into contact with many humans, they don't, nobody says, I love conflict. They all say, no, no, I don't want conflict.

But their actions say otherwise. Their words say otherwise. Politicians, they all say, we want peace.

So the first level of teaching is just your state of consciousness affects others around you. If not consciously, sometimes unconsciously, they can feel there's something in you that's different. And then you discover that the way in which you experience your life does not so much depend on what's happening to you, because people say, well, that's karma.

Some people say, well, why did these things happen to this person? You think your life is what life does to you. But ultimately, the way you experience your life is not so much determined by what happens to you, but by how you respond to what happens.

Einstein said, I want to know the mind of God. The rest is details. Somebody asked what that means here.

Yeah. And of course, the mind of God is consciousness. Consciousness is the light that emanates from this.

Consciousness is not God in the same way that the light of the sun is not the sun. And yet, on the other hand, the light of the sun is one with the sun. But you couldn't quite say

this light, this is the sun.

In the same way, your consciousness, which is not yours, the essence of who you are, the light of the world, is an emanation from the source of all life. I use the analogy of the sun. And there's a good reason why in many ancient civilizations, the sun was regarded as God, because it's a continuous outpouring of life energy.

And so in the sense-perceived universe, the closest analogy one can find is you can point to the sun and say, that is like continuous emanation. All life derives from it. And the life, the consciousness in things is that.

So God realization is the realization of I am that I am, your I am identity. And that's God speaking, but it would also be you speaking. So it doesn't transform the ray of the sun into the sun, but it makes the ray of the sunlight aware of its origin and its home, and what it is still connected with and always remains connected with.

At some point, we need to transcend the naive beliefs in what God is as a controlling figure that created the world a long time ago, and then he walked away and lost interest, or maybe he's still interested, but somehow things are not going well. Or he's condemning people for being dysfunctional. And then, of course, there are many arguments you could raise against that kind of view of God.

And that's the traditional argument of people who don't believe in God, who say, if there were a God who controls everything and supposedly loves people, or maybe not doesn't love, but he's controlling things, then if there is a God, how would he allow all that suffering and evil to happen in this world? Therefore, they say, there is no God. Or they say, therefore, God is morally inferior to us because we can see the injustices and the terrible things that happen in this world, and we are touched by it, but God isn't.

Therefore, God is some inferior creature that created the world out of malevolent intent. That was actually a belief held by many of the Gnostics, ancient Christian and pre-Christian group of people who otherwise had also some interesting teachings, but they believed that the entire physical universe was the creation of a malevolent deity, an inferior deity. I can see why in some way, but it's not the case.

So there isn't a controlling figure there that is. So we need to go beyond that image, that anthropomorphic image of a paternal authority figure and realize that God is the life in all beings. God manifests as the life in all beings.

God is the consciousness in you, is the emanation of God. God lives through you. Everything that happens in humans, God is suffering in humans in a way, you could say.

That's what the Christian teaching means. So it is a gradual emergence of consciousness, and the suffering is more like a dream-like thing to God. It's like a bad dream as in the process of emergence of that God consciousness into this dimension.

So human beings are not autonomous entities. It's not you, your consciousness, his consciousness, her consciousness. Every human is a temporary expression of the one consciousness.

[Speaker 14] (5:56:57 - 5:58:18)

Hello, Eckhart. Hi. A year ago at this time, it was discovered that I had stage three colon cancer.

A four-inch tumor was removed from my colon, half my colon and 16 lymph nodes, and they discovered that cancer was throughout my body. I went through extreme chemotherapy treatments for over six months, and during that time, I became bedridden, and I was in extreme physical pain. It was the best time of my life, spiritually.

During that entire time, I was in a spiritual retreat within myself. It was profound, and I experienced during that time what you have been sharing during this conference, during this retreat, and I thank you. My question to you is, now that I'm healthy, I'm not in chemotherapy, I'm not bedridden, and I'm finding myself adding activities into my life and going back into the busy life that I had before, and I wanted to ask what advice you would give to me or someone else in how to maintain that beautiful inner spiritual retreat of oneness while entering back into the world?

[Speaker 1] (5:58:19 - 6:38:34)

Yeah. Well, thank you. That is an amazing example of the potential transformational value, awakening value that a serious illness can have if you allow it to work in that way.

It's just amazing, and in your case, there has been a kind of healing, perhaps, or probably, because of the shift in consciousness and the deepening. Even if there had been no healing, it would have been worth it, even if you were no longer here in this form, and yet it had taken you into complete surrender. And then an illness like that, actually, as it forces you into presence, burns up the ego in you, fuel for consciousness.

Now you have to be careful. If you do go back into your busy life, don't allow stress to arise, ever. It is possible to be busy without stress.

If you find it's not possible for you, then it's better not to be busy at all. So being busy without stress means just being totally focused on whatever you happen to be doing right now, never focused more on the outcome that you want to achieve through whatever activity you're doing right now than the activity itself. So there can be high energy in the doing.

There needs to be, if there's no stress, there's actually a heightened sense of aliveness as you are active. That heightened sense of aliveness could be called enjoyment of what you're doing. You enjoy not only the outer doing, you enjoy the energy behind the doing.

Even if you might've heard the Zen saying, hurry slowly. So it doesn't necessarily mean that you need to be slow. You can be fast.

The slow is the inner state. The slowness is the stillness and the peace that is still there even while externally, you may be very active. But as you're not focused on the outcome, you're focused on the doing, you enjoy not only the external activity, but more importantly, you enjoy the energy that is behind it, the energy movement.

And then you can be working very fast or doing whatever you're doing very fast. And yet in a state of enjoyment rather than stress. So extreme vigilance is required so that you don't fall back into any kind of stress, which always means you're not fully in the doing.

You're mentally somewhere else. If you find it impossible or if whatever activity you're engaged in, if you cannot perform your function, if you endeavor to be without stress and several, many times you see you can't do it, stress keeps coming back, then you should leave that activity and do something else. So it's because stress will pull you back into the old consciousness, anxiety, stress, thinking that what you're doing is terribly important.

And it's secondary. What's terribly important is your state of consciousness behind the doing. So it's fine to be active again, but not if you don't enjoy it.

So the enjoyment needs to be there. Then you are not going to lose the presence that has already burned up a large part of your ego or the entire ego. Ego simply meaning complete identification with form.

So this is a very inspiring, what you just told us is a very inspiring example of what is possible, how an illness can be the great awakener. And it helps, of course, if before somebody becomes ill, he or she has already had some contact with spirituality, but it doesn't, even that's not necessary. I have seen people that had not the slightest glimpse of spirituality and yet at some point in the illness, the awakening happened.

I've also seen people who shortly before their death through illness became utterly and completely present so that they actually felt joyful. There was no fear anymore. There might've been fear initially, but fear is when you think about what's going to happen to you or the body.

So anything like that, if you allow it to force you almost into utter and complete presence, then what looks as a terrible curse actually is transformed into a blessing. And one more thing for the questioner just now, also not just talk about your activity for a moment, wherever you are at any time, don't ask, don't wait for life to have to force you again into presence. Choose the presence that is already powerfully in you and continuously invite that intense presence that you had when you were facing almost one could say imminent death.

That intense presence that arose there, choose it even when you're not being challenged now so that even when you go from your home to your workplace or drive or go or walk, whenever there's nothing in particular to do or you're waiting, that intense presence can be there now. You don't have to be forced into it any longer. So that's a wonderful thing.

There may be some others of you that are also facing an illness right now. So allow that condition to force you into presence. Healing may happen, but that's not why you do it.

It's not because in itself, that is the purpose of your life is to embody the arising of that consciousness. So anything that happens as a result of that is a by-product of the arising of presence. The arising of presence is not so that you can be healed physically.

You may or you may not. In some cases you are healed physically, but even if you're healed physically, eventually you die anyway. The body goes at some point.

So it's not a means, presence isn't a means to an end. It is the ultimate end, but it has certain side effects which are beneficial. And if you work with people who are seriously ill, you can also teach that.

You can teach presence. You can teach, but not necessarily even by using that word presence. You can start, for example, by teaching somebody to feel the energy field in the body.

And so you can show them what is possible. Never give them more than they can take. And not even then, not everybody, even facing an imminent death, not even then, not everybody will be ready to hear you.

But that's okay. Everybody learns at their own pace. Some are a little slower than others.

But eventually, really every human being is a manifestation of the one consciousness that is awakening. This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond yourself.

Your history and your life situation. Is it spiritually hindering to have pride in others and in oneself? Is being glad of one's accomplishments pride?

Is it spiritually hindering to have pride in others and yourself? Well, if you have pride in others, of course, it usually means you have some kind of ego link with them. They may be your children or somebody close to you, family members.

There's a difference between feeling a sense of goodness about something that you have done and the sense of pride. Pride usually is based on the misperception that I did it. I did that.

And not the deeper universal I of which I'm a temporary expression, but the limited sense of I as me, the ego. I did that. Look at me.

Now, when children do that, we have to allow them to do that when the little boy or the little girl says, look at me, what I can do. Or the little girl or boy says to another little girl and boy, you can't do what I can. Look, I can jump higher, much higher than you.

And of course, that's the beginning of ego. But it would be futile to tell a child, this is your ego, stop it. Stop it.

Ego is something that is really a, like, can be and should be like a childhood disease, like measles. And measles is something that children often contract It's something you have to go through. And ego, really, as humans evolve, perhaps will be like that.

It's something that manifests as a childish, childlike state of consciousness while they're growing up. And as a human being reaches maturity, they outgrow the ego. That is where we are going.

It's not yet the case with most humans, they don't outgrow the ego, it gets even bigger. So it's fine for the child to say, look what I can do, and for the parent to be proud and say, oh, isn't that wonderful that you can do that? But then, of course, if the 30-year-old still says, look at me, look what I've done, look at my car, look at my house, or look at what I know, or look how I look, do you like the way I look?

Whatever it is that one identifies with as oneself most strongly, and usually the ego chooses the thing that the most obvious thing in your life, you have the good looks but not much knowledge, then, of course, you focus on the good looks and everything else unimportant. Or you have bad looks, then perhaps you can acquire a lot of knowledge and hit others over the head with your knowledge. Or you can acquire possessions, and then you have more than powers, worldly power.

Look at me. Sometimes it's very kind of rudimentary ego, you can immediately wreck, it's almost a physical ego moving about across the room. Pride then usually is something to do with, I did that, and often it usually really implies other people didn't achieve what I achieved.

Pride, I would say, usually implies a comparison with myself with others, and I come out on top when there's pride and I compare myself with others, I must have, or can do, or know more than the other that brings up pride. So it's ego. But there's something else that is a sense of satisfaction with something that happened through you rather than something that you did.

And I get that, for example, when people come up to me and say, you or your book changed my life. That feels good. But I know that I didn't write this, not this entity wrote the book, the book, consciousness wrote the book.

Obviously the one consciousness wrote the book, and it changed people's lives. I don't get the sense of, oh, a bigger sense of identity suddenly. It's something when I travel to

the most unlikely places, people say, I was going through the airline, going, boarding a plane, I showed my passport and the ticket to board, to go onto the plane, and the man who took the ticket and passport, he looked at me and said, you changed my life.

And that's, I don't feel pride about that because I didn't do it, not the little I. Only the little I can feel pride. But it felt good.

There's a feeling of rightness and goodness that there's an awakening, and it happened through that. But so really it's not, if you have a sense of a separate doer, that is the illusion. If you don't recognize your connectedness with the totality, and it's the totality, the consciousness acting through you, if you don't recognize that, then you're in the illusion of separateness, and when the illusion of separateness is there, pride can come in, and the opposite of pride, a detection that you haven't achieved what you wanted to achieve, or the world isn't recognizing your achievements, then the opposite, this detection comes in, and you feel unworthy because something in this world of form hasn't happened to give you a sense of worthiness.

So you have pride, and the opposite of pride when there's the illusion of separateness, the separate doer, me, that's the iceberg who doesn't know, who only knows itself as the tip that's above water. So yes, feeling good about it, about something that happened through you, that's not very different from pride, and that's fine, so it could be anything, when people may love to come to you, let's say you have a business, let's say people come to you for haircuts or whatever, and they feel, and they love being there, and you know they love, not only because you're a good hairdresser, they love being in your presence because you acknowledge their being, you don't feel pride anymore, you feel a goodness about that, the totality of what's happening, but you don't take yourself out of the totality and say, me, I did that. That also takes power away from you, the more you get trapped in the illusion of separateness, the less power, the less consciousness can flow through you into this world.

And again, similar, you can have pride in your child, because that's the developing stage of consciousness, but my mother had a, her generation perhaps even more than now had a very highly developed ego, and she was very, she had great pride in me, well, only after I published The Power of Now, but I could see how much it was her ego, and she talked about, she never read the whole book, but she talked, I loved her dearly, so that I completely accepted that it wasn't, she couldn't understand it, but what she did understand was that there was worldly success. And so she kept telling people, my son's a famous author, and of course, that's complete ego, and that's pride, but that's fine, I didn't tell her you shouldn't do that, I just, there was an acceptance of that's her evolutionary stage, and that's what she does, it's fine. And so, that's, you can have pride in your six-year-old who can do something, that's fine, but it's not really pride, it's your, you've completely recognized that there's a developing ego, and you have to allow that ego to develop.

But when your child becomes an adult child, it's a different matter. If you then have, you feel, oh, you keep talking about my son, my daughter, what he can do, what he has, what he has achieved, to their friends and others, then you haven't outgrown the ego, so it's just a secondary ego, many, many parents have that, so you, some people even have, I have observed in a few cases, you can have an ego, ego identification with a family member at one moment, and an ego, competing ego with the same family member another moment. For example, a mother, when talking to her friends, can talk with pride about her daughter's position, or achievements, or possessions, implying, of course, that my daughter has more than your daughter, or is better than your daughter, but when the mother meets the daughter, she resents her success, and so suddenly the ego identification is dropped, and the ego is fighting somebody.

So the ego can shift, it can shift from one moment it identifies with, when it's convenient, and the next moment it's competing. And they're all states of unconsciousness, of course. So ego is always identification with form, mental idea of who I am, or who somebody close to me is, so close that it becomes part of my ego, and that's how it is, you allow people their ego identifications, and you can see it, when you see it, it's not, it's just, there may be a little inner smile when they do it, although I must admit some egos can be pretty obnoxious.

But that's just how it is. These things do not like the light of consciousness on them, even the pain body, your pain body does not like to be recognized. Yes, we haven't spoken about the pain body yet, so, well, you all know what this term refers to, accumulated emotional pain that you carry forward from your childhood, usually, perhaps also from past lifetimes, if you believe in past lifetimes, if you don't like past lifetimes, forget about it, carried over in from childhood, and it is partly personal, because it's to do with your life, early life experience, which for everybody is somewhat painful, and for some much more than for others, and you also absorb pain body from the collective into which you're born, which could be the country, or the energy field, or a particular area in your country, whatever it may be, you also absorb that, so there's a personal aspect to the emotional pain that lives in you, and there's a collective aspect.

And the pain body, just a very, very brief summary, the pain body is not necessarily, in most cases, always active, it has a dormant stage and an active stage, when it's dormant, you may not even know it's there, and periodically, the tendency is for the pain body to need to feed on further experience of something emotionally painful, because that is what corresponds to the vibrational frequency of this energetic entity, because that's what it is, emotion is an energy form, it's consciousness, everything is consciousness, consciousness is taken on a particular form, an emotion is a form, a temporary form that consciousness is born into, assumes, and what childhood pain, emotional pain, usually leaves behind remnants of that particular emotion, it's not completely released, so by the time you are 18 or 20 years old, you have, you carry a pain body, and for some humans it's a very heavy thing, for others it's not too bad, the

pain body periodically needs to feed on the experience of emotional pain, in other words, primarily in two ways, either it creates drama with people close to you, so that they get, you get negativity coming back at you, and then you can have the drama in relationships, favorite place for pain body to renew itself is intimate relationships, that's the best, you get the best food in intimate relationships, and it will create drama, and push the buttons, it has a borrowed intelligence, it has its own little intelligence, and it is cunning, it's a little, like a gremlin kind of, and it knows your partner's weak points, and it will touch upon them in order to provoke them into responding, reacting with drama, and usually it works, because then you press the correct buttons, you awaken the other person's pain body, it goes, oh, great, I'm here too, and so at that moment you don't want to let go, and if somebody, if your therapist at that moment rang you and said, do you want to be in this drama, or do you want to be free, you would get very angry, because you wouldn't be talking, the pain body would be talking through you, and you'd be saying, get away from me, this is, I don't, this is not about pain bodies, this is serious stuff, I don't want to hear what you have to say, leave me alone with that nonsense pain body, the pain body does not like to be recognized, because that means the light of consciousness is shining on it, now what do you do if you don't have an intimate relationship, it gets a bit more difficult, how can you, oh, the pain body says, okay, I have the perfect solution, when I need to feed, I will rise up into your mind, and I will control your thinking, and every thought will be a negative thought about yourself, about other people, about life in general, or about politics, a deeply negative thought, and then it becomes, the thought is not just one thought, it's addictive thinking, addicted to negative thinking, my life is so awful, or this person is so awful, or this is absolutely, whether it's predominantly anger, predominantly self-pity, or whining, or shouting, whatever it is, you are trapped in a cycle of negative thinking, continuously feeds, because thought is energy too, everything is, thought again is a form, every thought is a form that consciousness has taken, temporary form, it's a little entity, every thought, and that gives energy, the pain body gobbles it up, it loves your negative thinking, because the more negative thinking, the stronger it gets again, but after a while, it's had enough, it's like a big meal, then you can't eat anymore, and then suddenly it goes back to sleep, and you feel, oh, what was all that about? And sometimes, if it's in a relationship, you make up, so then suddenly everything is fine again, and it's like you both wake up out of some kind of weird nightmare, but the strange thing is, this weird nightmare happens every two weeks, or three, or every once a week, who knows, maybe once a month, or every three months, it varies a lot, but it comes again and again, and until you begin to recognize it for what it is, then the awareness comes in, once you recognize it, it can no longer, first of all, it can no longer use your mind to renew itself, because you recognize it directly, say, there it is, I can feel the emotional pain, and then you may be able not to be totally controlled by it when it tries to create new drama in the relationship again, or your partner, it arises in your partner, and you can clearly see that some dark energy comes into him or her, and suddenly, if you see it for the first time after getting married, you start living together, and then for the first time you see in

your partner the pain body, for many people that is the first time when they question whether they've chosen the right person, whoa.

Now, another strange thing about the pain body, it is a vibrational entity, it can sometimes attract, because there are entities floating around in this universe that we cannot see, there's a vast amount of things that we cannot see, our senses are very limited, so there are entities whose vibrational frequency corresponds to the frequency of the pain body. A bit like what you can see, it's like in the reality that you can see with your senses, it could be compared to perhaps vermin, as we call it, rats, a rat infestation in your house, or cockroaches, so there are psychic correspondents, a bit like cockroaches or rats in the unseen realms that can sometimes be attracted by strong pain bodies, and when that happens, the pain body gets, so they cling to your pain when you almost merge with it, and then the pain body can be incredibly heavy and can become really dangerous, and usually it happens to people who are either very, very unconscious, or people who are addicted to drugs, which lowers very much your consciousness, or alcoholics, lowers very much your consciousness, or have some deficiency in their mind, so it happens to them that their pain body attracts other entities to them, and then they could perpetrate the most dreadful crimes, and often it's sometimes, again, they're not always in the grip of it, but it's there, it's latent, it's waiting, and sometimes people who know these people, they say, how could he have done this, I know him, he's a nice guy, how could he have killed and dismembered six people, what, he was such a nice person, I was at school with him, what they didn't see was his pain body, and when it, his wife might have seen it, I don't know if she's still alive, but the, so it is possible that some entities cling to your pain body, and as you bring more consciousness to it, which simply means to be aware of it, then whether or not your pain body can, whether there are other entities that have come, and they might be not as bad as those entities that lead somebody to commit dreadful crimes, but little things, little bugs, unseen bugs can come in, and it is quite possible in your case, now we finally come to your question, that as you become more conscious and direct consciousness, then the pain body, it would be hard for these entities to continue to cling to your pain body, especially if they're not overpowering, which in your case, this is not, I can see that it's not, you're not going to call a kill and dismember a few people, so these are not overpowering entities, they are little things that cling to your pain body, but if left unattended, it could get worse, but it's because you're growing in awareness, you could, I believe that's the explanation, but I don't know if that is the explanation, but it seems to me that it is, that these things do not like the light of consciousness on them, even the pain body, your pain body does not like to be recognized, because it knows when you identify it and you can feel it, you put your attention on it, it doesn't like your attention, because it cannot use your mind anymore, so if you put your attention on it, there may be things that suddenly, oh, I can't stand this anymore, this person is becoming too conscious, things leave, the pain body becomes lighter, so the pain body can even, I told a story, and I believe in New Earth, when I saw somebody for counseling

session, and we had a wonderful release of this person's pain body, it was like a big chunk went, and I don't know where it went, but it went up into the air, there's similar stories in the gospels too, it's not called pain body in the gospels, of course, that sounds more ominous, he was carrying an evil spirit, and then when Jesus came and said, what is this, the evil spirit fled, and says, leave me alone, I can't stand your presence anymore, this is my paraphrase, so the pain body transmutation then happens, because pain body is energy, is trapped energy, that by focusing on it, the energy becomes freed, and I compare it to, you could say the flame of awareness, or the flame of consciousness, this energy becomes then part of your presence, it's transmuted into presence, it assumes a higher frequency, it's consciousness too, and it becomes presence, it's a bit like you could say, if you have a piece of ice, and the ice is very hard, and you could kill somebody with a piece of ice, but when it gets transmuted, it becomes soft and fluid, and when it gets transmuted even more, it becomes vapor, you can't even see it anymore, and that's a bit like consciousness manifesting in different forms, so-called inanimate matter would be a consciousness that is totally asleep, or almost totally asleep, and then gradually you have different degrees of awakening of consciousness in different life forms, plant life, animal life, human life, and then awakened human life, so all you need to continue to do is to be aware of it, especially when it arises, and be aware of it when it's there in relationship, does it use your mind still, be very alert so that the emotion does not rise up into your mind, and you start thinking negative thoughts, when this happens, immediately know what's happening, when you get, when you love your negativity, then you don't really love it, but your pain body loves it, so it's a wonderful, pain body is a great teaching, and it's a great thing for, it's often people with heavier pain bodies that have a more powerful incentive to awaken spiritually than people with a relatively mild pain body, however, one cannot generalize too much, but there's a tendency for people, it's like you're in a nightmare, if you're in a nightmare, your motivation to awaken is greater than if you're in a relatively pleasant dream, it's not that great, but it's okay, but if you're facing a monster, then you really want to awaken.

[Speaker 6] (6:38:35 - 6:39:08)

Well, first I have to say you are so very cute.

[Speaker 1] (6:39:11 - 6:39:12)

Thank you.

[Speaker 6] (6:39:18 - 6:39:24)

And then also, as I told Kim in the morning, I so wanted you to come to China.

[Speaker 1] (6:39:25 - 6:39:27)

Oh yes, I want to go too.

[Speaker 6] (6:39:28 - 6:39:29)

Okay, okay, let's go.

[Speaker 1] (6:39:29 - 6:39:47)

I have been to Hong Kong, a couple of days, done retreats in Hong Kong, but not for some years. Mainland China, do you think they would be okay with me? I mean the government, the government.

[Speaker 6] (6:39:47 - 6:39:53)

The government should be okay, you haven't done anything terribly wrong there before, right?

[Speaker 1] (6:39:53 - 6:39:54)

No.

[Speaker 6] (6:39:54 - 6:40:12)

So it should be okay, because you're already so very popular in China, your books are very widely read, and so many of my friends in the spiritual community, or even outside of this community, everybody just tells me how much they are expecting your visit.

[Speaker 18] (6:40:13 - 6:40:14)

Oh, okay.

[Speaker 1] (6:40:14 - 6:40:16)

Well, thank you, I will come.

[Speaker 6] (6:40:16 - 6:40:35)

Oh, that's great, that's great. Oh here, finally comes my question. Okay, so how can we truly accept and surrender and be present without having to go through a lot of sufferings, or intense sufferings, to the point that you have no other choice but to give up your ego?

[Speaker 1] (6:40:36 - 6:40:36)

Right.

[Speaker 6] (6:40:36 - 6:41:04)

And for instance, when I hear certain statements like, you must not reject your rejection, or you must not judge your judgments, well that made me feel even more painful,

because that's exactly what I'm doing. So sometimes, most of the times, I am aware that I'm judging this or that, but how to proceed further to really accept, but not just accepting in my mind.

[Speaker 1] (6:41:04 - 6:48:57)

Ah, yes, yes. Now, as you mentioned, it is true that for some people, some people are forced into surrender because they cannot stand the suffering anymore, and sometimes life does that to you, to a person. So the suffering becomes so intense that, that was the case with me.

Suffering became so intense, I couldn't stand it anymore. I couldn't stand myself anymore. On some level, there must have been a realization that I was generating the suffering.

I didn't really consciously know that, but I could not live with myself anymore, as it was the phrase that came into my head before I was disidentified from the egoic self, the mind-made, unhappy me. And then there are those people who are sufficiently conscious, like all of you here, yet they are sufficiently conscious to be able to surrender or accept voluntarily without being forced into it by life. So it's a voluntary decision to come to an acceptance of what arises in this moment, but the acceptance needs to be deep enough so that it's not just on a conceptual level, but also on a deeper level.

So the emotional level, for example. Otherwise you would be lying to yourself when you say, let's say you are in a situation that generates an irritation in you. Let's say a relatively small situation.

There's a long delay somewhere. You're waiting for something. There's a long delay.

You can find irritation beginning to build up. At some point you realize that irritation is beginning to build up. Then your mind says, I need to surrender.

I should surrender to this situation. I need to accept it the way it is. Okay.

And then the mind says, okay, I accept this situation the way it is. The question is, does it remain a statement in the mind? Because the true acceptance needs to go into every cell of your body.

You need to be in touch. This is why as a practice, body awareness is very helpful when you're not being challenged, just as to feel the inner body. So that habitually you're able to place attention into the inner energy field of your body, which also helps you to know what's going on in the emotional field of your body.

So let's say you get irritated at the airport. The flight is canceled. Now you're lining up.

Hypothetical situation. Many situations like that happen all the time. Your flight is

canceled.

Now you're lining up again to book another, get on another flight. But there's 20 people ahead of you. Here in China, they're often, the airline industry is not very...

The long waiting periods and people get very upset at airports because they have to wait a long time. They suddenly start shouting, can't take anymore. So I accept this moment as it is.

And then you need to detect within yourself whether you have really accepted it because are you still feeling irritated or not? To be able to know if you're irritated or not, you need to know both whether your mind is continuing to produce thoughts of irritation. And maybe it is not because you have mentally decided you're not going to have any more thoughts.

But in the emotional field, you may still be angry and irritated. So your attention needs to move into the body so that you're aware, is there still irritation in here? While my mind is saying, I completely accept this moment.

Or you could say another example of that would be, I forgive you. I forgive you. But there's something in you that hasn't forgiven.

So you have forgiven on a superficial mental level. So you need to get your attention in there to actually feel what... It's not only what your mind is saying at this moment.

What does it feel like to be in this moment? What is the feeling of it? And that will tell you when you ask them, what's the feeling of this moment?

That directs your attention into the body. And then you'll notice whether there's still, or whether there's a contraction still. And if there is, you can notice it.

You say, oh, there's still irritation there. And then what you can do, for example, is accept whatever you feel. Acceptance, surprisingly, changes it most.

It's the greatest agent for change, accepting whatever you feel. Because whatever you feel is non-acceptance. So you bring acceptance into the non-acceptance, which is in the contraction or the vibrational frequency of anger or irritation.

You say, oh, this is, it's okay to feel that. And sometimes it's possible to just drop it too. Sometimes it's a, I don't really want that.

So you take one or two deep breaths and release it from the body. And then you have released it both mentally, because the irritation usually starts in the mind, the mind making judgments about the situation you find yourself in. The body then reacts to the judgment and creates an emotion that reflects the mental judgment.

So it's always good to start with the mind and realizing I am not irritated because of this situation. I'm irritated because what your mind is commenting on this situation. That's an enormous insight.

And that applies to so many instances in your life when you feel any kind of unhappiness being seemingly being caused by the situation you find yourself in, by people, circumstances, and so on. Seemingly caused, but 95% of the unhappiness to use a generic term in whatever form it arises, a 95% of the unhappiness is generated surprisingly by your mind, but their mind is saying about the situations that you find yourself in. Once you realize that, you realize that you can be free of that because you don't have to do it.

It's the egoic mind, the unconsciousness, the unobserved mind is generating it. So there, that's the first, there you stop. Then you look at the most, then also you have enough consciousness left when it's not continuously absorbed by agitated thought processes.

Then you have enough consciousness left to direct it into the body and examine what it is that you feel. So the two levels. So let me know how it goes next time you're at an airport in China, for example, or many, do you live, what city do you live in?

[Speaker 18] (6:48:58 - 6:48:58)

Shanghai.

[Speaker 1] (6:48:59 - 6:49:24)

Oh yeah. Well, that's where it's all happening. It must be a very dynamic place, I imagine.

And high energy. Everybody's active and doing things. And that's a wonderful place to practice presence.

It's ideal. And of course you're challenged all the time, but Shanghai needs you and people like you who bring consciousness there.

[Speaker 6] (6:49:24 - 6:49:26)

To bring you there.

[Speaker 1] (6:49:26 - 6:49:29)

Yes. Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 6] (6:49:30 - 6:49:31)

Thank you. Thanks.

[Speaker 1] (6:49:39 - 7:11:07)

This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. I'm aware of fear that is almost continual in me.

My parents were Holocaust survivors, and in spite of my awareness of the anxiety and fear, it does not seem to lessen. Lessen. I know you talk about in any given moment, there's never a problem, but when you're terrified all the time, there is a problem because you are afraid.

This happens to be here. And of course it's connected to what we've just been saying. Now, this is somebody here who a lot of the time is in a state of fear or anxiety.

It could be related to something in his past or his parents or perhaps other generations too. And what to do? You can't get rid of being terrified except being in a state of fear most of the time.

What you can do is not to allow the fear to rise up into your mind and control your thought processes. Because then there would be a normal thing when you are identified. The emotion that's there rises into your mind and then it causes you to think thoughts that correspond to the emotion, fearful thoughts in this case.

And then you would get a vicious circle building up between the emotion of fear, the thoughts you think, which are fearful thoughts, which give more energy to the emotion. So the more fearful thoughts you think, the more it perpetuates the fear that you feel. So to cut, to sever the link between the emotion that you feel and your thought processes, what you do is, and this is not pleasant, but it's possible, you place your attention on the emotion.

You feel it. It's unpleasant, but it's not going to kill you. A child would probably not be able to do that if it's intense.

It might have to escape into some, through dissociation or whatever, possibly. But an adult, it's not going to kill you. It might kill you if you allow it to rise into your mind, because you might even commit suicide if you can't stand this anymore, but it will not kill you in itself.

So feel it. And then you shine the light of awareness on it. And you may have to do that a lot.

And at first it's not pleasant, but it's a burning up of the old emotion. And the only way to get rid of it is to accept it as it is right now. If you want to get rid of it, you can't.

But that complete acceptance of what is, is actually the doorway through it. It's a

transformation of it. And if it's extreme, that can become your main meditation in life.

And that will become your main teacher. And that will bring about your transformation. In some people's lives, there is one huge disability, one huge source of suffering or pain that it could be a physical disability.

It could be a situation like being in prison. It could be an emotion like that, that you carry inside that doesn't need to go, doesn't want to go away. So in certain people's lives, there is one major thing that seems to color your entire life and make your entire life seemingly makes it impossible for you to ever be free or happy or joyful.

But if that one thing, if you surrender to it, allow it to be and make it as a continuous spiritual practice, you need nothing else. That one thing will transform you if you surrender to it. And there will come a point when you are grateful that you had to go through that because it will have taken you, it will be the greatest spiritual teacher.

So there was, I believe, if I remember correctly, even Epictetus, that philosopher who said, it's not the situation that makes you unhappy, it's the thought that makes you unhappy. If I remember correctly, he was also crippled. He couldn't walk properly and he was a slave until he became freed.

So it's often humans who have one major disability or some huge, huge difficulty in life. And that becomes their catalyst for spiritual transformation. If they can surrender to it, allow it to be acceptance.

I call it acceptance of the seemingly unacceptable. Stephen Hawking's case, for example, I don't know to what extent he awakened spiritually, but he accepted the unacceptable. And so certain miracles happened.

He survived. Nobody would have thought it possible. And his life became fruitful on one level, at least.

Acceptance of the unacceptable is a great source of grace in this world. It's just a miracle. But it's an arduous, it can be an arduous process, especially for this questioner here who is here.

It may take a while. You have to endure it and be with it and surrender to it a lot of the time. And that's your meditation.

You don't need transcendental meditation. Your pain, your fear is enough. Be with it.

Allow it to be there. And gradually you will notice the transformation. That's the alchemy of transformation, the alchemy of suffering into...

The old meaning of alchemy is base metal. There comes this guy who experiments in the chemical kitchen and he transforms base metal into gold. So there've been medieval

times, there was a lot of interest in alchemy.

So that would be the material level of alchemy. But on a spiritual level, alchemy is the transformation of suffering into consciousness. And that only happens if you bring surrender to the suffering.

This is how the reason why in India, for example, you have holy men or also, I suppose, holy women who inflict the most incredible suffering on themselves for years. There's a man who stands on one leg continuously, he even sleeps on one leg. Or you might sleep, on the famous example, on a bed of nails.

Can't think of other examples, but it's incredible. And the idea behind it is voluntarily embrace suffering so that it brings about a transformation of consciousness by surrendering to it. I would not recommend that that is the way for you to go.

Life has enough. What life gives you is just right for you and enough. And some of you might say more than enough.

My prostate was cancerous and I had surgery on it. I had been cancer free or so I thought, but after seven years, cancer has once again reared its ugly presence in the region. I'm having difficulty coping with this plus type two diabetes.

Well, it seems the destiny of many humans to be confronted with something like that. At some point or something similar. So I will just explain what I have addressed before a few times with regard to serious illness.

And that is not to, as much as possible, avoid the mental, I'm not saying don't recognize reality like in the previous question, but what I'm saying is avoid an excessive mental dwelling on either the condition that has a name or me as the one who suffers from that condition. So that your mind does not continuously strengthen that mind form of the illness mind form or me as my identity as a sufferer from that illness by thinking about it, which of course creates a lot of fear and won't make you feel good. In other words, in order to become free, now, it is a secondary thing, what kind of treatment you go in for, whether it's conventional treatment, whether it's alternative treatment, whether it's no treatment at all, all that only you can know.

But what is your state of consciousness? And it's a wonderful, it sounds strange for me to say that it is a great opportunity to have an illness like that. And this has been confirmed to me by a number of people that I've known who have had similar illnesses.

One or two seem to get cured, others did not, but that was secondary. They said that it forced them into a very intense presence because they noticed when they were not present, they were very unhappy. So the illness forced them into just living more and more in the present moment.

An extreme example of that was I read last year, I sent it to, I read it on the BBC News, my app, there was a musician in England, popular music, I had never heard of him, but apparently he was quite well known in England who got diagnosed with cancer. And he reports in an interview that when he left the doctor's office, he felt ecstatic. This is very rare.

He felt ecstatically happy and he couldn't quite figure out why. And now he says, I now realize all the problems that I thought I had are completely meaningless and he lives completely in the now. And the rare thing with him was that that happened immediately as he left the doctor's office.

I've never heard that before, that somebody, so can you be, allow the illness to push you into the awakened state. Their motivation is very strong now. And it could happen to anybody who is Luganti.

I have not had a serious illness my whole life. I haven't even seen the inside of a hospital, but who can say that it's not going to happen? Everybody is one heartbeat away from death.

Well, the death of the physical body. And most, if you don't die in an accident, if you die, you might die of old age, if you're lucky or unlucky, depending what your old age looks like. Or as somebody once said, old age isn't so bad if you consider the alternative.

So it's either that, most people here, including myself, will probably die of something, which would be heart attack, cancer, stroke. Well, I think those are the main things. Could be an accident too, of course, or something more rare.

Something eventually comes. So ultimately how long your life is, although I must admit, if it comes to a very young person, it may be more difficult. One person hasn't lived completely, but even there, the shift is possible so that you allow the condition, the illness to force you into just absolute present moment awareness in which you do not suffer.

A lot of the suffering of the illness arises from what your mind is saying. Of course, with some illnesses, pain eventually comes. That is pain.

When I use the word suffering, I really refer to psychological suffering. If there's pain, then perhaps something is done to alleviate the pain and you also need to surrender. But there may be many conditions where there is actually no pain for quite a long time, but you know there is that illness.

So go away from focusing excessively on the idea of illness in the mind and in order to get out of the idea of illness, which is not a denial that, it's not saying I don't have it. No, you're just not going there. You're just being in the present moment.

And several people that were part of, came to me over the years, especially at a time when I still had more personal contact with people who would come to me. I've seen several who had developed fatal illnesses and in the last months of their lives became quite radiant, quite awakened really. The flowering that is meant to be the purpose of human life, the flowering of consciousness happened.

They didn't need another 25 years of life, which means 25 years of eating, 25 years of taking the dog for a walk, going on vacation, seeing a few more sunsets and adding more life experiences. And you can add more and more, but is that the real purpose of your life? To add more and they're good, but then you need more and more and more life experiences and add more.

No, there's something else that is more vital, more important. And that's the flowering, the shift in consciousness. Then time becomes immaterial, whether you have a few more months or another 20 years or 30 years.

So it was wonderful to see those people becoming radiant and becoming in a way like little children because the whole personality collapsed. The ego could not survive. Knowing that it had no future.

If the ego really knows it has no future, either it goes into intense suffering and complaining and victim identity. Why did this happen to me? To me?

Or it dissolves.

[Speaker 3] (7:12:06 - 7:18:39)

It's our intention. Our intention is everything. Nothing happens on this planet without it.

Not one single thing has ever been accomplished without intention. So I started thinking about my life and I started thinking about this conference and what we're about. And I looked back and I thought, well, I was two people my whole life.

I was in the living room, entertaining people, being a monkey, you know, doing my thing for the company and trying to relieve my mother who was suffering. She had rheumatoid arthritis and phlebitis and everything, everything under the sun that was nagging at her. And she was depressed and I wanted her to be free.

And I wanted her to realize that her life was worth something because she gave birth to someone who was worth something. And then I would go into my room and I would sit with a legal pad. I was a little kid.

And I would sit there and I would try to figure out what it meant, what it was all about. Why are we here? What is this?

And one day I read something from Buddha that said that all spirituality is about

relieving suffering. And I suddenly realized that's what I'm doing in the other room. And I'm aligned you know this, my purpose is aligned with this.

So I felt incredibly lucky. I lose sight of that all the time. I get caught up in different concerns and ego concerns.

But I'm so lucky to be a part of this community and to do something that is of value. And I really cherish that. And we are all one thing.

It really is true. Can I speak to the person in the last row, in the very last seat against the wall? Is there someone back there that can say hello?

What's your name? Andrea, are you aware that do you have the distinct palpable feeling that your intention created this evening as well as Melissa's? Do you understand that all of this, this entire event is happening inside you?

We'll just try to feel it for a second because it's a trip, man. Some people go to the Super Bowl. I am the Super Bowl, man.

I swear. My friends are all going to see that play. That was great.

I'm like, yeah, but the energy coming out of me right now, man, is unbelievable. I'm just sitting there. I'm the stadium.

I'm the vendors outside. I'm the crack dealer on the corner. I'm everything, man.

There's no end to it and it's so much fun. It's so much fun. So I hope you can feel that and I hope you understand that you are one of the creators of this evening, that your intentions and your desires created this evening as well.

And then I hope you are able to ask yourself, why did I get such a crappy seat and be okay with it? I mean, you're in the last row in the last seat. And yet you created this.

That's got to be. It's a really selfless thing to do. A few months ago, after knowing Eckhart Tolle for a while and studying the books, I woke up and I suddenly got it.

I understood suddenly how thought was just an illusory thing. And how thought is responsible for, if not all, most of the suffering we experience. And then I suddenly felt like I was looking at these thoughts from another perspective and I wondered, who is it that's aware that I'm thinking?

And suddenly I was thrown into this expansive, amazing feeling of freedom from myself, from my problems. I saw that I was bigger than what I do. I was bigger than my body.

I was everything and everyone. I was no longer a fragment of the universe. I was the universe.

And ever since that day, I've been trying to get back there. It comes and it goes. It's like riding a wave.

Sometimes I'm on, sometimes I'm off, but at least I know where I want to go and that I want to take as many people with me as I possibly can because the feeling is amazing.

[Speaker 1] (7:19:14 - 7:44:24)

Thank you, wonderful. Welcome. My first time here, up north.

And it is perhaps not mere coincidence but synchronistic that we are coming together here at a time of crisis, politically. And it is significant that a group of people are gathering here who are focused on spiritual awakening and of course, the inevitable thing that comes with spiritual awakening, that's inner peace. And that's what needed, not only here, but in the rest of the world too.

Most of you are here because you're already undergoing what I call the awakening process. And I'm sure some of you are here who are already awake and just enjoy listening to me. Don't need to be here anymore, but that's fine.

And one or two may be here against their free will because your partner or a relative or a good friend told you that you really need to come here. And it is a sad fact that the people who really need to be here are not going to be here, mostly. But that's fine.

Awakening eventually will come to the whole of humanity. But right now, at this time, a certain segment of humanity is beginning to go through this evolutionary shift, which I sometimes call the awakening of consciousness. And I guess, although I have no plans, particular plans for this evening, but my feeling is that it's going to be about awakening, the awakening of human consciousness.

And not only about the awakening of human consciousness, I have a feeling that this evening is going to be an essential part of the awakening that's happening on the planet here and there. So I'd like this evening to be not only interesting for you on a conceptual level or entertaining, because that wouldn't be quite enough and you might get bored after half an hour or so. But more importantly, I'd like this evening to be experiential for you.

Something that goes beyond conceptual understanding or taking in new ideas, interesting ideas, and then you can go home afterwards and say, oh, that was interesting what he talked about. I don't remember everything, but that was an interesting idea. There may be one or two interesting ideas, but this is not what this evening is about.

It's something deeper, a shift in consciousness. So I'd like you to experience as we spend this evening together, to experience or to deepen, because many of you have already, are already going through this shift. Then this evening is a deepening for you of this shift

in consciousness.

And for one or two of you, it may be the first time and that may be one or two of those of you who didn't really want to come here, but were dragged here by someone else. And you may get suddenly, have your first glimpse of what is meant by awakening. And what in Zen they called Satori.

And you suddenly go, oh, now I know what he's talking about. That's what it is. And then you talk to a friend about it tomorrow and say, well, what is it?

And say, well, I can't explain it, but I realized something. Humanity is going through a very, what has been until now, a very slow evolutionary progression, human consciousness. So slow that you would hardly notice it.

Humans are slow learners. They repeat the same mistake again and again. The same thing that causes them suffering, they do it again and again and again, both personal on this personal level and on a collective level.

The same mistakes politicians make and so on, until a point comes when they can't stand the suffering anymore. And that's always a good point to reach. And then suddenly an inner opening happens.

Suffering has its purpose. And many of you would not be here. I would even say most, perhaps even all of you would not be here if you had not had your share of human suffering.

So retrospectively, we can be grateful for the suffering that we as individuals have gone through, because it has taken us to this point of the awakening of consciousness. This also applies to the whole of humanity. Humanity is an, you can consider it as an organism that is gradually evolving, the collective consciousness of humanity.

Each individual is an expression of the collective consciousness of humanity. And the collective consciousness of humanity is an expression of the one universal consciousness. The greatest mystery of the universe, and perhaps this is a good starting point for our evening.

The greatest mystery of the universe is not out in outer space, the mysteries of the galaxies, the mysteries of the black holes, the billions of galaxies that exist, that it is phenomenal, it's unbelievable. And the greatest mystery is not on the atomic level, which is also unbelievable. The world that is there, the atomic and subatomic level that scientists explore, which we only understand a tiny fragment of, just as we only understand the tiniest of fragments of what is out there.

So you have the two realms, the two mysteries, the outer space, and then the macrocosm, and you have the microcosm. And people write books, great scientists write

books about the mysteries of the universe. And the amazing thing is, many of these books, very good books, fail to mention one word.

They explore the mysteries of the universe, but there's one word, you can have a whole book on the mysteries of the universe, either the macrocosm or the microcosm or the two together. The one word that's not mentioned is consciousness. Which is the foremost fundamental mystery, the fact that the universe is conscious.

That is the most amazing miracle. How do I know that the universe is conscious? Well, I am conscious.

You are conscious. The universe is conscious in us. The universe is experiencing itself for a brief moment as a human being.

It's also experiencing itself for brief moments as a plant or an animal. And that's an amazing thing. Now, scientists are probably never going to figure out what consciousness is.

If it's even possible to figure out what consciousness is, because scientists is concerned with looking out there. You can either look out into outer space or you look into the most, the innermost of matter. But what scientists don't look at is their own consciousness.

Which is the universe looking at itself. So the awakening of human consciousness is, and I'll give you now the answer in case you have better things to do. So I'll tell you the secret of the universe now.

And so if you want to have a pint after this, it's okay. At least you know the secret of the universe. And let's just settle into the present moment.

Which is not something perhaps that you would normally do because there's always something else that's more important or pretends to be more important. And then you forget that the only important, the only really important thing in your life is the present moment. Because there is nothing else, ever.

You have to really realize that fully to see the implications of that. And how one could almost say devastating it is to realize that there's only ever this moment. But most people live as if other things, past and future, were more important than this moment.

It's an unconscious pattern. So meditation is about becoming present and the word itself implies, of course, now, present moment. So we sometimes speak of present moment awareness.

I sometimes call it presence. And that is what meditation is all about. Discovering that dimension of consciousness in yourself and usually meditation techniques are designed to get you there.

But our meditation is a meditation that does not really have any particular techniques. I'm just inviting you to come into this present moment with your attention directly. Just drop into the now.

This is something you can only verify or realize for yourself that you can actually almost sense, one could say, the presence of the present moment. Well, it has no shape or form. So you can become conscious of the present moment itself.

What does that mean? First of all, you become more conscious of sensory perceptions. An alertness arises that normally is not there when you are trapped in the continuous stream of thinking.

Then that alertness that is synonymous with presence or awareness is just not there. So the normal state of consciousness is to be trapped in this continuous stream of thinking, a lot of it quite useless and repetitive. Thinking can be a powerful thing, but most people's thinking, 99% of it is repetitive, useless, often negative.

It's mental noise. And when you're identified with that, when there's that voice in your head that never stops speaking and you don't even know that you are not that voice, so you think you are the voice, you become the voice, that is a dreamlike state. And you can observe people around you often who are in that dreamlike state.

You can see it in their eyes. They're not here. All their attention is absorbed by their thinking.

They're just a little bit left, just that they know where they are going and not bump into furniture. But so you can see how many people are most of the time not really present because almost all their attention is absorbed by this continuous noise of thinking. And so they go, and when they look at you, they don't really see you.

At best, they see you through the screen of thinking, which is judgments that they may have about you. So there's never a clear perception of anything. Everything is filtered through the thinking, through the judgments of the mind.

And that's traditionally in spirituality, that's called being asleep. And that's why the term that is used in various ancient spiritual traditions for enlightenment or whatever you want to call it is awakening. So there's an alertness that is suddenly there when you become conscious of the present moment.

At first, you might notice it as suddenly becoming more aware of your sense perceptions, listening, looking, seeing, hearing. You might also find that alertness is there when something new suddenly arises in your field of vision, somebody comes into the, something appears, or in your hearing, a sudden noise, and when a sudden noise appears, and or suddenly somebody comes in or comes around the corner, and you suddenly look or listen, and there's an alertness behind the looking and listening. And for

those few seconds, when that new thing arises and you give it your full attention, for those few seconds, three, four, five, maybe two, there's not a thought in your head.

Thought then comes in and after a few seconds, and it may for some people only be a couple of seconds, and then immediately interprets what it is there. But there is always, there's a moment when something new arises, when there is clear perception and just an alertness in the background. And that's an interesting moment because that is a natural way of presence arising in you, but usually it's so short-lived that people miss it.

So it's a good thing to discover that you're actually already meditating for brief moments. You are in the state that we call meditation and perhaps didn't even know it. And sometimes there may be moments when you just sit somewhere and you suddenly become completely comfortable with that moment as it is.

And an inner peace arises and you feel there's nothing missing here. And this can suddenly can happen where before your mind said, why am I still waiting here in this waiting room? I've been sitting here for an hour and why are they keeping me waiting?

And so on the mind, and suddenly there may be a shift and you say, well, I'm here this moment, I might as well be here fully. And suddenly all that noise of thinking subsides and you realize actually there's nothing really missing in this moment. I'm breathing, looking, listening, feeling alive.

And it's fine when the mind is not telling me that it's not fine. And you'll be surprised how often the present moment is fine when you really check it out. Whereas the mind would habitually tell you that it's not fine.

It's not good enough. Something is missing. Something shouldn't be there.

But of course it is. And when you argue with what is in your mind that's called unhappiness in whatever form it comes. Irritation, impatience anger, sadness.

So meditation is learning to align yourself internally with the present moment and become aware of the present moment. So first of all, through sensory perceptions. So I just said that sometimes those things arise naturally.

You suddenly either something new comes into your field of vision or your hearing and an alertness is there for a few seconds. Or there may be a moment when you are relaxing into the present moment. And I'm not talking about becoming tired because that's not where we are going.

We are not going towards sleep. We are going towards a heightened sense of alertness which is what the meditative state is. Or let's do away with the term meditation altogether and just call it presence.

There's a heightened state of alertness is very different from the lowered alertness that when you are moving towards sleep. So that is not meditation. And even when people talk about relaxation usually often it's associated in people's minds with kind of you're gradually moving towards sleep.

I'm so relaxed now. Or if you go to a hypnotist, you might say and your eyes are becoming heavier and heavier and we are not going that way. That's nice.

It gives you a little bit of relief from your mind. But here we are exploring the possibility of a higher state of consciousness, heightened alertness.

[Speaker 10] (7:44:51 - 7:46:54)

So the question I wanted to ask you is could you comment on the relationship of chi which is the relationship of chi to Tao which is Buddhist I think. I know it is. How do you experience it?

I'm not crying. This is just water. Yeah, tears are usually water.

I experience chi energy like I feel like a lot of energy. So I think of energy as formed, as something that's formed. It can be kind of gross like the energy I feel now.

I feel it's very gross. Or it can be very fine, but it's all energy. And I feel that Tao, if it's what I think it means, is more like God which is not energy.

That's my opinion. And I really was... But what makes you think that energy is not God?

Well, it is, of course. Everything is part of that, but... So may I ask you, are you trying to separate the two?

I'm sorry?

[Speaker 2] (7:46:54 - 7:47:00)

May I ask, are you trying to separate the two? Like there's Tao here, there's God here, and there's energy here?

[Speaker 10] (7:47:01 - 7:47:05)

Well, I'm not trying, but maybe that's what I'm doing. It's possible.

[Speaker 18] (7:47:05 - 7:47:06)

Yeah. Hello.

[Speaker 9] (7:47:29 - 7:49:21)

It's the first time that I stand in front of so many people, so I'm a bit nervous. I guess I

represent one of those, I suppose, many women who hold trauma from their childhood and have a pain body and have experienced how beautiful the connection with Source can be and how healing it can be. And so at the moment, I am going to...

Well, I've been contemplating a lot on the different energies that we hold, so two of them, so the Divine Feminine and the Divine Masculine, and also how much separation it really causes in this world and how much conditioning there is on what is feminine and what is masculine. And so Eckhart and also you talk about the one consciousness, the oneness, the one universal energy that we draw from, and yet still we also talk about yin and yang. And so I am just a little bit confused about...

So I am a woman, also the label says, and in my form. And so I'm asking myself, when I draw from Source, is it that I draw from the yin as a woman or is it that I draw from yin and yang? Is there no difference?

Is it just a difference in the form, how I express it? So I'm really kind of fascinated by this question of what is the unconditioned yin and what is the unconditioned yang?

[Speaker 2] (7:49:24 - 7:55:04)

The Source is neither yin or yang. Your being is neither female or male. The Source, you can say, is a nothingness, it's nothing.

Yet it's potential of everything. So the yin and the yang is the manifestation of form. So form is dual.

The non-dual, the unmanifested, is formless. Absolutely formless. Yet manifests itself as duality, as form.

So when we draw from the Source, we don't draw a yin and we don't draw a yang. We draw from the vastness of the Tao that cannot be named, cannot be described. But yet we use pointers and we have these words, these limited words, that we can point to this Source and point to who we are.

That is beyond the form. And I may use the words like yin, all the yin qualities, in order to be able to access stillness. So the spiritual words to use are like yin qualities.

So we have yin, yin is the female, which is always... And you can imagine the mountains all around and we have a mountain and you have a valley. And the feminine represents that valley, which is not the form here, but just the space here.

And the yang, the masculine, represents that which exists. So we need, it's almost like we need this duality in order to be able to see ourselves. So in other words, and I've said this before, if the whole world were the color green, we wouldn't know what green was.

We just wouldn't know it. But we have these differences. The opposites.

And everything in this manifested world is opposite. We have male trees, we have female trees, although I can't tell the difference, but there are, you know. So it's all opposite.

We just wouldn't know it. We wouldn't know this flower from a different flower. We wouldn't know this flower from a different flower.

You from me if we just all look the same. If we were all green. So the source that we draw, you go beyond any concepts, any words.

Because really there are no words to truly describe the unmanifested, the formless dimension. Of the source of stillness. But yet all this describes it all too at the same time.

And the beauty behind that, so the beauty is that this stillness coming through that form, the energy, which is the purest. You can say it's still form, energy is still form. So our life energy is still form, but it's the purest life form arising from the source of emptiness, nothingness, sometimes it's called.

And that's where we go to. We go to that source of no words, no description, no form. Yet it's here within.

It's here outside, it's neither in or out. But we sense it. Without our forms we probably would not even be able to sense it.

Because we are it. But we get a chance, an opportunity to sense with our human bodies. Not only here, but inside.

That space inside us senses the space, the bigger space.

[Speaker 9] (7:55:12 - 7:55:13)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (7:56:15 - 7:56:29)

All the things that I was so anxious about, that were created, what was it that was so unnecessary and pointless? All the things that I've been striving for were ultimately pointless.

[Speaker 17] (7:56:34 - 7:57:00)

So suffering in your life, if it still arises, it's used so that the ego gets burned up by the suffering, so to speak. The ego gets burned up in this fire of suffering.

[Speaker 1] (7:57:01 - 7:57:57)

Now we can call this conscious suffering. That's a very interesting concept, conscious

suffering. When suffering arises, become aware of it, and accept that it's there.

In the form of fear, anxiety, regret, you have self-pity, you have unhappy sense of self, complaining about your life, many forms of suffering. You've lost things you don't know. Things that you had identified with are taken away from you.

Who am I now? I'm nobody. I'm nobody.

Well, that's great. Be nobody more completely.

[Speaker 17] (7:58:00 - 7:58:06)

Realize fully you're nobody-less. You're nobody-ness.

[Speaker 1] (7:58:13 - 8:07:45)

I don't know who I am anymore. I've lost everything. All the things I've worked for have gone.

Everything is so pointless. Their mind is still talking. It's all been for nothing.

It's all meaningless, meaningless. This is your mind talking. Don't believe in the things it says, but it continues talking.

Many humans in this world are suffering from what we could call nihilism. I don't know if you know that word, nihilism. Nihilism means the belief that everything is absolutely and utterly pointless.

That's a deep form of suffering, nihilism. It doesn't make what's the point of it, or just this awful life of mine. The whole world is pointless.

It's so awful. That's a very deep suffering, the total lack of meaning. Everything is arbitrary, random, and meaninglessness is a mental disease that is afflicting millions of humans.

Because everybody, the mainstream culture still believes, it goes back to the 19th century, it goes back to Darwin, Origin of Species, and said life evolved, which undoubtedly is true. But he said life evolved, but the evolution of life on this planet is an arbitrary, random course of events. Molecules and atoms at random coming together and forming life forms over millions of years.

Random, the idea of randomness in the theory of evolution put forward by Darwin and others, the idea of randomness means there's no purpose or intelligence behind it whatsoever. It's a random process. In other words, it's the belief that everything, that all life on this planet has no meaning.

It just is a meaningless conglomeration of atoms and molecules. It's ultimately

meaningless. That basically is the underlying assumption behind the theory of evolution that many people still believe.

It has seeped into mainstream culture, and even people who have never even heard of Darwin, it has seeped into their belief system that we live in a meaningless universe. Before that happened, we had certain religious beliefs, so there was some meaning. And all those, a lot of that perhaps was ideological and ego-driven.

Nevertheless, in the ancient religion, there is the access to the transcendent is still there here and there. So there were still little openings into the transcendent, even though many forms of religion developed into ideological belief systems that strengthened the ego. Nevertheless, religion still carried, or still carry, the secret of transcendence is still there hiding within the religions.

And that became inaccessible to many humans. So now we have the pandemic of nihilism. This is one of the pandemics far worse than any physical pandemic.

That everything, the belief that everything is meaningless. So, and you can have a meaning in your life that is very limited. Like for many people, the meaning, okay, I want to have a career that gives you limited meaning in your personal life.

I'm working for a career, nothing wrong with that. I'm working to create a better life for myself and my family. That's also wonderful and great.

I'm working to achieve recognition in this world, et cetera, et cetera. That's fine too. But at some point, a meaning that is purely personal may begin to lose its power.

So that, let's say you've spent two or three decades working for your career, which is nothing wrong with it. At some point, you may arrive at a point where your career doesn't mean anything anymore, or you lose it. That you lose your career and your status, or it consumes you so completely that you become ill with stress.

Or in some other way, you turn into something that's not satisfying at all. It actually creates suffering. So something can give you limited meaning for a while, for years, and then suddenly turn out to be ultimately meaningless.

So some people suddenly wake up and say, all my life, some people fall ill, seriously ill. And then they look back on their life and say, all this was so pointless, accumulating possessions. Why did I do that?

What was the point in that? All the things that I was so anxious about, when they're, now they're, let's say they're seriously ill now. All the things that I was so anxious about, that were created, what was, it was so unnecessary and pointless.

All the things that I'd been striving for were ultimately pointless. That can be an opening.

Suddenly, wow, the limited personal meaning, which was fine.

It's better than no meaning at all. To have a personal meaning in your life, better than no meaning at all. But ultimately, that's not satisfying in the long term.

You have to go deeper, to a deeper meaning that transcends who you are as a person. And that is, am I aligned with the purpose of the universe? That is the ultimate true meaning.

Am I aligned with a purpose? And what is the purpose of the universe? The purpose of the universe is consciousness, bringing more consciousness into this dimension.

That's the purpose of the universe. Bringing more consciousness into this dimension. Am I aligned with that?

And then, if that is the case, if you're aligned with that, you are a bringer of consciousness, a bringer of light. That is the ultimate true purpose. And it could be that your personal purpose and the deeper purpose can go together.

That's fine. So you can have a career, and yet it's not totally ego-dominated while you are active working. You bring in the light of consciousness.

You do things in your work that bring more consciousness into this dimension. That's wonderful. So you can have, it is not necessarily a case of either having a career or being aligned with universal purpose, which is you can bring the two together.

That's perfectly, that's the balance between, the balance between being and doing, as I sometimes call it, the balance between being and doing, bringing those two together. But so the purpose, there's only one true purpose in your life, and that you have to discover that, and that is, am I aligned with the consciousness? Am I a bringer of consciousness?

So that's the end of nihilism, is that, and it no longer matters. Your entire past becomes relatively unimportant when you realize the meaning of life is to be a bringer of consciousness. Let's say your entire past was one disaster after another.

It happens, some people's life is like, unfortunately, it was like that. Let's say you've ended up in prison because you did one wrong and bad thing after another. And, but then you look back in your so-called life and say, my God, that was a disaster.

My entire life was just a disaster.

[Speaker 17] (8:07:47 - 8:07:55)

Okay, but at this moment, I realize the consciousness that I am.

[Speaker 1] (8:07:58 - 8:11:01)

And I've, all the suffering that I have created for myself and others, all the suffering I've created for myself and others was part of the egoic dream, the delusion, the egoic delusion and the conditioning that I came into this world with. And then you awaken at this moment. If a totally disastrous life brings you to a point of awakening now, the whole thing was great because it suddenly has a purpose.

Retrospectively, all the disasters brought you to this moment of awakening. So in retrospect, what was totally absurd and meaningless, suddenly it fulfilled a purpose. The past can suddenly be realized as having fulfilled its purpose by creating the suffering that led to your awakening.

So there's no regret anymore about the past. It all made sense. So it's, the meaning arises retrospectively.

It only remains absurd and disastrous if the awakening doesn't happen. Then you're trapped in the dreadful dream, continue to be trapped in it. Well, so be aligned with universal purpose.

That is the ultimate purpose. No matter what you do, no matter how it expresses itself through you, that doesn't matter. But realize that as, and if you want to look at your life in terms of failure and success, as many people do, is my life a failure?

Is my life a success? How do you, what criterion do you use for failure or success? Do you allow this world to tell you whether you're a failure or success?

To a large extent, this world is insane. So are you allowing an insane world to tell you whether your life is a failure or success? Well, no, if this world cannot tell you, then what is it?

Obviously, the only true criterion is whether you are conscious or not in this moment. If you're conscious in this moment, instead of being totally immersed in the dream of your conditioned unawareness, the fictitious person, if you are conscious in this moment, then that is the greatest and only true success there could be in this life.

[Speaker 5] (8:11:28 - 8:12:50)

As we search to focus on our true self, our true I, and we look at the various types of attachments, status, materialism, body image, I specifically have a problem with letting go of the concept of relationship and roles, and specifically the role of mother. And although I see the agonic risk in hanging on to the role of mother and have no problem with the challenge of trying to let go of that, it's the concept of letting go of, and having motivation to let go of the bond between mother and child that I struggle with. How old is your child?

My children are adults. I have two living and one that I have buried. So I embrace and fully accept the opportunity that they all may go at any time.

It's not that, but I'm talking about the emotional bond. So I'd like your comment on how we accept and embrace the concept of a letting go of the emotional bond. Can I ask, I'm gonna stay there.

[Speaker 2] (8:12:51 - 8:12:56)

Can I ask you whether you have fully grieved the one that you have lost?

[Speaker 5] (8:12:56 - 8:13:39)

I feel that we have. It's been 30 years, and my belief in the spirituality that we speak of has assisted me in incorporating that into our lives. Are you afraid your other children may die before you pass?

No, I have no fear of that. I have no fear of death for any of us. Okay.

But you have a fear of letting go. I have no motivation to let go of the attachment between any one of the three living or dead. I'm asking for your feedback on how to let go of the attachment.

[Speaker 2] (8:13:42 - 8:15:36)

Well, what's coming through is that it's not the bond so much that you have to let go of. It's the mother role to let go of. And begin, when you let go of that, you are able to then begin a new sort of relationship, a more perhaps adult to adult relationship, a friendship to friendship relationship, rather than the mother-daughter, mother-son relationship.

Now, usually when we hang onto our roles, it gives the ego a sense of something, gives the mind something. Because after all, you know, we've been mothers for a very long time. But there comes a point where if you don't let go, then a new relationship cannot form, a different type of relationship, a more adult relationship.

Because mother relationship, let's face it, mother's, you know, concept of mother could be telling your child what to do or having your child being able to come to you. But if we don't let go of that, the result then for your child is also not being able to be fully themselves. And you know that because you're shaking your head.

And in turn, you are not able to be fully yourself. So, do you want to be fully yourself? Of course.

Then let go.

[Speaker 5] (8:15:38 - 8:15:50)

So am I understanding correctly that letting go of the attachment of roles and relationships is not literally letting go of valuing that, but rather letting go of that identifying you?

[Speaker 2] (8:15:51 - 8:17:34)

Exactly. When we have an expectation of something, so when I realized in my relationship with Eckhart early on, I had a lot of expectations. A lot of expectations.

Things that I didn't want in a relationship anymore, things that I wanted in a relationship. And he's like, no. So, when I suddenly saw that, oh my God, it was like this aha moment.

Oh my God, I'm not having a real relationship with my man here. I'm having a relationship with the idea in my head. So you won't be able to have a full relationship with your children until you let go of the role.

Because you don't need to be a mother anymore. They're not little. So, but mothers are okay.

They're wonderful. But when they get to be, you know, like older, it's no longer wonderful. It blocks them from growing and being who they are and blocks you from growing and being who you are.

The question is, are you willing to discover who you really are? And have them discover who they really are and see them who they really are.

[Speaker 5] (8:17:34 - 8:17:37)

Thank you for the clarification. Great.

[Speaker 1] (8:18:18 - 9:24:50)

Once you become aware, do you have to have a plan of where you're going? Or do you leave that up to the universe to bring that to you for you then to make the choice? That's, many people have been asking that question.

Do you have a plan to where you're going? Or does that just happen when you are in touch with the creative power within you? Either way may be the case.

For some people, something just spontaneously and organically grows. And before they know it, they are engaged in some inspired and empowered activity. It may start very small and they may not even know that how it's going to grow and develop.

It's just the consciousness takes over and they didn't plan it. Sometimes, just an example, you could have a musician who just loves playing this instrument and then he is at a street corner playing his instrument. And then somebody comes and says, oh, this

is great.

Why don't you try come to a studio? And it can develop from there without him having had any plan, just enjoying the doing. For others, something may come to them suddenly, a mental, an image of something that wants to, I put it that way, I say that wants to be created.

It's not so much I want to create this. When something comes to you from a deeper level, it feels more like that this wants to be created. So it comes, an image or a thought even comes to you and then you suddenly know what it is that wants to be created through you.

And then one could say that you have a plan, but the plan is very different from the plans that the ego had when you were still trapped in ego structures because whatever plan the ego has is very limited by its needs. The ego really seeks itself through its plans. It seeks an enhancement of itself.

So those are the plans that the ego creates and they are flawed, deeply flawed. And whatever action you take in order to carry out the ego's plans is also going to be deeply flawed and will bring about a lot of heartache and problems and creates problems more and more for yourself and others. And you get, it's hard, it's a struggle.

That's always a sign that there's the ego somewhere, that you're struggling. I'm not talking about intensity. Things that, plans, so you have ego plans.

They are really, there's always a hidden self-seeking in whatever the plan might be. The ego, when it comes through the ego, there's a hidden, it's a hidden form of self-seeking. But the plans that I'm talking about here come from a deeper level within yourself.

That's why I usually say not that you want to create this or that, but it wants to be created through you. And so there is a, the deeper, the unconditioned wants to create form through you because it loves the creation of form. How do I know that?

Well, just look around and you see that the universe loves to create multiplicity, an incredible multiplicity of life forms everywhere throughout the cosmos. Just planet Earth alone, just look at the billions of life forms. So obviously the universe enjoys the creation of form and it has some purpose that we cannot conceptually, rationally, intellectually, fully understand, although we can have an inkling of why.

But we cannot fully understand what the ultimate purpose of the creation of forms is. Yes, we have an inkling, I sometimes talk of it, but one thing is certain, that the universe enjoys that. Consciousness enjoys the play of form and it can happen through you and it's deeply enjoyable.

So something may come to you, then that something that, and then you can say, oh, I

have a plan and it'll be inspired and there's no self-seeking in it. In other words, you're not looking to whatever it is that wants to be created through you. You're not looking to it for happiness or self-enhancement or fame or wealth, that those things may come.

You may get fame, you may get wealth, you may get those things as by-products, but that's not the reason why this creation happens through you. There is no self-seeking and yet, whatever the ego would have sought for itself may come to you as the adding on, as Jesus puts it. Things may be added on.

If there's an enormous energy output from you into the world, it's not yours, of course, there's no personal energy, it would be a misperception. But if you become a channel for that universal energy, then, of course, things will come back to you, usually also in material forms. So there will be, if there's an enormous outflow, an enormous giving, not yours, but as a channel, things will come back to you because if you give out to the universe, the universe gives back.

So you may enjoy wealth, but it would be just an adding on to, or you might give part of it away, or all of it, whatever it is, that you feel is right for you. Just so you can, to summarize, for some, there's just a spontaneous evolution of the creative impulse into the external, and it happens through them without any prior plan. For others, something arises in their minds and they, yes, this is what I need to do.

This is what wants to come into being through me. I feel that very strongly. And then you take action.

And important is not, be aware of the energy field behind the action that you take so that you don't lose the presence because the ego, even there, can still take over. If any action you take in order to achieve something, if stress and negativity come in when you find obstacles, because there's always some obstacle that you encounter when you begin to create something new, there will be some obstacles. There will also be enormous help coming, not necessarily immediately, perhaps immediately, but at some point you will notice an influx of supportive energy.

But you may also encounter obstacles in the form of people who don't want you to create something new. People who are so stuck in their mind patterns, they resist anything new. So that's a very common thing.

Or obstacle in some other form. So if then, if you encounter an obstacle and there's negativity or attack, you're attacking, then you're quickly losing power. The ego is attempting to take over.

So whenever you are trying hard or struggling or stress arises, stress is another indicator that you are no longer fully aligned with the power within. Then you become stressed, upset, anxious, complaining, attacking somebody, you're losing power quickly. So that's

a good indicator.

Whenever you engage in creative action, manifesting this or that, is stress arising. Now, I'm not saying that there cannot, there's not going to be an intense energy behind when you're engaged in creative activity. There is intense energy behind it, which from an external viewpoint can sometimes be misinterpreted almost as stress, but it's not stress at all.

It's just intensity of energy behind creation. It is, but it's joyful, it's intense, but joyful. And you can feel that intensity when you're in the midst of some creation happening through you, enormous intensity of energy.

And that's, but very different from stress. Stress is always, there's a, it's not flowing, but this intensity is flowing. And it deals with, the intensity deals with obstacles in a very different way from the ego.

The intensity can sweep away obstacles or it can transform obstacles into something helpful. Even humans, it doesn't attack. Another thing to be, yes, you find obstacles when you create something, but as I just mentioned, also you encounter the phenomenon of being supported.

If your creation is aligned with what the universe wants, then you, it becomes enormously empowered. It's like riding on a huge wave. Somebody wrote a poem or something about it.

Was it Shakespeare? It starts with, there is a tide in the affairs of men. And if, can't remember the rest, but so if you catch that tide, which is the tide of something wanting to be created through you and that movement, and then you're riding on this enormous wave.

And at some point the creation then happens. And so then that wave comes to an end. And then there may be a time period when there's more of a withdrawal before new creation happens.

So that varies from person to person. And it's exciting to, it's wonderful to be part of that because it's something, an entirely new way of being coming to this planet. Because happiness does not ultimately derive from this world.

This world is not designed to make you happy. It is designed to challenge you. And if you believe that this world is designed to make you happy, then you're going to get very angry because as the years pass in your life, you realize, why isn't my life working?

Why is this reality seems to be always throwing obstacles in my path? The moment I say, oh, it's okay now, this problem has been solved, another one pops up from behind you. And so you have these areas of your life, the main areas being your physical health, your

financial situation, your living situation, your professional situation, your relationship situation.

And one of these areas usually develops problems. So you solve a problem in your financial area and then props up a relationship problem. You solve the relationship problem, suddenly you have a health problem.

It's interesting that you're constantly being challenged and you might have noticed, one of the greatest sources of challenges are human beings. Because humans are incredibly challenging. And although humans look to other humans often for some ultimate fulfillment through other humans, more often what they find through other humans is that other humans turn out to be a source of suffering.

And that is because you're stuck in the egoic mind and you have the egoic mind has certain expectations of the world, which includes whatever you experience in this world, has certain expectations that the world cannot meet. But if you believe that the world should, then that is a delusional reality that you will be continuously unhappy. The world continues to challenge you, but you believe the world is here to make you happy.

That's a terrible dilemma. So it means all your expectations are delusory, but you don't know it. And that creates an enormous amount of suffering because then every challenge that you encounter in this world, and they come one after another, every challenge that you encounter in this world, you then, because of that underlying expectation that something is wrong when you're being challenged, every challenge is then turned into unhappiness.

There's a big difference between a challenge and unhappiness. So when you have delusory expectations of the world, then the world will make you unhappy and not happy, but you continue to believe that something has gone fundamentally wrong in your life because life does not leave you alone. Or do you want some peace?

You want some, ah, you want the sense of, I've arrived, this is it. And occasionally it comes, but it never lasts so very long. So that's the dilemma.

There's the underlying state of ignorance, not knowing that the function of this world is to challenge you because only by challenging you does it provide the necessary incentive to awaken you. And it is, you notice after a while that as you gradually begin to awaken out of the unconsciousness, which is the complete identification with the conceptual egoic mind, you begin to realize that, oh, a lot of the unhappiness that you experience, and unhappiness is a generic term that could be many, many things. Even a state of irritation is already unhappiness.

Sadness is unhappiness. Anger is, any state that doesn't feel good is unhappiness. Any state of unhappiness, you begin to realize that a greater part of it is not derived from the

situations in your life.

And when you realize that, that's the beginning of an awakening, let's say 90% of the unhappiness that you encounter is actually produced by your mind. And that's an amazing realization. There remain the 10% unhappiness.

You might be very, somebody, a loved one dies close to you. Of course, you experience, you weep. That is, of course, normal.

But if you observe the various forms of unhappiness in your life, from the very, the mildest forms of unhappiness to the more extreme forms of unhappiness, let's say, just two brief examples, a mild, very, very small, little bit of unhappiness arises many times when things happen in daily life and you can't immediately get what you want. You're on the phone, trying to get talk to your bank, but of course, there's no human being there. And even that is a, it's a minor form of unhappiness, but it is, you get very irritated and you don't, you think, well, this is caused by this dreadful bank that has no longer human beings that you can speak to.

Or you're lining up, airports are a great place to observe small forms of unhappiness because often so many things go wrong and you're lining up and this lineup is not moving and just, and of course, these people are just so inefficient and never going to fly with them again. And so, and you feel more and more, and in any of these situations, if you observe, okay, unhappiness is arising, is it really coming from the situation or is it coming from the way in which I speak to myself about the situation? Does it derive from the mental commentary about the situation or is it the situation?

And in most cases, you actually find, and you begin, I suggest you start with little, small forms of unhappiness, you will find that the unhappiness is derived from the narrative, is derived from your self-talk in the head. And because the self-talk just happens to you, you're not doing it, it's like the heartbeat, it happens to thinking, the reactive thinking happens to you and you mistake it for who you are and then you become an unhappy human being. Welcome to our live meditation.

Are you conscious at this moment? Of course you're conscious because you see me on the screen, you're aware of the place where you are, the room, the doors, you're aware of other things, my voice, other noises perhaps. So you know that you're conscious because you're aware of these things.

If you were not conscious, you would not see me or hear my voice. So that is kind of secondary evidence that you are conscious, but it's not primary evidence. So secondary evidence, you're conscious of things, you're conscious of sense perceptions, you're conscious of thoughts or emotions.

And those things together, sense perceptions, thoughts, other mental activities, mental

images and emotions, those things make up your life, a mixture of things, but those are the ingredients that make up what you call your life. Sense perceptions, thoughts or mental images and feelings, emotions. Now the way in which these are mixed differs from person to person, but those are the ingredients that make up what you call your life.

So you must be conscious for these to arise. They appear in the light of consciousness or the space of consciousness. And then there's something else, there's primary evidence, and that's what one may call spiritual awakening, when you're no longer totally drawn into, identified with, reacting to, sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions.

And without primary evidence, which we could call spiritual awakening, you are actually unconscious, spiritually speaking. Consciousness only reveals itself to you in disguise, assuming a certain form of sense perceptions, thought, emotion. And that draws you in, gives you your sense of who you are, your sense of identity, which is derived from your life, your life situation.

That gives you your sense of identity, which includes the past, the things you have experienced, which means perceived, thought about, felt. And these leave traces, so in the present moment, you still remember these things, re-experience them in your mind. That's you.

But you're not really awake, spiritually speaking, unless or until you're not only conscious of those things that I mentioned, but you're also conscious that you are conscious, conscious or aware of awareness, aware of yourself as awareness, aware of yourself as consciousness, aware of that formless dimension within yourself in which, for a moment, thought or thinking has subsided and you can sense an underlying presence, the beingness, the liveness, the loveness. These are all just pointers.

Stillness. Right now, I'm not asking you to become still, but to realize that dimension of consciousness that we call stillness that's always already there. Underneath all the thinking, but you didn't know it.

So stillness is actually a beautiful pointer. If you haven't read my little book, Stillness Speaks, or haven't looked at it in a long time, go back to it, read a page or two, and see if it enables you to enter that dimension of stillness, to find that dimension of stillness within you. That's what the book is for, not to give you more information.

But it gives you pointers, signposts. If I remember correctly, the first entry, the first sentence in the book is, you're never more essentially yourself than when you are still. That feeling of being you, of identity, that comes out of that stillness, that is the stillness, that is more essentially who you are than your historical person.

The identity that depends on your life situation and your past. So we have two, so to

speak, identities. One is time-based, thought-based, and the other is formless.

And that consciousness, to be aware of that, is the aim of meditation. And here we are not even using any techniques. I'm just giving you pointers.

But also, I'm conveying to you the reality of consciousness itself. That's what the stillness is, the stillness that is also primordial intelligence. So the mastery of life consists in being able to operate on the level of form thinking and doing, and at the same time, not losing touch with the awareness, the stillness.

At first, it appears as two things that you consciously, during the day, become aware of yourself as awareness, become aware of the little spaces between thoughts, develop the ability to relinquish thinking if only for a few seconds, either by choice or by realizing that sometimes thinking subsides laterally. For example, when you look at something beautiful in nature, the sky, or the sunset, or the ocean, or the river, or the sound of the rain, the sound of the wind, there's an appreciation of what you perceive. You give it your fullest attention, and there's a little space in which the perception happens without any conceptualization.

In other words, the mind does not comment on it in the first moment of perceiving it, when you feel an inner connectedness with what you're perceiving. You just look, or you just listen. The realization of beauty arises in that moment of non-conceptual thinking, non-thinking.

And when that arises naturally, as it sometimes does, it doesn't even necessarily have to be when you look at something beautiful. It could happen at any moment. All the natural things are more conducive to that state of consciousness.

Then you suddenly become aware of why this moment feels so alive, so good, so peaceful. Because you're in touch with the dimension of consciousness itself. Not just the form that consciousness has taken, but consciousness itself.

There's an underlying alert stillness. In that sense, nature can reconnect you with the deeper dimension of yourself. It's sometimes called the essence identity, as opposed to the form identity.

So the mastery of life is moving in the two dimensions, so to speak. Not losing yourself in the form identity with millions and millions of people all over the world. Undoing that without knowing it, completely absorbed in their mind, sense perceptions, but it all basically happens in their mind, of course.

Completely identified with that. That's the unconscious state. The strange thing is it almost seems like a paradox.

Although there are moments when beauty, you become aware of beauty, that are portals

into the unconditioned, pure consciousness awareness that you are. That is true. But as far as your life situation is concerned, the strange thing is, it's often when things are not going well on the level of form, that you're more likely to discover the dimension of essence in yourself, the formless, the stillness.

And by not going well, I mean when there's a disruption of your normal life, pattern of your normal life, so accident, illness, loss, some disruption. So on the level of form, things don't go well anymore. You can become very unhappy, that's usually the case.

But there's also the possibility that it increases your motivation to go deeper. But you don't have to wait for that here, because as you begin to awaken spiritually, you consciously choose to go to that dimension, to discover that dimension in yourself. So you don't have to wait for things to break down.

The present moment gives you access to the deeper dimension within yourself. And that starts with a little thing like, let's come back to folding the clothes. Why does that feel so wonderful and peaceful?

Because the task itself doesn't really require that much attention. You can do it, you don't have to work out mentally, how am I going to fold these pants or trousers? Or how exactly am I going to hang this shirt up?

No, you just do it, it's simple and it's easy. So a lot of your attention is left to spare. Now, most people with all that attention to spare, they go into all kinds of mind stuff.

So they're not fully conscious of what they're doing, they're just elsewhere. So I could have been here already giving a talk in my head. What am I going to say?

Well, I fold, and I wonder what's going to happen tonight. And then, when is our flight back home? Or did I let go of the menu?

What's for lunch today? What did he say to me yesterday that wasn't very kind, was it? And I really should have replied.

What should I have? I should have said this and this. That's right.

And so it's a kind of sleepwalking existence. So you're folding, okay. You're not here.

So all that attention that was to spare is absorbed by unconscious thinking. And that's normal, very normal. But it's a pity, because all that attention that is spare attention, you could have used to become aware of the fact that you are conscious.

In fact, so you become very still, and you realize that stillness is your consciousness. And then as you fold, whatever it is you're doing, your clothes, you feel this undercurrent of still, alert attention. ♪♪♪ Life without love is no life at all.

But life without love means you have not realized life, what life truly is. This questioner has a, it must be a quote from someone, but he doesn't say who, or maybe it's his own. Life without love is no life at all.

Please comment on this statement. Well, I like that statement. Life without love is no life at all.

Now, what does that mean, life without love? Love can only be there when you are connected to the source of life, who you are beyond form, stillness, spaciousness. And then from there, you perceive, you relate, you operate, you do what you do.

And there's a sense of oneness, no longer a sense of separation. You're one with the present moment. You're one with whoever you meet because the separation comes through mental concepts.

And that sense of oneness is love. It's a recognition that you share with every life form, you share the same consciousness. So it's always a self-recognition.

You see, you sense rather than see yourself in the other. That is love. And then of course you treat the other as yourself.

You love your neighbor as yourself. And you don't do to anybody what you don't want to be done to yourself. It's natural that comes out of the state of love.

And then, yes, you're not really truly alive or we could also say you're not fully human unless that dimension is there in you. So on some level, we could say human creation, the creation of the human has not yet been completed because many humans are not yet fully human. There is no love.

And why is there no love? Because they're disconnected from who they truly are because who they truly are merges with the universal divinity or the one. Who they truly are, who you truly are, who I truly am is one with the one, universal consciousness or the divine.

That's where you and the divine merge. Another way you could say it is the ray of sunlight realizes suddenly that it's not separate but realizes its source as the sun. And the ray of sunlight is not separate from the sun.

It emanates from the sun. It's not separate, but it could, let's to use this analogy, you could conceivably imagine the ray of sunlight being deluded into believing it's a separate entity and every other ray of sunlight is a separate entity with its own life because you're not in touch with the one life. So you believe that every life form has its own life.

But no life form has its own life. That's why I sometimes say, I don't have a life. You don't have a life because if you have a life, then there's you and life.

But how could you be there without life? You are life. I don't have a life because if I say my life, then I must be separate from life.

If I have life, then there's two here. There's life and there's me and I have it. It's absurd.

But that's the delusion that arises with separation when you don't realize that all life forms are expressions, manifestations of the one. And then every life form has its separate life. That's the absurdity, the delusion.

And then you create a world based on that delusion. And the kind of world you create on that delusion of separation is the world that you can read about in history books or listen to the news or look around. And so according to this quote, then that's no life at all.

That's one way of putting it, yes. It's no, life without love is no life at all. But life without love means you have not realized life, what life truly is.

All you know is separate life forms and you attribute a separate life to each life form. But they're all manifestations of the one. And you are a manifestation of the one which has no form, is beyond time.

And you can sense the one within you. And then there's love. And then you're truly alive and you're fully human.

It's only through the spaciousness that opens up that the true recognition of being in whatever life form appears in front of you, that recognition of being is there. Being recognizes itself. It disguises itself in millions of life forms, temporary disguises.

And you recognize, you look through the disguise and sometimes the disguise is very strong. That's the play of the universe. Let's really disguise ourselves.

And some humans are heavily disguised. God disguising him, her, itself very well. And with others, the disguise is not so heavy.

But the heavy disguise is more challenging. It's more fun in a way. I'm talking about, of course, difficult humans.

To recognize shared being as in a flower is of course much easier because the disguise is far, far, far less. Much easier than to recognize the shared being as when confronted with an angry human, it says, you. But there's a space for that also.

And you look, oh, give him or her the space to do their act. And you don't need to react. Let them do their act, but you don't need compulsively to react because if compulsively you react, you adopt your own, your disguise again.

And you play your part in the drama or the dream of existence. All the world's a stage. And all the men and women merely play as, or however else Shakespeare's phrase goes.

So to recognize your essential beingness is such a simple, it's so simple that it becomes difficult for the complicated humans. It's so, such a primordial fact. And then consciousness recognizes itself really.

That's what it is. And that is joyful or blissful. And so the Indian teachers, masters, they string together three words and make it into one, satitananda, being, consciousness, bliss, to describe that state of connectedness, of oneness with being.

It's very simple, too simple. And what do you access? Access also is intelligence itself, the unconditioned out of which anything new arises, an insight, an idea.

That is the place of true intelligence. I call it sometimes non-conceptual intelligence or the unconditioned consciousness. And that's where suddenly creativity opens up in your life.

Because the person is not creative. The mind is not creative, but it can be an instrument of true intelligence. And the mind has no intelligence of its own.

It borrows its intelligence from universal intelligence. So the secret then is to not lose touch with who you truly are as you go about this world, seemingly participating in the play, but knowing at the same time, not conceptually, being the space and then pretending also to be the person while you do things. So you are the space while you talk to someone, listen to someone in spacious awareness.

So you bring that dimension into the interaction. If you only did that, listening whenever other humans are talking to you, if you only did that, if you are able to use every opportunity whenever any human being talks to you, listen in spacious awareness instead of listening through mentally, immediately agreeing or disagreeing or thinking of the next thing you are going to say, or I know exactly what you need. Let me tell you what you need.

I know that already. But be there as an open field of aware presence. If you only did that, it would be enough to transform your life, your relationships with every human, because the old patterns would no longer be operating through you, would transform your relationships with all human beings.

And of course, will also help others without you feeling that you are helping, you're not doing anything, but it is an invitation to others if there's a slightest openness in the other to join you in that field of aware presence. And if they don't join you in that field of aware presence, it's fine too. But if that were your only spiritual practice, listening in that way to other, you would be enough to transform your life.

And if enough humans transform their lives in that way, then of course the world gets transformed. It's only a collective expression of the collective consciousness. So unless you live as a hermit, in other words, you never listen to anybody except your mind.

And most of you are not hermits, so you interact with people and every day you listen to people on the phone. Well, unless you get so much into texting that you don't talk to them anymore. For teenagers, I may have to think of some other way of being if they only, if they don't talk anymore.

No, no, it goes with your thumbs. You can see I haven't only had a phone for a few months of that kind, so I do like. So if that's your only spiritual practice, quite enough, just the listening.

Because whenever you listen, you are not there as an egoic entity. You're not bringing in your past. You're not even there as a person anymore.

The person recedes and you are there as awareness. And it doesn't mean that now you have to be, you can't talk anymore, no. It means then as you talk or reply or give your viewpoint, you very clearly realize that what you are giving is your viewpoint.

You don't merge with your viewpoint. And then anybody who questions or attacks your viewpoint is considered a mortal enemy because you have confused who you are with the thought in your head, which is your viewpoint, which is insane. This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive.

To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. I thought my childhood was difficult, but yours, I think, was more difficult. You had a very violent father, and so that was your primary challenge in childhood.

And without that primary challenge, you probably wouldn't be here now.

[Speaker 11] (9:24:50 - 9:26:23)

I wouldn't, and we all, you know, there were four boys in my family, and we all used different strategies to deal with the pain because he was an abusive and violent person and a wife batterer and all these things, and very unpredictable. And sometimes among us, we'd get depressed or try to use humor or whatever. I became the family peacemaker, which became my profession later on.

Anyway, but it's partly what took me to the monastery. I had a lot of suffering. And as you said earlier on, our education system focuses outwardly on reading and mathematics and science, but it doesn't focus on the heart.

It doesn't teach us either to ask who are we or what do we do with the suffering of life or the mystery of aging, none of it. And I needed something desperately. So it was really that calling inside to find some help.

And then I read these amazing books about Zen masters and I said, okay, I wanna find one and see if, you know, that can help. And fortunate, fortunately, I was actually able to

find some good teachers. And you had this remarkable experience of really doing it on your own, which is both unusual.

I mean, a lot of people try, but also, you know, in many ways, much more difficult because you didn't have anybody to talk to to say, well, what happened?

[Speaker 1] (9:26:24 - 9:34:13)

Yes, this is why I had to seek people out after that shift to understand it. So I went to Buddhist monasteries. I talked to some monks and sought other places.

I went to investigating, trying to understand. And it's through Buddhism that I understood or began to understand a lot that had happened to me, which otherwise I wouldn't have been able to understand at all. But of course, when you have a shortage of money that restricts your life, you kind of can't live where you would like to live, or there's not enough freedom of movement because there's not enough money.

There is a sense of something missing. And you see, it's not just in your mind. It's also here when you look at your bank statement, you see it's not very much there.

Going beyond the sense of lack that is an inseparable part of the ego, you need to, I believe the questioner to some extent has already done that. You need to discover the fullness of life to use Jesus' expression, which is the fullness of being, which is inseparable from the present moment. So when you go there, you can sense that abundant, another expression is abundant life that Jesus used.

You can sense this abundant life in the present moment regardless of whether there is actual abundance In this manifested dimension, you feel the abundance of life and you see, and then when you appreciate all the countless manifestations of life that are around you that you perceive with your senses, and you acknowledge the abundance of life, that's no matter whether you go out into nature, you see the abundance of nature, the abundance of brain right now that's coming down here that I can hear, there's an acknowledgement and appreciation that even a potted plant, I have a potted plant there and there's another one here, to appreciate their manifestations of the aliveness of the universe. And there's an abundance in everything.

If you live in a city, there's abundance everywhere. You can look into a shop window and you see abundance of goods there. Oh, you don't even need to go and buy them, you just appreciate it.

You go past a flower shop and you see abundance of plants and flowers and you appreciate it and you feel abundant already. But the deepest abundance is the feeling of the fullness of life. And then I believe what the questioner is asking, at times when he looks at his bank statements, the sense of lack comes back because then you see, oh, I have very little, there's not much left.

And then the mind will start creating a narrative of lack and will tell you that you've been wronged, that actually you don't have much. And that can be a great hindrance and it will diminish your power of manifestation. So what do you do when you look at your bank statement or you go to the ATM machine and you want to get out $300 or whatever it is, and it says, you put it in, it says insufficient funds.

And that's the time of, I'm not talking about right now what you can do on a practical level. The question is, as much as possible, do not succumb to the feeling of financial lack, even if there is financial lack in your life, do not succumb to the feeling of lack. And that is whatever you can do to generate a sense of abundance.

And the main thing, of course, is going within and sensing the fullness of life. Even when you look at your bank statement, you look at it, okay, that's what I, don't personalize it, don't have any kind of projection, just, this is just factually, these are the figures of what I have. And then perhaps you have a certain course of action in order to, in addition to feeling the sense of abundance, you may have to work out a certain goal that you have that may give you more abundance.

So perhaps you have something that you want to do to create more abundance. And then your manifestation can flow into that so that the sense of abundance flows into the, whatever it is that you are wanting to manifest in your life, you have to combine action and whatever technique you use or whatever method you use with relation. It is to be recommended that you combine it with some kind of action so that you can generate abundance even on this outer level.

[Speaker 13] (9:34:22 - 9:35:46)

Many of us here, and I personally feel very lucky to be able to be here, but I work, and I come from a country which is in close proximity with a lot of chaos, death and destruction, man-made, and my line of work is to do with responding to that in a humanitarian sense. So the question about access, which is basically those who have experienced such immeasurable suffering, such immeasurable loss, who have lost everything that they ever knew or had and have actually found themselves displaced across the world, they say it's the largest displacement since World War II, who could never dream of attending such a place and how to make you more accessible to people who are going through such suffering to prevent this suffering from becoming a prolonged victim identity or a prolongation of suffering but a transformation through conscious to, well, I can hardly articulate, but I think maybe you understood.

[Speaker 1] (9:35:46 - 9:49:59)

Oh, yes, yes, thank you very much. Thank you, I understand. Thank you.

Thank you. Yes, so the, as we are, as you know, the, we are attempting to reach more

people through the foundation to distribute teaching material to places where otherwise it would not get to. At the moment, we have not yet succeeded in bringing it to certain areas of the world where a lot of suffering and violence is happening, but we will attempt to do so.

But another question is how many people are actually ready for it? Because although it seems so obvious to everybody here, you might think, well, everybody must be ready for this, but the case is not everybody is ready. There will be people in those suffering countries who are ready and who have been made ready by their suffering.

Many are being made ready by their suffering. Everybody, I said it a few times, everybody in this world has a spiritual teacher. A few have an actual spiritual teacher that it might be a person or a teaching or a book.

It could be, you could be a Buddhist and you are, then the Buddhism is your teacher, or you could be a Christian and have access to the deeper dimension within the Christian teaching, then that's your teacher, or you could be a Muslim and have access to the deeper dimension that's there. My favorite, of course, being Sufism, but that's, those who have actual teachings or teachers and all the others that unfortunately their teacher is suffering. And the one tries to, you can, it's only those who are ready to go beyond suffering who are then open to the teaching.

The suffering is to a large extent self-produced by humans. That's the weird things. The humans produce their own suffering.

And it's, what is needed is a raising in the state of consciousness in certain areas of the world, but it's a refugee problem is something that is, I do not know how many of those humans who are, have been, they have been deprived of their home and all their usual surroundings. They no longer belong anywhere. They are, some of those will experience a spiritual awakening through their suffering.

Some will and others will not. And some may, if we are able to get the teaching to places like that, that may help. And perhaps you can give us some ideas too.

We might talk to you. And if you can give us some ideas of how to get it there, I think that would be extremely helpful. And I thank you for asking that question.

So let's try and see if we can do that. Now, as you probably know, one of the most challenging things in your life is other people, because they're so difficult. People are so challenging.

And for many people, one of their greatest sources of suffering or unhappiness, strangely enough, is other people. Sometimes, of course, it might be a situation, but just usually every situation is associated with certain people. But of course, another source of unhappiness, of course, could be your physical body, which might become ill.

That's a different matter. But yes, people are difficult. It's not surprising that Jean-Paul Sartre, the French philosopher, said, "'Hell is other people.'" That's the ego talking, of course. Life could be so much nicer with all these dreadful people around. And of course, these are judgments. These are judgments of the mind.

And the moment you encounter another human being, the moment you meet another human being, if you are trapped in the conditioned mind, you will very quickly have things to say about him or her. And the moment you have thought arising, you're imposing judgment, you can't really experience that human being anymore. And so that happens all the time when people meet others.

But what would it be if I could meet another human being and just look into his or her eyes without making it too obvious? Even in ordinary situations, you go to a restaurant, you go to a shop, you buy something, you pay for it. There's a brief interaction with the person you give the money to.

And in that, are you able to just look at this person for a few seconds while the transaction happens and be free of thinking? And there's suddenly a connection. There's no need to make it obvious.

You don't go like, and you don't have to tell them, I'm connecting with you on a spiritual level because they'll go, what? But it's a beautiful thing to be able to just be spacious with another human being. It's easier with a dog, obviously, because the dog does not have the screen of mind that obscures that sense of presence or beingness in the dog, the consciousness of the dog.

Humans usually have this screen of mental stuff. So it's not as easy to relate deeply. You have to penetrate the level of mind, which sometimes is not all that pleasant either.

It can be very difficult conditioning of this personality. Some personalities are very difficult and might be aggressive or whatever, but it's looking at another human being and just like this, no thought. And it's always pleasant.

It's a pleasant, suddenly you sense a connection and it's pleasant, but don't try that too soon. Start with a tree because there's nothing in the way with a tree. There's no mind.

The tree is an expression of consciousness, but the tree is very still. It's even stiller than the dog. The tree is just, it might have been there for 100 years, 200 years, 300 years.

Some trees have been there for 1,000 years. And so you can look at a tree, and by looking means, we'll do more of that after the break, but just when you look at something, you give it your attention, and there's a tree. And you give it your complete attention.

Just look at the totality of it, and then occasionally you look at little details and just be

with it and the totality of the tree without needing to impose any thought on it. You don't need to call it anything. You don't need to know the name in order to experience the tree.

You don't need to know the name of the tree. That's fine. There's nothing wrong with knowing the name of the tree, but the name of the tree can, if you are too attached to the name of the tree, can prevent you from experiencing the tree, and that is a very common thing, how the moment you name something, you think that's it, and then you don't realize there is a depth to that which the name obscures.

The spiritual teacher Krishnamurti said to somebody, the moment you teach a child the name of the bird, he or she will never see that bird again. Slight exaggeration. Of course, he'll see that bird again, but what he means is the child will lose the deeper connectedness with the bird because the label, the mental label will be in the way, and the child will mistake the mental label for it, and so the mental label keeps you trapped on the surface of reality, and so very knowledgeable people, and there's nothing wrong with knowledge, but people, let's say people are very knowledgeable about nature sometimes are so trapped in their knowledge, all they know is mental stuff about things, so they know a lot about the tree, but they never know the tree. You have two kinds of knowing. One is conceptual knowing through labels, and one is a deeper knowing through immediate perception through awareness, and then you sense something deeper in the tree that can never be known through conceptual knowledge.

You connect with the tree in a deeper level, it becomes almost what I'm saying now. Conventionally, one would say that's just a mystical thing to say or it's a poetic thing to say, but there's a real, there's a reality behind this, and if that dimension is missing from your life, you run around the surface of reality, never connecting with anything or anybody really deeply, never sensing your connectedness with other life forms, nature, animals, humans, so it's important to develop this ability to experience without imposing labels, so you can just be with a tree and look at it.

You don't have to hug it, you can, but it's not necessary. If you will have to want to hug it, it's fine, because the touch can free you also from thinking to take your attention into the sense of touch, yes, but all the senses are involved in that experience, and then you, the trees can then teach you stillness, because the tree is so still, but you have to tune in. You can't tune in with mental labels.

You have to be there, and then there's an alertness there, and with that alertness, you not only perceive the tree, you sense the underlying consciousness of the tree, because ultimately, it's the same consciousness that is the essence of who you are, but in a different manifestation, a different frequency level, so to speak, but, and then the tree can teach you to be still, and you become, but it's not the same stillness in you as the stillness of the tree, because the tree is a long way below thought. The stillness in you is

above thought, but in there, you meet the tree.

You are above thought in presence, and the tree is long below thought in beingness, and you meet the tree, and then the tree can teach you to be still, and you can actually sense that the tree is just, oh, that's the tree, the tree would be saying, oh, if it could speak, or continuously, because that's the rootedness of, the tree is not only rooted in the soil, the tree is rooted in being, and beingness, the source of life.

[Speaker 17] (9:49:59 - 9:50:00)

It hasn't.

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[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 1:19)

Come out that far yet. So it's, it just is. Your latest book, this Lost and Found.

This is a very interesting challenge that came into your life not that long ago. The challenge was mercifully provided by one of your, or perhaps your most important spiritual teacher whose name is Bhagavan Bernie Madoff. And you, he mercifully took away from you 30 years of savings, all their life's savings to help you experience the essence of who you are.

Yeah. However, you did not immediately experience the essence of who you are.

[Speaker 4] (1:20 - 1:22)

I'd say that was an understatement.

[Speaker 1] (1:22 - 1:53)

And you describe it in the book, how it starts, and that's wonderful, I believe it's chapter one or two, beginning the incredible amount of the reaction and the fear that comes when you lose all your life's savings and you describe what it did to your state of consciousness, wonderfully explained and illustrated. I don't know if you want to talk briefly about it. And then something happened.

[Speaker 4] (1:54 - 8:04)

Yes, for those of you, those few of you who might not know who Bernie Madoff is, he ran a Ponzi scheme and actually all over the world and ended up stealing $65 billion of people's money. And as my husband is very fond of saying when he tells his stories, and not all of it is mine. So we had our, we did have our life savings in there.

And we got a phone call, or I got a phone call one day. My husband was away. We believed it was very safe.

A friend of ours was friends with Bernie Madoff, whose father was friends with Bernie Madoff. And anybody could put, in our particular fund, anybody could put anywhere from $600 or $1,000 to whatever amount you had in this fund. And we just kept on putting all of our money in there because our friend had been in it for 30 years.

And also, as my husband says, that you start believing in gravity when every time you throw a ball up in the air, it comes down every time for 30 years. So we absolutely believed it was safe. And then it wasn't.

And then we got the phone call saying it was gone. And I was shocked and in terror, I

think. First I was shocked and then hysterical.

And then in terror. And then I called a couple of very dear friends and teachers who I would say, we've lost all our money. And this was very soon after the phone call.

And two of them said to me, you've lost your money, but nothing of any value is gone. And I said in that moment to both of them, now is not the time to be spiritual. Farewell.

I was convinced, I was like, don't give me that. We've lost our money. What are we gonna do?

We're gonna be homeless. We're gonna be out on the street. And what are we gonna eat?

And it was such a panic. And I started very soon realizing that it was going to be unbearable to live inside my mind. That I could not, absolutely could not live inside the mind that was telling me, what did you do?

I can't believe you did that. What's the matter with you? How come you didn't diversify?

Even a four-year-old knows to diversify. And I started blaming, of course, everybody and then myself. And the ranting and the raving was so intense that I understood pretty immediately within a day that unless I brought myself back to what I had, not what I had lost, to what I could find instead of the money that I couldn't, what was already here, which is that animating aliveness or that indwelling aliveness that I've heard you speak of, unless I could bring myself back moment to moment to moment every single time my mind wandered, then I was gonna be lost.

I was going to be living in abject terror. When I wrote Lost and Found and when I traveled around and went on tour about it, I found that talking about money was very difficult, not for me at that point, because I became so interested in money after this that I would talk to people in the grocery store. So, what do you think about money?

And tell me about your relationship with money and how much money do you make? And do you and your spouse talk about? I just became fascinated with it like I became fascinated with food, as a point of departure, so to speak, or as a doorway into what we believe about scarcity and deprivation and what we're allowed to have and be.

And when I first started talking about food, which was in 1978, people didn't wanna talk to me except for those people who were willing to talk to me. With the rollers in my hair, they were willing to talk to me, but most people when I would say, it's not about willpower and it's not about force and deprivation, it's about using it as a doorway into who you are really there was a, no, it's about willpower and it's about calories. And with money, I found that I was almost had turned back the clock 30 years and so that it was a similar, no, I'm not talking about money, sort of like with me, there's spirituality and then

there's money.

So I'm wondering what you think about that just in terms of why money is such a difficult subject really to bring, why people are more willing to talk about their sex lives and in great detail, mind you, and what they've eaten and not eaten and binged and not beaten and including things like stealing food and all of that rather than talk about money. So I'm curious about what you think about that.

[Speaker 1] (8:05 - 9:24)

Well, it is true that in for many people, the mention of it can bring about an immediate loss of awareness, even in people who otherwise have already embraced awareness in many aspects of their lives. And still there remains that there's a fear that coagulates around that money idea and that's the fear, I would say, of survival. Yeah.

And there is also an egoic trait that's one of the most essential traits of the ego, not enough. Not enough is one of the most deep seated ego traits. Every ego has that.

And for many people, the not enough refers to money. It could refer to many other things, not enough food, not enough whatever. The ego never feels it has enough.

And that's particularly manifests in the area of money because money is neutral, but it can become anything in the world of form almost. And so it triggers the insufficiency, the feeling of not enough of the ego.

[Speaker 4] (9:25 - 9:28)

Spirituality is fine. And then there's money.

[Speaker 1] (9:29 - 9:29)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (9:29 - 11:44)

Yes. And also that awakening, so to speak, becoming fully alive to the aliveness was not possible for me in this lifetime. That's what I believed.

Yes. I believed I could work at, that I would always be sort of like a little busy beaver. I would be working at it and efforting at it and I would be meditating.

And even though I didn't really like meditating very much, I still wanted to be a good spiritual student. And so I'd keep on trying and trying, but that it wasn't, even though intellectually I heard, yes, of course, it's your true nature. I still believed, well, maybe it's not my true nature.

Maybe it's everybody else's true nature, but it's not true, true nature because it's not

really mine. And I think it took this to experience that that aliveness, that indwelling aliveness is, if I'm not aware of it, it's just a bat of an eyelash away. And that it is possible for every human being.

I always feel like if it's possible for me, it's possible for anybody because I feel like I've just about been as crazy as any of the people I've met who have come to my retreats and workshops for 30 years. I mean, I've done it all. And so I feel like, okay then, all right then.

What Eckhart has been saying is true. It's not just a line. It doesn't just sound pretty.

It's true because here it is in this moment with no money, not a penny, here it is.

[Speaker 1] (11:45 - 24:27)

Yes, I experienced that on the park bench often. The intense happiness of simply the joy of being in that moment where the mind, if it had come in, and occasionally it did just briefly, it said, what are you doing? And shouldn't you be looking for some work or do something?

But the thought didn't have any force behind it anymore. So I don't know, it just didn't come. I could have remained that, in which case I would have become quite dysfunctional and still be happy.

But after a while, then doing happened again. I was able to do and initiate things and respond to whatever the present moment brought. And then I became a normal person again, at least on the surface, on the outside.

Oh yes, can you speak about how to be in this world with this constant push for connectivity? How did we get to the most profound things from a relatively simple question? Oh, yes, we talked about doing and being without feeling that being present is another thing to do.

How do you be in this world without this constant push for connectivity? Well, the first thing is you turn off your push notifications. That's already a big step forward.

And you need to be disciplined in the use of your device, your phone, whatever, tablets, phone, so that it doesn't take you over because it's simply an extension of your life. It's an extension of the mind. And if it wasn't enough before we invented these devices, humans had already been taken over by their minds.

Even 2000 years ago, not as much as now, but even 2000 years ago, Jesus said, why are you always thinking about tomorrow? Why are you always worried about the next thing? Look at the flower, look how it lives.

In total alignment with the present moment. And it's being sustained by the one

consciousness. That's my translation of it.

So already then, humans had been taken over by mind, but even more so since then, mind has proliferated. And then the clever human mind came up with these devices. It said, let's extend ourselves into the realm of things.

And then we can create this, which is an extension of the human mind. So when you, you might have noticed when you're with yourself, you have the voice in the head, unless you begin to awaken, in which case you're able to experience spaces of alert, still presence. It's beautiful.

But otherwise you have this thing, commenting, talking, arguing. And then this becomes a burden for many people. Of course it is a burden because a lot of the stuff it says is actually not pleasant.

And so you experience it as a burden. And since you derive your sense of identity from it, it becomes yourself. This talking voice, you think that's you.

It becomes the self. And you walk around with this burden of the self. And in order to unburden yourself, one thing you can do, you think you can do, is you can watch the television or you can go on, there are countless things that you can watch on the little screen.

The entire world's knowledge at your fingertips. And the moment you watch the screen, whether it's television or whatever screen, you might have noticed that your own, your so-called own thought processes come to a stop. So to some extent, you're free of the self.

This is why people sometimes find watching television relaxing. Say, okay, I just need to relax now, just turn it on. By this they mean, while they watch the television screen, they are not burdened by their self-induced thought processes.

What they do, however, they replace their own thoughts with the collective thoughts. So they just, you're in a state, you're not in a state of thoughtless awareness when you watch television or you watch something on the screen. You absorb the thoughts from there into your mind and you link into, so for people often in a state of semi or hypnosis when they watch, it kind of paralyzes you.

It can also happen with the screen, with television already started, of course. I don't know when, whenever, 60 years ago, whenever television started and you go. And so your mind is just absorbing whatever is playing.

It's the TV mind, which is receiving stuff from wherever it comes from, is going into your mind and you become no longer thinking your own thoughts. Occasionally you might, you say, oh, this guy is so stupid. And then you're watching again.

And then another thought, why am I watching this rubbish? Half an hour later, this is so awful. But you can't turn it off.

Here's the remote. Let's just try one more channel. There might be something else there.

Oh no, that's stupid. Try one more. This is how an addict behaves.

And the device is even more addictive. You carry them with you and you have to admit, you may have to admit that there is an addiction in you. Not everybody here, but quite a few.

It would be almost normal to feel this draw towards it and you use it even when you don't need to use it. That's the amazing thing. When you're standing at the elevator waiting, so another person is standing next to you and he or she is pulling out the phone and then you pull out yours.

You don't know why. You don't know why. Or anywhere you're in a, you're waiting, you're ordering a tea or coffee somewhere and you're standing in line.

And if you look around, there's almost nobody and probably nobody who is not looking at this little thing. This is scary, zombie-like. Now, if somebody from the past, the so-called past, time traveler from the past came here and even not the distant past, let's just say even 20 years ago, and he arrived and would see in the streets, in restaurants, in cafes, everywhere, public transport, people walk around with these things, staring at these things.

Say, what's that? Something has happened to humanity. They've all become zombies.

Something terrible must have happened. What was that? These are wonderful devices, the incredible possibilities of having access to all kinds of knowledge, but there's always the downside.

There's a huge, huge downside to it. They are addictive. They stimulate the mind.

The thing you want to become free from, you want to become free of mind, and this will prevent you from becoming free of mind. So you need to be disciplined enough to not automatically look at it whenever there's a moment and you're waiting for something or whatever it is. There's no need to check these things.

I don't even know what they are, but I just know that Facebook is the biggest thing, and then there's Instagram and Snapchat and countless names, and some people have all of them on their phones, and you need to know the latest thing. Crazy. But if you detect the addiction in yourself, then you have to, first of all, admit that you are addicted.

Don't deny it. You know, Alcoholics Anonymous, the first thing when you go there, you have to say, I am an alcoholic. Now, some people say, well, that's not a good thing

because your identity is not being an alcoholic.

Of course not. So it could be misunderstood, but your nature is not being an alcoholic. It is your present condition is that, but to recognize the problem, the difficulty, the challenge is just you stated, yes, I'm addicted to this phone, and I choose not to be addicted, and then you can be the only one in many places who is not looking in waiting rooms, waiting in line, whatever it is, waiting on the phone for somebody to talk to you, and in the meantime, but you use this beautiful thing of just being, just being present, and you look around and you step out of thinking, and all the others are still in the hypnotic state. So practice not to use it unless there is a true purpose. If you want the answer to something in a conversation, there's a what is what, then you can get the knowledge.

You have the world's encyclopedia there, then you can look it up. Okay, that's how it is. And then you put it away again.

There are some apps that are meditation apps. I want to check them out a bit more. I have a few on my phone, but I haven't tried them yet.

They've been there for a year or two. And that would be something great. It transformed something that otherwise would amplify your mind.

It transforms it into its opposite.

[Speaker 6] (24:54 - 25:03)

Do you believe in the law of attraction and manifestation? Where is this coming from?

[Speaker 3] (25:07 - 27:24)

Do I believe in the law of attraction and manifestation? I want to say yes, and I want to say no, because on the no level, it is the mind can want something, and you can also get it, but it's not coming from your true self. So there is a law that our thoughts can be projected and then manifested.

Yes, I do see that, and that's not a belief. It's actual, I see that. There are many things that I have wanted in my life and in growing up that I have received because I wanted it so badly.

But going through that, some of those things, I saw that they weren't such good experiences. So we can attract something through the mind, and it won't be really what our heart, our consciousness really desires and wants. And usually that consciousness that really desires and wants is not a selfish desire, but is a desire that would be not of and for ourself.

And then in that sense, that manifestation is a sacred manifestation. It's a holy

manifestation. Have you ever heard of the saying, be careful what you wish for?

[Speaker 6] (27:27 - 27:30)

I think I know what it means, but I've not really like heard it.

[Speaker 3] (27:31 - 27:33)

Okay, so what do you think it means?

[Speaker 6] (27:34 - 27:35)

Can you say it again?

[Speaker 3] (27:38 - 27:39)

Be careful what you wish for.

[Speaker 6] (27:41 - 27:46)

To be exact of what you want, or I'm not sure.

[Speaker 3] (27:47 - 28:13)

Okay, so the saying, be careful what you wish for means that you could want something. I'm just trying to find an example that you could maybe relate to. I want 10 chocolate ice creams.

Oh boy, I really want that.

[Speaker 10] (28:13 - 28:14)

So do I.

[Speaker 3] (28:15 - 30:36)

Okay, so it was a good one. Must have been channeling you. So I want 10 chocolate ice creams, and I get 10 chocolate ice creams.

So I'm eating 10 chocolate ice creams, and then suddenly I get sick and I throw up. So it means sometimes our mind, we think we might want something, and then we can get it, so we can manifest it, but then it's not really good for us. However, if you were really connected to the being instead of the desire of what the mind and maybe the ego desires, then you might have said, oh, I'll have one chocolate ice cream.

And you may eat the whole chocolate ice cream, that one, or you might just have three bites and say, that's enough. I don't want any more, because you've been fulfilled. Manifesting from consciousness rather than from the mind is completely different, and

the experience will be completely different.

Your will is completely different, because it is no longer, when you're manifesting from consciousness, it's not your will, but thy will. Thy will be done. You know that saying from the Bible, thy will be done?

So it means it's God, it's consciousness, it's Christ, it's the Buddha, your Buddha nature that is wanting this. And it's not even so much of a want, because it won't be a want in the same way. There may be a want because we are a human being, so just example of that ice cream, if you're from consciousness and we have a human being, so we have these little human cravings, chocolate ice cream, but it won't be 10, it'll be one or a half or just a bite.

So does that help you?

[Speaker 6] (30:37 - 30:37)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (30:37 - 30:39)

What do you wanna manifest, by the way?

[Speaker 6] (30:39 - 30:53)

Well, I play tennis, and I have a vision board, and I even make little trophies made from paper, just using staplers and crayons.

[Speaker 3] (30:54 - 35:31)

So you wanna become a tennis pro? Yes. Ah, well, you know, that's not a bad thing to wanna manifest.

I mean, this is something that, a desire that you have. So I would say go for it, you know? Just don't think that when you get it, it's going to make you completely happy.

You'll receive and get some happiness from it, especially say if you win, you go, ah, yeah, right, I won. But life is about challenges, and it's about learning, so there'll be times that maybe you won't win, and you'll have to learn from that. So when you do your vision board, it's best when you make these vision boards that you also leave it open to the universe.

Okay, I'll give you an example. When I was kind of through the different men, I decided to make a list of what I wanted in a man, and I actually got it, and I got Eckhart. But, you know, what we try to manifest and what we try to think we want is never complete, because I forgot to put, I want somebody who cooks.

I'm serious. I mean, after, when you're in a relationship, you're thinking, if you don't wanna do all the cooking yourself, at least I didn't, and I want, you know, I didn't put down I wanted a man to clean. I listed other aspects, which I got.

So we're always, on a human level, going to forget something. So this is what I mean by, it won't quite make you completely happy, but you can receive and get happiness from it. Just, you know, leave it also open to the universe.

When we make goals, it's okay to make a goal, but then leave it open, because maybe life knows better than we do. Hmm. So we make a goal, but we kind of just leave it open-ended.

Many years ago, as Eckhart was growing in his talks, there was an organizer, and he said to me, he rented a, I can't remember, I think it was like a 2,000 venue size that held 2,000 people. And I was talking to him on the phone, and he said, I'd be happy if I got 1,000 people. I didn't say anything, but I thought, well, why did he rent a 2,000 venue if he'd be happy with 1,000?

I didn't say anything. I just went, oh, okay. Anyways, we got 1,000 people.

He got his 1,000 people. But what would happen if he said, I'd like to fill this venue, but then just leave it, leave it to the universe, whether it filled or whether it didn't fill. It didn't matter.

It's the universe that is in action when we want the will of the universe. Have that. Make that your primary focus.

So you can have this wish and desire to be a pro tennis player. It's wonderful. I used to love tennis myself.

So that's wonderful, and you make that vision board. But then, in your own mind's eye, also leave it open. Leave yourself open.

And just say, you know, I want this, but I'm also okay with having more, and I'm also okay with having less. I want the will of what's best for me as consciousness. Coming through this form, this body, this mind.

Because maybe there's something even greater for you. And we just don't, you just don't know that yet. We can't foresee that.

So you just make those goals, but leave it open to the will of God. And that God is you. It's within you.

[Speaker 6] (35:33 - 35:36)

Thank you. Did that help you? Yes.

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (36:01 - 43:42)

This table doesn't mean anything. This flower doesn't mean anything. This room doesn't mean anything.

What does all that mean? Well, let's see, cause and miracles. And the purpose of the cause and miracles Miracles is to bring you to a place where the words are not needed anymore.

It meets you, or not you personally, but the human being. It meets the human being where the human being is in the realm of thought. The Course in Miracles would say that otherwise there's no meeting at all.

It has to first of all meet the human being where it can be reached, and that is in the realm of thought. In the same way that a psychiatrist, in order to reach a deluded patient, there's no point in the psychiatrist telling the patient, I am telling you, you are not Napoleon. That will only strengthen the delusion of the patient that he is Napoleon.

He will never reach the patient. But if the psychiatrist for a little while enters the mind of the patient and says, okay, so you are Napoleon, suddenly there's a meeting. Once they have met, because the psychiatrist has entered the delusional system of the patient, once they have met, there's a possibility for him to take him out of the delusion.

If they never meet, nothing can be done. In the same way, the Course in Miracles is attempting to reach people where they are in the realm of thought, and gradually take you out of thought. But throughout the Course, thought is still used, but more and more in the later lessons, it points to the stillness.

And towards the end, the final lessons, it says, the use for words is almost over now, towards the end of the Course in Miracles. So it takes you, it's designed to take you into presence or stillness. So if you can enter presence or stillness right now, or wherever you are, if you already have presence and stillness, spacious awareness in the background of your life when you deal with people and situations, you don't need the Course in Miracles.

If you can enter stillness when you're not being disturbed, but as soon as you interact with people, you lose presence, awareness, or stillness, then the Course in Miracles may still be useful, because it has certain lessons that can be used as pointers. For example, one lesson, I remember, it says, in a situation where you feel upset or angry or irritated, it says, you can say, I could see peace instead of this. I could see peace instead of this.

It's a pointer. The words don't miraculously produce peace, but the words are pointing to the possibility of approaching that situation in a different state of consciousness. So

really, the words are pointing to a different state of consciousness.

It's not in the words, it's that to which the words point. And as the Buddhists tell us correctly, the finger pointing to the moon is not the moon. Only the dog might think that the finger pointing to the moon is the moon, because if you tell the dog, go there, most dogs will look at your finger.

So it's not the...the words are pointers. And particularly useful, Course in Miracles, for human interaction, it really uses relationships as spiritual practice, and that's a good thing. So many lessons can be applied to relationships, and you need it, or if the course is right for you, it's definitely not for everybody, but it might be useful for some people who still find that they have a lot of conflict with other people, and a lot of upset with other people.

So you can bring the lesson into relationships. If you don't have that anymore, of course you don't need the Course in Miracles. And even if you...if you understood deeply, or could practice deeply, just Lesson 1 of the Course, it has 365 lessons, just do Lesson 1, nothing that I see here means anything. That's what the lesson tells you. So, this table doesn't mean anything, this flower doesn't mean anything, this room doesn't mean anything, what does all that mean? It means you're giving up all your interpretations and judgments, you're approaching, you're cleaning the blackboard of your mind, erasing all the scribbles on it, or let's say, or let's call it deleting all the noise on the tape, no they don't have tapes anymore, they delete all the digital signals, whatever they have in your mind, nothing that I see here means anything, takes you to a place of not knowing anymore, and what's left when nothing means anything? You're not thinking anymore.

Now, if you deeply, could do deeply Lesson 1, you don't need anything else, because it would stop your mind from its useless interpreting and judging and so on. So in your own life, if you feel, have you already practiced the Course in Miracles lesson? If you still find difficulties in relationships with other people, you can still use it, then it can take you, it can eliminate, help you to become more conscious there.

In the end, it takes you to the essence of this teaching, which is awareness, pure awareness or stillness, and that's the end of, and also by the way, the Course says, this Course is the beginning, not the end. So it takes you to that place where you open yourself up to awareness, which can then flower through you. If it's for you, it's definitely not for everybody.

[Speaker 8] (43:43 - 43:50)

I use these sentences when I feel I'm getting angry now, so I say some sentence and push it down.

[Speaker 1] (43:51 - 44:37)

Yes, but don't push it down, don't push it down, just, you can say the sentence and then allow it to dissolve, if that's what it wants, because if you get upset or angry and try to hold it down, it'll build up. Don't hold it down, just allow it to dissolve, different approach, never attack an inner state, never attack any emotion that arises, because it creates resistance again. Allow it to be, and then if it's not resisted, it dissolves, lovely practice.

Now you asked something else about prayer, the Indian man behind you.

[Speaker 8] (44:38 - 44:45)

And in general, prayers, is this talking to me, or how do you explain prayers?

[Speaker 1] (44:52 - 54:38)

That's a huge topic, of course, prayer, in the way this, he uses prayer as a kind of repetition, a kind of mantra perhaps. The good thing about it, of course, is that it stops your mind from doing other things, like indulging in fear-producing thoughts, or negativity-producing thoughts, so it stops your mind from that, but ultimately, that kind of thing, for us, for anybody, has to be left behind. When Jesus said, pray unceasingly, or pray without ceasing, that does not mean, because it would be absurd, that he's telling you to continuously pray, pray without, he's using prayer in a very different sense, but it's possible that people who wrote down what he said misunderstood, because they didn't realize the truth in themselves.

Jesus teaches presence, teaches, points continuously to the present moment, the importance of the present moment, and the importance of staying awake. There are parables about going to sleep, not going to sleep, but staying awake. Jesus says, the truth will make you free, which implies that right the way you are, you are not free, because you are run by the conditioning of your mind.

So, all the basic teaching is there, you just have to see it. Repetitive prayer, if you need it, that's what you will practice. And a time will come when it's no longer right for you.

Any meditation method can be helpful, let's talk about meditation, you have a method, some people count while they meditate, from one to nine, from nine to one, from one to six, from six to one, they count their breaths, or they do this or that, have a mantra that they repeat in their minds, which keeps out other kinds of thinking. Now the purpose of a mantra is not to be stuck with a mantra, but to eventually let go of the mantra. The mantra reduces all thinking to just one thought movement, so you can focus on that, and then it's meant to be dropped.

When you drop the one thought that was left, first your mind was full of all kinds of thoughts, then the guru comes and says, I will give you a mantra, you repeat every day 500 times, and if you do that, it brings your mind to a one-pointedness. Some people then get attached to the mantra, my mantra, no, then you are meant to, at some point,

the guru will point out, it's time for you to let go, because what is left when all your thoughts have flown into one thought form, and then that one thought form is dropped, just awareness is left. So it can be, take you there, if you don't get stuck on the way.

If you get stuck on the way, then you're stuck until you suffer a bit more again. So let's leave it at that. It's knowing when to let go of something that is helpful for a while, like a ladder, you climb up a ladder, and then you don't need it anymore.

Or the Buddha has a famous example of a raft you use to cross a river. The raft in the Buddha's, when the Buddha uses the parable of the raft, he's talking about the teaching, Buddhist teaching and Buddhist practice. So you use the raft to cross the river.

When you have crossed the river, you don't carry the raft around with you, it's heavy, that there's the point where you let go of the raft, and there's complete freedom then. Whether you still call that Buddhism, or whether you still call yourself a Buddhist, it's up to you. But suddenly, there's freedom.

That something is helpful for a while until it's a hindrance, any kind of practice. And in the end, there's just awareness, presence, consciousness. And some gurus teach that directly.

They don't give you, they hardly give you any technique. And that's for certain people who are ready for that, that's fine. So it's what you feel drawn to is what is right for you.

And then know when it's time to let go. So on the level of doing or becoming, there are certain things still perhaps that you want to achieve. There are maybe certain things that you want to become.

You might be at right now, you might be engaged in learning this or that. Music or some whatever, some science, some skills, whatever it is, dance, engineering, astronomy, astrology. You can't immediately be a master at that.

That involves becoming, and it involves doing. So you're not complete on the level of becoming yet. And that level of doing and becoming is one part of life.

The emphasis in this teaching is not on becoming, not because I reject becoming, but because what the world needs more at this time, because the balance is totally lost, what the world needs more is the awareness of being, the being awareness, so that a balance can happen in the world, whereas most of the world is lost in becoming and doing. Go to any big city, and they're all running around. And they're all becoming.

Now it might be for a few years, it might be exhilarating, but then the frustration sets in and your body begins to suffer and become ill. We are constantly achieve the next thing. Part of becoming is what I often describe as always the next thing, never this.

This is never fully acknowledged because the full acknowledgement of the present moment belongs to the being realm. So a person who is constantly engaged in becoming can never fully acknowledge the present moment, because he or she is always running away from the present moment. And there is, of course, there needs to be the balance between, yes, you're going somewhere, you have a life goal, or either a huge life goal or a limited life goal, like you want to learn this or that subject.

You have that life goal, but as you pursue that goal, whatever it is, are you losing continuously the present moment? So you're no longer, you're never comfortable with the is-ness of the present moment. You never see the, except perhaps for brief glances, you never see the beauty around you and the aliveness.

There's never a full appreciation of the miraculous nature of life that is always around you. That's because you're too absorbed in becoming.

[Speaker 2] (55:47 - 1:16:23)

Let's come into the present moment, accept what is, whether it's sunny or bright or dark, it is what it is. And entering the meditative state, which is a state of presence, all you have to do, and it's not even doing, is to become aware of yourself. Now there are different levels to that awareness.

So what does it mean, becoming aware of yourself, and what are the levels? Of awareness? Well, first you're aware of your body, the external body, that's yourself, one level of yourself.

And then you notice you may already have an opinion about your body. Like it or dislike it. And that's already the next level of awareness, which is awareness of your thoughts.

So you have certain thoughts that tell you something about your body. So there's already interpretation, which is in the mind. And that level of thought very often complicates what essentially is very simple out here in external reality.

It interprets, it objects, it likes and dislikes, it says, I want, I should, you should, you should not have, I should not have. And many other things. An entire sense of identity builds up around your thought patterns.

Habitual thoughts, reactions, and so on. Leading to another level of awareness, which is the emotional level, which is linked to the level of thinking. There's an enormous difference, whether you're aware of your thoughts and emotions, or whether the thoughts and emotions just appear and take you over so completely.

And that's all there is of you. So to become self-aware, first of all, means to become aware of, yes, your self as the physical body, of yourself as habitual, or whatever, thinking, emotions. And that's already a great game, to become aware of those things,

rather than to completely be those things.

And then at the deepest level, you are aware of your own awareness. You're aware of yourself as a presence with no particular form. And that really is the essence of meditation.

You can be aware of yourself as I speak, and as you listen. Be aware of yourself as the presence that makes the visual and auditory perception possible. There's a presence there.

You may be dreaming up this very thing. And yet, even if you're dreaming right now, what's happening right now, there is still, there has to be a consciousness, a presence, in which the dream, in the light of which the dream appears. It doesn't really make any difference whether it's all a dream, or whether it's all real, or something in between.

What matters is that you are aware of the essence of yourself. Otherwise, you mistake many things that are not the essence of yourself, which is who you really are. You mistake those things for who you are.

And then you're totally in the grip of whatever arises in your mind, in your mental and emotional field. Because that's what ego means, to be totally in the grip, totally identified with whatever arises in your mental and emotional field. That's the ego, a misperception of who you are that needs to defend itself, and enhance itself, and protect itself continuously.

Reaffirm its identity through continuous thinking, very often, despite, you know, very often, unpleasant and negative. And yet, you're stuck with it, defending your mental positions all the time, fighting for your life, your psychological survival, survival of your ego entity, which is made out of thought, and just being wrong in an argument, it's a terrible defeat. It's an injury to your sense of self.

So, living like that, you can call unconscious, not knowing who you are. You could even say it's being deluded. And it leads to an enormous amount of problems that are generated by the egoic entity.

An enormous amount of misery, of unhappiness, drama. It's all unnecessary. Life is challenging enough as it is, without adding all that unnecessary reactivity to it.

Every challenge that life presents you with, and it does that, you get challenged through situations, and through people. You get challenged the moment you are born. And not only humans, every life form gets challenged.

And survival of the physical form is always precarious. But you amplify the life challenges enormously through unconscious thinking and reactivity. A small challenge becomes a huge one.

And it creates additional, your, the way in which you respond or react to a situation, determines subsequent events. So, if you amplify through your reactivity, you amplify a challenge that leads to further challenges. So, one small thing can then grow and proliferate into something big.

So, your degree of awareness, you can easily measure it, get a sense of where you are at, by becoming aware how you react to everyday situations. Especially challenging ones. Small challenges, mostly small challenges, occasionally a big one.

Small challenges mean challenge. It means something doesn't go the way you would have expected or wanted it to go. Somebody doesn't do what you expected him or her to do or say, expected, should have said, omitted this or that.

You're waiting too long on the phone, trying to talk to your bank. All little challenges. People are not, people who are supposed to do work for you, don't do it the way they should be doing it.

They're unreliable. Hundreds of little things continuously arise. So, the question is, can you deal with a situation in a way that is free of reactivity, so you remain peaceful and can still deal with it.

If there's something to do, something, there's nothing to do, just isn't, nothing you can do about it. Any reactivity or complaining mentally or out loud is unnecessary baggage that you carry around. So, as you know, continuously, but people don't do or say what you're supposed, they're supposed to do and say, according to your mind.

And then the complaining starts in your mind. And then it goes, might become verbal complaining. All that is unconscious living.

Awareness becomes obscured. The moment you get challenged, that can happen to people who are meditators, to meditate for half an hour a day or whatever. And yet, the moment you get challenged by life, awareness is completely obscured.

So, the question is, in daily life, not just here, but this is a kind of training ground for daily life, where do you sense your identity, who you are, where do you sense that? Do you sense that on the level of thinking and opinions, likes and dislikes, and memories and expectations, as most egos do? Or do you sense a deeper identity, a deeper sense of who you are, deeper than anything that arises in the field of thought, a presence.

That presence is not threatened by all those things that the ego cell is threatened by. So, the practice, the spiritual practice is really a continuous one. And the greatest practice is daily life.

The greatest spiritual practice is not when you sit in meditation. One could almost say it's a preparation for the spiritual practice.

[Speaker 1] (1:16:50 - 1:56:43)

Okay, I have so much to deal with here. I need to do that first, and then I can, when my plate is empty, because you have so much on your plate now, as the expression goes, and of course, the plate is never empty. Before they came up with all the digital devices, there was only the human, the busy mind.

So, creating one thought after another, keeping you trapped in content, the content of the mind, so that your entire life was content-based, no spaciousness. Of course, there was already television, has been around for a long time. And when I talked to Arianna Huffington last week, she said what she used to do for many years, the moment she opened her door, the door to her apartment, she would turn on the TV news.

So, come in the door, news. So, that's one way of filling up your mind continuously, avoiding any moment of stillness, presence. And now, of course, the television has been around for a while, radio.

And then came all the devices that we have now, that can amplify the tendency of the human mind to live exclusively in the realm of content. So, you get continuous input of stuff, in other words, for content, so that you get the input from your emails and text messages, each one very, very important. And I'm sure much more important than this talk, according to the mind, more pressing than a talk about waking up.

All the mind is, I can do both things. I can do, I have developed the ability to text and email, and at the same time, I know exactly what you're talking about. I could repeat, if you ask me afterwards, although I have been texting, I could repeat to you what you've been talking about.

And this may be true. Maybe you could repeat what I was talking about, and on that level, you took it in, but you would have missed a much more important level, which is not the words, but an energy field that comes with the words. It is behind the words and in between the words.

That's really it. And so you, unfortunately, you would miss that. So, you would take only in the teaching on the level of stuff, because the words are also stuff, but it's a particular kind of stuff that points beyond stuff, not self-serving stuff.

But if you only take it in as stuff, then it's just more stuff, interesting perhaps, or not that interesting. I've heard that before. So, I might as well send another email.

And you wrote that in your book, didn't you? The now is very important. I read that years ago.

What else can you tell us? So, I have plenty of time for more text messages, because I've heard all that before. Okay.

So, that's one level of being here or not being here. So, you would miss the more important dimension, because the words are secondary. And all the words really point to is a particular inner state.

So, while you listen, if it works for you, that inner state of spaciousness arises. But you have to be really there with your attention, because it is the state of that spaciousness is the attention. It is the alert presence.

So, as you sit here, the alert presence needs to be there. This cannot be there if you are texting, then you're only taking in the words, the information. So, the most essential thing here is the alert presence.

So, all the words point to the alert presence. Sometimes the words point to obstacles that may arise to prevent you from being in the alert presence, so that when they arise, you recognize them. That's fine.

But the very essence of being here is a deepening of that state of consciousness. And the mind, the egoic mind can very easily convince you that it has more important things to think about than presence. I've got so much on my plate.

Interesting expression. I've got so much on my plate. I can't deal with all this now, present.

Maybe when I've sorted out all the stuff that's going on when my plate is empty, then I can deal with it. It's a very common mind pattern. Jesus already talked about it.

He had these stories of a man who was invited to a wedding feast and he comes up with excuses why he can't go to the wedding feast. And always what he says, or different people are invited and different people are asked and each person has a different excuse. And the excuse always starts with the words, it's in the gospels.

The excuse always starts with the words, let me first, I have to sell my cows and my oxen. Let me first sell my cows. Let me first, even one second, let me first bury my father.

But there's always, let me first do this before I can do, before I can accept your invitation. The mind always can set, okay, yeah, but let me first, and that is the mind pattern, which says, okay, I have so much to deal with here. I need to do that first.

And then I can, when my plate is empty, because you have so much on your plate now, as the expression goes. And of course, the plate is never empty. As you might have found, life gives you one thing after another.

In that sense, the plate is never empty, but the emptiness can only be accessed within, in the present moment. As long as you get hypnotized by the excuses of the mind, then

you can never access that dimension. So quite amazing how the gadgets can amplify the tendency of the human mind to be continuously trapped in stuff.

So before it was just, well, before radio and television, you just, you just had your mind and you could talk to other people. And then came the beginning of devices. And now the digital devices, of course, you get bombarded.

Most of humans, especially younger generation, some of the older generation too, get continuously bombarded with things that require your immediate attention. With, it comes through your phone, your smartphone in the form of, well, phone calls, but even more frequently, probably text messages, bing, bing, bong, bing. And they come in all the time and immediately go, and then it requires a reply.

And then emails, they can come in through all kinds of devices too. And then the latest postings on Facebook, your friends, very important, what they're doing right now. You need to know that.

And they need to know what you are doing right now. It's so important. Oh, and Twitter.

Tweets coming in all the time from all kinds of people. And if you're connected to these people, the youngsters get famous pop stars, you get their tweets, continuously things coming in. Or Justin Bieber is tweeting me, he says, the little girl, the girl, oh, wow.

And that's becomes a continuously filled with, there's never a moment of spaciousness because these devices amplify the tendency of the human mind to be reborn. The tendency of consciousness, one could say, to continuously be reborn into some new mental formation. And then sleep, people sleep at night.

I hear with many sleep, even with their phone on the pillow next to them or right next to the bed. And I read that when people wake up in the night or the last thing before they go to sleep, they're still sending emails and receiving emails. And, but there's a little bit, there is some hope on the horizon.

I was told I was, when I was at the conference last week in Wisdom Conference, where there are many people attending who are, who work for these companies that engaged in digital producing or digital devices. I don't know how it all functions, but, and we were told that some companies now each, for example, even in Germany, WVW, motor cars, Volkswagen, they give you company phones, which are programmed to turn off at 6 p.m. and to turn on again at 8 a.m. That's a wonderful, that's progress. That means there's some awareness here that the continuous engagement with these devices can be very harmful.

And even companies are discovering that these things can be very harmful. So our alertness really needs to be there and some discipline so that we do not become the slaves of our gadgets. There are wonderful possibilities that are opening up through

these.

They're neither good nor bad in themselves. They're wonderful possibilities of connecting with people on a certain level. It's not necessarily the real connection, but on a certain level, and consciousness, news are no longer the exclusive, no longer can just big corporations disseminate news, which used to be the case.

Anybody can now disseminate news, which is good and bad. It can be a wonderful thing. You can reach, if you have something important to say, you can put it on the net.

It could go, as the expression goes, viral. And a few days later, millions of people, you've reached millions of people. It can happen.

Now, in many cases, those things may not be very helpful that go viral. Often things that are particularly unhelpful for awakening go viral, but it could be something helpful. So we need to be very careful when we use these, have some discipline also, especially at night, so that we don't get this continuous input of stuff.

Welcome to our meditation. An interesting question to ask yourself, and you can find out the answer right now, is whether you're able to stop thinking for a few seconds or so, or whether it's impossible to find any gap in the stream of thinking. And you don't stop thinking by exercising willpower that would not be helpful.

For example, holding your breath, I don't recommend that because you, yes, you could stop thinking by holding your breath and getting very tense. And then you're feeling you're holding thought at bay like this. But the moment you start breathing again, thought will rush back in even more strongly than before.

So it's holding your breath I don't recommend. But if you're not able to just stop thinking, not that many people can do that, you may want to use something to help you to not think. And that is, for example, not holding your breath, but being aware that you're breathing, observing that you're breathing, observing the in-breath, feeling it, sensing it, and the out-breath.

And even being aware of a short gap at the end of each in and out-breath. You breathe in, hold for two seconds or so, but don't even have to do that. And out.

And there's a cessation at the end of the out-breath, a natural cessation. And then you breathe in again, and you continue to be aware of your breathing. And when you do that, you're not thinking.

That's why breath awareness is an ancient meditation method. It's also very pleasant. And then after a while, you may notice there's a sense of aliveness behind the breath, so to speak.

So if you're looking for a very simple meditation technique, observing your breath is a good one, just as inner body awareness that I've written and spoken about. They are related. If you're observing your breath, you're also becoming aware of the energy field inside your body.

It's all very pleasant, very simple, peaceful. Sometimes thinking may come back in, and if that happens, you just return your attention to your breathing. And in daily life, when you want a moment of no thought, which is extremely important to get into the habit of cultivating the state of not thinking, when you don't actually need to think, so that when you do need to think, your thinking is actually more effective, more powerful, more intelligent.

When you are connected with a deeper realm of not thinking, which is the unconditioned consciousness. So in daily life, you cultivate as much as possible, just finding brief moments of no thought throughout your daily life. You could associate it with the breath.

I call it, the briefest one is one conscious breath, as I call it, which is you breathe in, you breathe out, and while you breathe in and out, just one in breath, one out breath. And while you do that, you're just very much aware of the air flowing into the body, the air flowing out of the body. Conscious, one conscious breath, means you're not thinking during that brief moment.

And that's very significant. When you're not thinking without losing consciousness, in fact, being more alert than when you are thinking, that is finding a new dimension of consciousness within yourself. We're entering the now with our attention.

That's all there ever is. You might as well be there fully, because that's your life. Don't fall into the trap that some spiritual seekers have fallen into, who are telling themselves, if I only had a life that's more undisturbed, that I could really practice being present and practice meditation, preferably in a lovely climate, so that I'm not disturbed by unfavorable weather.

So it's, let's tell you, the tropics, there's a warm breeze, then I could really practice and become present. And especially if I get massages every day. Oh, and the purest of foods, cooked for me, or not cooked, better not cooked.

Then I could really, but life, why doesn't life give me an opportunity to, well, if you have it, it's good to be on a retreat, it's a wonderful thing. But to always look for some situation that's ideal for your spiritual practice, no. What works much better is to say this moment is ideal for my spiritual practice.

And my spiritual practice, whatever it is that I'm facing at this moment, what is the state of consciousness that I'm bringing to this moment, which ultimately is all that ever is. There is nothing else other than your experience of this moment. There never has been

anything else.

Isn't that weird? And there never will be anything else. People think the future is incredibly important, and of course, on a practical level, it has its place.

You can't do without it. But on a deeper level, the future, of course, you might have noticed, you have never yet experienced the future, but you've thought about it a lot, for years, thinking about the future, but never arrived. You cannot arrive at the future because ultimately, on a deeper level, because it doesn't exist.

Is that true? Let me think. Well, that's easy.

If the future existed, you could have experienced it. When it comes, it's the present. The past, nothing happened.

I said in The Power of Now, nothing ever happened in the past. It happened in the now. And when you remember the past, you remember it now.

There is only now. Now, The Power of Now came out for the first time 20 years ago. How is that?

Well, that was the now. Paradoxical. But in your time is something so weird.

On one level, it's everywhere. It's all consuming. It ultimately eats you up.

It burns you up. The fire of time burns you up. The body burns you up.

If you haven't noticed it already, you will in a few years. One morning, you look in the mirror. You say, what's this?

Who's this? And then you remember the apple you left on the windowsill three weeks ago. That's what happened to the apple in three weeks.

Happens to you in 30 years. Oh, shrink. Time does that to you.

Everything is consumed by time. Everything is consumed by time, Jesus calls it, where moth and rust consume. Now, he uses that as an analogy for time.

Rust, even the hardest of substances, metal, is ultimately consumed by rust. Moths, they eat up your clothes. But really, it means time is eating up everything in this material universe is being eaten up by time.

So it's everywhere. Time is, you can't get away from it. And yet, you have never experienced time.

You can only experience this moment, but you can think about time. So future exists as a thought in your head. The past exists as a thought in your head.

So future and past are necessary in order to cope with life in this dimension, undoubtedly. We could not have met here without future, where it said, at such and such a time, on such and such a day, Eckhart is going to talk here. It would have been difficult to say, one day in the now, Eckhart is going to talk in Calgary.

Let's hope you'll be there. So you need time on the practical level also. But losing yourself on that level is losing yourself on the level of the mind, the thinking mind.

To be able to use time doesn't matter that you have to be used by time. And so the transcendent dimension of consciousness that I started with when I talked is encountered when you enter the now with your attention. And okay, the now means now.

So as I'm speaking, we're entering the now with our attention. That's all there ever is. You might as well be there fully, because that's your life.

So you might as well. And here we are in this moment. You are perceiving visually, you're perceiving auditory perception, visual perception, perhaps other senses involved.

And you're perceiving the totality of this room. When this is the beginning of becoming more conscious of the present moment is to come to your senses. In order to come to your senses, you have to take some attention away from this stream of thinking.

A lot of that is useless anyway. You have to take some attention away from the stream of, you cannot be totally absorbed in your mind, as many people are throughout the day. They go through their day like sleepwalking.

They are so absorbed in their minds, which means they are not present. And they go through like, when you look at them, you can see they're not there. They might see a vague outline of you.

Or when they talk to you, they talk through the screen of their, what they think of you in the mind. So to come to your senses, take attention away from, you have to take attention away from thinking. You then become more aware of your surroundings, visual, auditory.

You might breathe, scent might be in the air or feel the breeze on your skin, this tactile, but the predominant senses are listening, hearing, and seeing. And that already takes you out of your, the trap of your mind. And then there is a moment right now when you are aware of your surroundings, or one single, sometimes it's a single thing, like a flower, the table, your hand, or it's the totality of your surroundings at any given time.

You're aware of your surroundings, and you might notice when you come to your senses, there's a momentary cessation of mental noise, which means thinking. There's a momentary cessation. It could just be for a few seconds at first.

For a moment, you are aware, you're perceiving, you're aware, but you're not thinking. You're not labeling your perceptions. That's an amazing way, an amazing shift in consciousness.

Another way of putting it is you become still, and then the perception happens against the background of stillness. It's a beautiful way to perceive things. There's a background of, and that stillness, that, in other words, is spaciousness, is not the stillness that you find when you are moving, when you get tired, and you're moving towards sleep, and then you're halfway asleep, but you're too tired to do any more thinking.

That can be a beautiful moment when you catch it. You're half asleep, and it feels so good. You're moving now towards sleep.

It feels so good, and you can't remember your problems anymore, can't think about your problems anymore. You don't remember anything anymore, and there's a moment of deliciousness, and then you're going to sleep, but this is not it. That has its place.

Of course, you go to sleep. Nor is it what you encounter when you have a few drinks. This is empty.

I'm just demonstrating. So you go. You're unhappy.

Your mind, the torture of your mind. Then you wait a few moments. You feel a little bit better.

Why? Because probably your mind slows down a bit. I have another one, and gradually you go, life is great, isn't it?

You're not thinking that much anymore. Isn't that great? So for a little while you get free of the torture, the daily torture of your mind, which is useless, but then you're moving towards eventual collapse.

That's another matter. We're not going that way here, because that way, what I just described, going towards sleep, taking alcohol or some other substance. I don't totally condemn anything.

I love a glass of wine or two occasionally. It's nice. No, but to desensitize yourself, you are falling below thought when you do that.

And that's okay. When you're going to sleep, you fall below thought. When you take excess alcohol, you begin to fall below thought.

But here, the practice of being able to come to your senses, to look around, to listen, to sense, to feel, perhaps to be aware of your breathing, perhaps to be aware of the aliveness in your body. Every cell is alive, but your attention is never there because you live in the upper part of the building of your body. You live under the roof, not unaware

of what's going on in the rest of the building.

So your attention goes into, you might feel the body at the same time. It's all part of becoming present. You look around and there is a stillness arising that is not the stillness that is the stillness below thought.

It is the stillness that is above thought. And that is spiritual awakening, to encounter in yourself right now. I'm not just talking about it right now.

Encounter in yourself the possibility of accessing that dimension where for initially brief moments, you are free of thinking, but totally conscious. That's delicious. And at first it may not last for very long, but that doesn't matter.

And you may find that even without practicing it consciously as a spiritual practice, you may find that it can also happen spontaneously in your life. For example, during certain activities that require your total presence, because these activities have a certain element of danger to them, such as climbing up a rock wall, or race driving, racing car, or surfing, probably skiing downhill. All these kinds of things require your complete presence.

So they stop the mind and you're totally there and you go. In other words, the unenlightened, so to speak, partner becomes your teacher. That is sometimes the case.

And surprisingly, often says or does exactly what you need to become conscious in yourself.

[Speaker 7] (1:56:47 - 1:58:38)

The question I have is along that process over the last couple of years, almost every one of my relationships is gone, including my relationship, my marriage of 25 years. It's like hanging by a thread at the moment. And I can't tell if it's judgment or it's discernment, because it feels like I can no longer engage in some of the behavior.

And so I'm with a crowd of people that I no longer relate to. And so what has happened is my partners, our friends have become my partner's friends where I no longer kind of engage. And so it's caused a lot of distance.

And early on in my personal growth, somewhere along the line, I had heard the line, only someone with low self-esteem stays in a relationship that doesn't meet their needs. But it's now come to the point where it feels like any need that I think this egoic identity has is going to cause suffering if I try to, even as something simple as what you're saying is offensive, it's hurting, can you please rephrase it? Even something like that seems like it's going to be misinterpreted.

It's going to feel like an attack. And maybe it's riding on judgment that's just slightly

beneath my consciousness. I suspect that's probably true.

Like there's some, whenever you speak about spiritual superiority, it brings some kind of, it's like, oh, you better pay attention there. So I don't know how much of that over the course of our lifetime, trying to get my partner to do some kind of spiritual growth work has had the exact opposite effect or anyway, that's where I'm at. She actually was coming.

I finally got her to come and it didn't happen. It blew up before. Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (1:58:40 - 1:58:42)

So, but you are still together.

[Speaker 7] (1:58:43 - 1:59:00)

Um, we're, we, in the last year we had a big windfall. I did some, one of your manifestation processes, a big house just showed up and we're in two different houses now. I'm in a big house by myself.

I don't want it. I don't want the house. I bought the house for her basically anyway.

[Speaker 1] (1:59:02 - 1:59:04)

Well, yes, that's an interesting story.

[Speaker 7] (1:59:05 - 1:59:08)

The emphasis on the word story though.

[Speaker 1] (1:59:13 - 1:59:22)

So could you, um, before I speak, have you already asked a question or not yet?

[Speaker 7] (1:59:22 - 1:59:48)

Uh, I think the question is maybe, well, number one, how do I know when it's time? If it was up to me, I would never throw in the towel for me. What's coming up is supposed to come up.

It's an opportunity for us to heal. And so I'll, I'll plant my feet, but the other person doesn't seem like that's their agenda. So when do you say it's time to let go?

I guess is the question.

[Speaker 1] (1:59:49 - 1:59:53)

And other relationships have already come to an end.

[Speaker 7] (1:59:53 - 2:00:15)

There was no formal end, just growing away, like not a drawer or a lack of connection, lack of ground to connect on, I guess. And at the same time, I feel more connected to everything. So it's like the farms are going away, but the connection to energy, it's like, I just see waves of energy.

[Speaker 1] (2:00:16 - 2:03:04)

Right. Right. Thank you.

Often that question is one form or another is often asked, when is it time to let go of a relationship or is it possible to continue in a relationship, even if there's a huge gap in the level of awareness, for example, in the two partners, there's a huge gap. Usually the best answer comes not through the decision-making process of the mind, trying to figure out what's the best thing to do. The best answer comes as a sudden realization that this is the thing to do.

Either you leave or you stay. If you live in two separate houses, of course, then it makes it a little easier to be in a relationship because you have a lot of space to yourself. And she has a lot of, he or she has a lot of space also.

So it often happens that one person, let's say two people meet, they come together, married or not married, they'll start living together. And at some point, one of them begins to grow spiritually. For some reason, there's a spiritual growth happening, the arising of awareness, some transcendence of ego.

And the other person, let's say, is staying behind. So the communication becomes a little bit more difficult. Also, as far as pain body is concerned, because the pain body in couples, for example, pain body needs the other person's pain body in order for the ultimately dysfunctional relationship to work.

The other already has gone beyond the pain body. I don't know whether you are still engaged in emotional.

[Speaker 7] (2:03:05 - 2:03:13)

I get hooked after I feel like I'm verbally attacked. If you keep misinterpreting, I'll get hooked. So there's still places where I need to work.

[Speaker 1] (2:03:14 - 2:03:29)

Yes. So it could be that the other person can provide people the training ground for you. That's what it feels like to be non-reactive.

[Speaker 7] (2:03:29 - 2:03:30)

That's what it feels like.

[Speaker 1] (2:03:30 - 2:04:20)

In other words, the unenlightened, so to speak, partner becomes your teacher. That is sometimes the case. And surprisingly, often says or does exactly what you need to become conscious in yourself.

So there's a reflection. And this can be highly, very useful. It might even ultimately, at some point, the other person may experience also the beginning of an awakening, but not necessarily.

But in the meantime, a relatively unconscious partner can teach you a lot about yourself when you observe the reactivity within yourself.

[Speaker 7] (2:04:20 - 2:04:20)

Great.

[Speaker 1] (2:04:26 - 2:05:54)

So unless something else comes to you that is beyond any doubt, and I very rarely make recommendations as far as people's personal lives are concerned, but I'll make one now. So I would continue for a while and allow the person to reflect back to you the things that you need to still become conscious of by provoking you. And often that is the case.

And you have some space. If you can't take any more, you go to a house. The comfort zone is not conducive to any kind of deepening.

Through resistance you suffer, or your presence deepens, because it has to. Many of these things are regarded as negative, but they're actually exactly what you need.

[Speaker 13] (2:05:58 - 2:06:15)

My question is, how does one remain centered in stillness when we might be surrounded by and asked to engage mentally and emotionally with others who are not?

[Speaker 1] (2:06:16 - 2:12:20)

I assume that this situation happens to you quite often, because you're asking the question. And of course, it's a very common thing for people to find themselves in such situations. Let's assume then it's, these are human beings that you cannot easily, or you don't want to, to separate yourself from, like could be family members, or it could be people you work with.

Those two situations are often situations where you feel you want to continue to interact with these people, or you have to interact with these people, but it's getting difficult,

because you can, there's toxicity, or there's a lot of unconsciousness, egos, fight against other egos, and so on. Let's just for a moment put aside the more extreme manifestations of such situations. There are situations, whether it's family members or at work, there's some extreme situations that are so destructive and toxic that you, the only healthy and sane course of action would be to remove yourself.

So, if it's an extreme situation, let's say you're in a relationship, the relationship is sometimes violent, there's physical violence, or there's repeated emotional violence, that's an extreme situation, or you are at work, the company that you work for is, the environment, the energy is so toxic and negative, that just going into that office, you feel the weight of it, and the pull of that negativity, and it's full of ego battling each other.

So, in certain extreme situations, I would recommend that you remove yourself from this, because I mentioned that at first, because I want to put that aside, we need to know extreme situations involving emotional violence, physical violence, whatever it may be, you have to take responsibility and remove yourself from that situation. But many situations, and I assume in your case, perhaps it's not that extreme. So, what remains is normal human unconsciousness, not the extreme forms of unconsciousness.

So, to deal with normal human unconsciousness, again, be aware when you are interacting with people, realize that you may not always succeed in doing this, but the most important thing, see if you can bring about a shift in the way in which you approach the situation and these people. So, the most important thing in such situations is your state of consciousness, rather than whatever it is that they are talking about. They may be talking about this or that, whether it's at work, or they may be gossiping, or they may be whatever, they're engaged in emotional ego stuff.

Use it as an opportunity to stay present. And it's not easy. And you can only, you need to intensify your presence when you are with unconscious people.

By that I mean, when you are sitting alone in a room, or you're walking out in nature, it's, being present is not that difficult. You can, especially nature is conducive to presence. Or being alone in a room, if you discover that you actually like sitting alone in a room, that's a great thing, because that means you become comfortable with yourself.

And there are still, the majority of humans still become very uncomfortable with sitting alone in a room. And you may discover that you actually like being alone, not continuously, you still love people. But you also love being alone, because when you're alone, you can sense the presence that you are, the very simple, but powerful presence.

And you've sensed there's a stillness there. It's lovely. And then of course, then you leave your room, and then you meet other people, you lose yourself, you get to go see the, there's a gravitational pull that the mind has.

And so people know that they, so other people's minds will try to draw you in. I don't, is it, may I ask you before I carry on, is it predominantly, is it more a family situation in your case? Or is it a work situation?

Or which one is it predominantly?

[Speaker 13] (2:12:22 - 2:13:03)

I would say, thank you for asking. It is both, and both family and work occasionally are issues, or not issues, but present themselves as a challenge. What is an ongoing daily challenge is the unconsciousness of the city I'm surrounded in.

So, you know, by Wednesday, that starts to peak, and becomes much more difficult for me to stay out of my head, becomes very noisy.

[Speaker 1] (2:13:03 - 2:13:08)

Oh, you can sense the energy field of the city?

[Speaker 13] (2:13:08 - 2:13:09)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (2:13:09 - 2:13:10)

Ah, right.

[Speaker 2] (2:13:10 - 2:13:11)

Yes, yes.

[Speaker 13] (2:13:11 - 2:13:25)

Sunday is very pleasant. Wednesday, Thursday, Friday are not. Right.

Right. So, but it's, it's really, you know, that plus the more intense situations of work and family, which occasionally come in.

[Speaker 1] (2:13:26 - 2:14:16)

Yes, yes. I need to ask one more question. Do you find yourself drawn into how when other people are ego-controlled, do you find yourself emotionally, mentally, you become just like them?

Or do you feel you're a little bit of an outsider now that's observing what's going on? Are you a full participant temporarily in the unconscious interactions that are taking place, the drama, whatever it may be? Are you a full participant?

Or are you a reluctant, sometimes a reluctant participant, or you remain there as an almost an outsider observing what's going on? How is it for you?

[Speaker 13] (2:14:18 - 2:14:47)

I, it oscillates. Most of the time, I am an outsider who enjoys engaging. I suspect that my sensitivity to presence and stillness is becoming, is increasing, or the sensitivity to that lack of in myself is increasing.

Does that answer your question?

[Speaker 2] (2:14:48 - 2:14:49)

Yes, yes.

[Speaker 1] (2:14:49 - 3:10:43)

Thank you. That's good. Yeah.

Yeah. Let's talk for a moment about this, the energy field of the city, before we go on to your personal thing. I don't know if you, whether you meditate or not, whether you do some form of meditation.

And often, you say, yes, often people meditate, and then something disturbing things happen. While they meditate, suddenly, there's disturbing noise. This morning, I was sitting, I was sitting in, in my living room.

And it's Wednesday, so they do the gardening on Wednesday with extremely noisy leaf blowers. This is the time of year with a lot of leaf blowers. And so the noise, and I was just so, it was so peaceful, as I was sitting there.

And suddenly, there was this, and often, I immediately knew how to completely transcend it, because I've been, it's second nature to me now. But often, I have to tell people how to deal with disturbing things like that, especially when they're trying to meditate. And then that happens, I always say, incorporate whatever arises during this time when you're trying to meditate.

Everything that arises, make it part of your meditation. In other words, resist nothing that arises. Don't demand that anything that arises should not arise.

In that case, even a disturbing noise, such as a leaf blower, is incorporated into your meditation by deep acceptance of what is. You don't resist. You may be able to practice the same in the city when you feel the energy field.

But I mean, you may be walking there or driving or just being in an apartment or office. Practice surrender to this energy that you feel, then you may be able to transcend that

particular energy. If you don't, if you react to it, it still has you in its grip.

In a way, one could say, when you react to toxic energy, you become part of the toxic energy without knowing it. So, the only way you can become free, other than removing yourself and live in the countryside, the only way you can get beyond it is through deep surrender. So, completely, and this can be a spiritual practice, as I said, except in the most extreme cases when there's violence of some kind or extraordinary toxicity, then obviously you remove yourself.

Otherwise, surrender to something that seems unacceptable and yet you surrender, you're totally okay with suddenly the toxic energy of the city, but you no longer even call it toxic. You just, you can sense it and allow yourself to sense that and think, oh, that's what it is. And you might also then recognize it as an expression of human unconsciousness to some extent, but also, yes, it's still a manifestation of life at a particular stage, evolutionary stage, and that's what it is.

You can then, I had that realization many, many years ago when I went through a shift in consciousness. At the time, I lived in London and I had to travel every morning to work on the subway, which is called tube or underground, they call it. It has different lines and one is called, at that time, it was decades ago, I don't know how it is now, one was, the one, the line that I had to catch is called the Northern Line.

The Northern Line was always considered the worst of all tube lines because it had the longest delays and the most totally crammed carriages that always, you can never find a seat. You had to push yourself in and then there were long gaps, no trains. People called it the misery line and I had to catch that line every morning.

After my shift in consciousness, I still was the same. I went in there and I felt completely at peace. On the Northern Line, which before was a source of great unhappiness, felt completely at peace.

I couldn't quite understand why for a long time and later I realized I'm actually not complaining about anything anymore. I'm not complaining about it, it's just it is. My mind wasn't saying anything about it anymore.

And I could still feel that energy, but it was, I allowed myself to feel that and by allowing myself to feel it, there was transcendence of it. So, that is something to practice. And then also often in the middle of, sometimes in London, I would catch a bus too, so I might always sit on the upper level of the double-decker buses, would sit on the upper level and I contemplated the city.

I had the most peaceful meditations contemplating the hustle and bustle of the city, sitting on the upper deck of the bus. Wow, everything was so peaceful. Why was it so peaceful?

Everybody is stressed. Most people in a big city like that is stressed, most people are stressed and yet I felt peace, so peaceful. I was completely okay with everything.

That was, seems, was the reason. So, it's a practice of surrender and through surrender you transcend. Now, going on to people, dealing with people, individual people or small groups of people, family members, in any situation, as much as possible, remember that the most important ingredient of that situation is the state of conscience that you bring to it rather than whatever is being discussed.

And see that it's a little bit like without accepting the way people behave and, but, and recognized by, you can only accept it if you realize that they behave in this way because they cannot, they can't help it. They cannot, they, they behave the way they behave because they're still in the grip of that unconsciousness. Now, you have to be careful that the ego, when you observe people's unconsciousness and recognize its unconsciousness and you recognize that's just their conditioned behavior, it's the ego that makes them, that's a true recognition.

When you have that true recognition, you need to be careful, though, that your ego doesn't come back through, come, return through the back door, as I put it, and suddenly you feel very superior to them. Because any sense of superiority is a conceptual identity again. Yes, it's important to recognize that they are still in the grip of that unconsciousness.

So, it's a little bit like observing children. You wouldn't come, when children do the wrong things or break something, they can't help it. A three-year-old can't, if the three-year-old spills something or breaks something, they can't help it.

That's just how it is. It corresponds to the evolutionary stage as a human being. And so, you wouldn't complain about it.

Well, some parents do, if they're very unconscious, they get angry with a two or three-year-old when they break something. That means you're really unconscious. But, so, able to accept people's behavior and see when they do it.

Be very careful, though, with your reactions. So, stay as present as you can, through breath awareness, or even listen, when you listen to somebody, be really there, listen to them, be there as a conscious presence. Don't let, especially when it's a family surroundings, the pain body can often come in.

The pain body wants a reaction, an emotional reaction from you. Other person's pain body wants you to react emotionally. And when that happens, you can recognize it.

And you may not need to react emotionally, if you stay present. Staying present is the important part. Accepting the way a person behaves, for the time being, is fine.

Unless, if it's in your family surroundings, it may be helpful to talk about certain patterns of behavior that you're not okay with. When you shout at me, when you're tired and you get irritated and you shout at me, that's not okay. Catch the person when he or she is relatively conscious, to point out moments of unconsciousness.

But when it does happen, you just have to, they're like children. People who are still unconscious are like children, in evolutionary terms. So, it's challenging, but you need that in order to deepen your presence.

If your surroundings were ideal for sustaining presence, your presence would never go very deep. If you lived, if you had unlimited money, and you lived in the most wonderful surroundings, and you're being looked after, you can meditate every day, because nobody's making any demands on you. You get the best possible food that is served every day, and clean air and wonderful surroundings.

Now, you might think, then I could really grow spiritually and awaken. Unfortunately, that's not the case. For a little while, you'll feel peaceful, but it wouldn't go very deep.

Your presence wouldn't go very deep, because it doesn't have to go very deep. It doesn't go, nothing happens unless it has to. It's only when you're confronted with a demand, a challenge, an obstacle, then you are forced to go deeper.

Otherwise, you're like a little flower that grows in a greenhouse, very protected conditions. Let's say, a seed that sprouts in a protected environment of a greenhouse, and then it grows very quickly. If you take it outside, it wouldn't even survive, because it was never confronted with the adverse conditions.

It didn't generate enough energy to deal with the adverse conditions in the same applies to presence. Your comfort zone is not conducive to spiritual awakening and deepening in presence. The mind might tell you, there's nothing wrong with comfort zones, enjoy it when it's there.

But don't believe that the comfort zone is the ultimate purpose of your life. In a way, the opposite is true. You don't necessarily need to seek discomfort, although that has been done and is still being done by certain types of spiritual practice, seeking out discomfort.

In India, there are still many people who practice that. In the West, there used to be many people, not anymore. The West is more about seeking comfort zones.

Comfort zone is not conducive to any kind of deepening. When you're not in your comfort zone, either you suffer or your presence deepens. Through resistance, you suffer.

Through judgment, resistance, and on, you suffer. Or your presence deepens, because it has to. You're taken out of your comfort zone, sometimes because of the people that you

need to deal with, or you could be taken out of your comfort zone, where you live, or what you have to do, or whatever it may be.

But all these are good things, or you lose things that were important to you, so you're taken out of your comfort zone in that way. Many of these things are regarded as negative, but they're actually exactly what you need to deepen your presence. I had a relative many years ago who suffered from a mental illness.

I would only visit this person once a year for a brief time, because, anyway, this person was very deeply in the grip of a condition called paranoid schizophrenia, and sometimes this person was in a mental home, sometimes at home. And so, when I visited once a year, I could see, first I had to listen to the narratives, which were complete fake fantasies about all the enemies that are surrounding us, and so on. Paranoid schizophrenia, misinterpretations of reality.

And I just, first I had to sit there and listen. I knew already, every time I arrived, I would hear the stories of the dreadful things that's been happening, and I would just sit there. And normally, everybody, sooner or later, would become incorporated into this person's fantasy world.

If you questioned anything she said, you would become one of the enemies. So, I never questioned anything. And whenever I arrived there, I could sense my, in the presence of a very unconscious person, I could sense my presence deepening, becoming much more intense, or just automatically, because there is a, the way in which you experience presence varies.

There can be intense presence, or there can be just background presence. In certain situations, I experienced intense presence, like a dimmer switch, turning on the light on the dimmer switch, but I'm not doing it, it just happens. So, whenever I sat with her, I would become very, very present, and just listen.

And many times, while I was there, she would become virtually normal, and not talk about it anymore. And her condition subsided, and she could converse like the normal person. And the moment I left to go back home, I was told by somebody else who lived with her, she would immediately revert back into her fantasies.

But while I was there, she was, initially, I had to listen to the stories, but as I stayed present, some of that presence transmitted itself to her, it seemed, didn't have a permanent effect, but it had a temporary effect of bringing some light into the unconsciousness. So, but this is a practice that is very important. Difficult people are very important on your spiritual path.

And difficult people means, obviously, ego people, unconscious people. In other words, most people are difficult in one way or another. Some are much more difficult than

others.

Some are close to insane. And those then you have to remove yourself. As I said, if you can, if you can't, that's fine, too.

But we deepen through interacting with other humans. And to some extent, you find also that your state of consciousness gets reflected in other humans and the humans that you attract after a while. If you remain present as much as possible, you attract other humans into your life that are also relatively present.

And sometimes there's a healing effect that you can have without wanting to change the situation, but by remaining present in a situation, non-reactive, you can sometimes change the environment without feeling that you are doing it. Because one present person can make a difference to the entire energy of a group of people. Or sometimes the group energy is so deeply unconscious that even that doesn't help.

At least you don't become part of it. And you remain on the periphery, you don't become part of it. So, in the same way, however, if you have a group of people, let's say you have a meeting, you have a committee meeting, sometimes one very unconscious person can draw everybody else into a deep unconsciousness.

So, that's the reverse of what I was just talking about, present. If one person is very unconscious, it sometimes happens that everybody else gets drawn in and their level of consciousness also diminishes. That's not uncommon either.

But you need difficult people to evolve. That's the truth of it. So, and ultimately, even your childhood, when I, many people, when they look back on their childhood and their parents, you can see parents were unconscious, behaved in unconscious ways.

In my case, for example, and they couldn't help it. There's no, I don't blame, just in the grip of their conditioned behavior. My life was not pleasant as a child.

But even that, retrospectively, it all made sense. Retrospectively, I needed to go through that. I remember talking to Oprah, it was actually, I can mention it now because it was a public conversation.

She grew up with a single mother, never saw her father. And her mother did not have the ability to love. She was not given any love whatsoever.

It was just very bad, very bad situation. And I said, when she explained the situation, the details of which I had forgotten, but it was awful. I said, you would not be who you are now if you had had a loving mother.

Because this forced you to go deeper to something that you did not find outside. It forced you to go deeper into yourself. So, that is, may help you to remember, thank you

for difficult people.

That is your prayer of gratitude. Oh, by the way, when you awaken spiritually, it doesn't mean this is the end of challenges. They don't stop.

The only difference is, and it's a big difference, you no longer unconsciously transform the challenges of life into unhappiness. The entire psychological self that you think you are, that your identity that is derived from whatever it is that your mind identifies with, your past, what happened to you in your past, what you did, what people did to you, what you achieved, your successes, your failures, your sufferings, victories and defeats from your past, they gradually, a story forms in the mind. And a story is thoughts, certain thoughts, they come together as a bundle.

And so after, as you grow up and you become an adult and you grow, this becomes more developed, this mental image of who you are. And that becomes who you sense yourself to be as a person. That becomes your personality.

And that is the foundation for most people's sense of identity. That is all they know. And that is the unawakened state of consciousness.

So you are confined to this ultimately mind made sense of self that consists of a storyline, a narrative that you think about, and you call it my life, me and my life. Hmm. And that exists in time.

This is where the time dimension becomes very important, because the me and my life is me, the person that I am now, which is conditioned by my past, all the things from the past that make up the person that I am now. And then future becomes important for this me and my life, because you can look to the future as a destination, a source of possible greater fulfillment, because, strange thing is, the sense of self that arises from the past, that is, that consists of a bundle of recurring thought forms plus emotional formations, a mental emotional entity, that entity that you call me and my life, is, a lot of the time, spends its time worrying about me and my life and considers itself problematic. So you carry you as that entity, you as that person, everybody here carries a life situation with him or herself.

You carry a life situation with you, and everybody here has certain, a certain set of problems in their life situation, which, whether they are related to your relationships, whether they're related to your health situation, whether they're related to your financial situation, your work situation, any of these areas, it's rare that you're totally free of perceiving yourself as being kind of almost burdened by problems.

And that many people have a view of themselves, of their identity, as a problem to be solved, unconsciously. They don't say, they don't say, I am a problem to be solved, but there's an underlying current of unspoken thought that says, there's something that is

not quite right here. And you've, and then you look at others, especially on Facebook, and you see, they don't have those problems.

So what's wrong with me? What's wrong? And even if you walk in the street, they seem to be okay.

And you could perceive, why am I always, have all got that stuff going on? And then of course you begin to pretend too. You don't know that the others are pretending, but you are pretending.

And then you start taking the selfies for your Facebook post. So this, this mental image that people have, we now have the technology, isn't that great, to amplify this mental image and send it out into the world. And we can polish it up so that it looks great out there.

But the greater it looks on your Facebook page, the worse you feel inside. So the interesting fact is then that everybody carries the burden of their life situation. And whether it's a heavy burden for you at this time, or whether it's a relatively light burden for you at this time, as you sit here, may vary from person to person.

But there is not a single person, unless there's a baby here somewhere, there's not a single person who does not carry this burden of their life situation, whether it's heavy or light at the moment. And it could change. If it's heavy today, it might not be heavy anymore tomorrow, but then it'll be heavy again another time.

So then that's an interesting fact. And that is part of a person's sense of identity, is what I call the life situation. What is me and my story?

And there's always, and that's the strange fact, there's always something missing. There's always a sense, an underlying sense of, I am not enough. I haven't arrived yet.

There's a search ultimately for greater fulfillment, a search for yourself ultimately, for a better version of yourself. Now there's nothing wrong with engaging in activities that help you learn a new skill, acquire new knowledge. And so you gradually, you become a better version of yourself.

You become, let's say, you acquire a better education or whatever it is, a skill, dance, whatever. That's fine. But whatever it is you acquire, on one level, you can improve yourself, no doubt.

But on a deeper level, that sense of dissatisfaction will resurface again and again. And no matter what you achieve or attain, for a little while, sometimes it happens that a person is totally feeling, now I'm fully myself. I have arrived.

This happens, it could happen when you win the lottery. And there's been many things

written about lottery winners. Many of them became more unhappy after winning the lottery.

There was a moment of elation, and then there was greater unhappiness. So there's that sense of, the underlying sense of not enough, not enough yet. I'm not enough.

And you never actually arrive. And then you reach retirement age, and you suddenly realize that you've always been waiting to start living. And that's a pity.

Without knowing it, you've always been lived for the next moment or some other future moment, and thought, I'm going to get there. One day, I'm going to make it. Whatever, it's a weird expression.

Make it really, make yourself, I suppose. That's one day, I'm going to make it. And ultimately, several times you think you made it.

But then you realize that your life situation, again, sabotages you. That's what it does. You might have noticed.

You do your best. You do your best intentions, and you should. But no matter how good your intention, how well-focused you are, and how much positive thinking you do, which are all great things, I'm not saying don't do them, do them.

But even there, you do not escape this fact that challenges come one after another. And challenges sometimes come in the form of some form of chaos. It's good to strive for order.

But no matter how good you are in bringing about order in your life, and it's a great thing, you will periodically encounter the eruption of disorder in your life, whether it's an illness, or some kind of loss, or some huge drama in your relationship, or toxic. You might have noticed, by the way, a great source of challenge in your life, one of the greatest, apart from the fact that as you grow older, the body is being consumed. A great source of challenge in your life is human beings.

So if you look at your life situation, you realize, where does a lot of that suffering and happiness, where does it come from? It's other people. And sometimes the very people that make you happy for a few years, suddenly, the very same people make you unhappy.

The person you fall in love with today, five years from now, you hate each other at the divorce court. The worst person you ever met. So everybody carries a life situation, and there's a certain heaviness to a life situation.

And if you are totally trapped in your life situation, you think about it, you talk about it compulsively, either you think about it in your head, or you talk about to others, the

more you are trapped in it, the more unsatisfying your life is. That is really the temporal dimension, because you as the person, you as the personality, you that has a life situation, you that is the story of me, me and my story that exists in time. And the wonderful thing is that there is a way out.

There is a dimension of consciousness where you are not trapped on that level. So one could almost say that you can get off that speeding train, but not as a physic, not with your physical body. But there is a possibility of transcending a sense of identity that is exclusively derived from mental, emotional patterns in you, because that's what the person or the personality is.

Now, most humans don't even know that. But the ancient teachers pointed to it using different signposts. Buddha said, life is suffering.

What did I just talk about? I just didn't use those terms. Buddha said, life is suffering.

But he also said, I teach suffering, he said, and the end of suffering, which means, when he said, I teach suffering, he meant, I show you how suffering arises. And when he said, and the end of suffering, what he meant was, I show you how suffering can end. A lovely statement.

I teach suffering and the end of suffering. So the Buddha talks about the possibility of the end of suffering. Jesus talks about the necessity of, on the possibility of what is called salvation.

And in other spiritual traditions, other terms are used, liberation, awakening. So they all pointed to it using different signposts, different terminology. And yet very few humans realized what they were talking about.

So even like Christians, most Christians don't know what salvation is. They might think an emotional high is salvation, or a certain belief. You say, I believe this, which is a story in your head that you don't question.

Thought, in other words, thought forms. There's a story in your head and say, this is how it is. I don't, you don't question.

I believe in this narrative. And then they say, this narrative will save you if you believe in it. I would suggest to you that what Jesus was pointing to was much deeper than that, but there was a beautiful truth hiding there.

I would say hiding because you don't very rarely do you actually hear the depths of the teaching explained to you in churches. So it is possible. There is a possibility of transcendence.

You can internally transcend the limitations of the person, which doesn't mean you're no

longer a person. You continue to be a person. You also continue to have a life situation and you continue to be challenged by life.

The difference is, oh, by the way, when you awaken spiritually, it doesn't mean this is the end of challenges. Really? Oh, they keep coming.

They don't stop. The only difference is, and it's a big difference, you no longer unconsciously transform the challenges of life into unhappiness. You no longer transform the challenges of life into an unhappy me, an unhappy sense of self, a dissatisfied person with, in the background, always a sense of dissatisfaction, discontent, irritation, not enough.

But sometimes, of course, you smile. How are you? Great.

I'm just great. Haven't you seen my Facebook page? I'm...

This is the food I'm eating now. Now, as the Buddha said, I show you suffering. I teach suffering.

I show you how suffering arises. Now, how does it ultimately arise? How does the unhappiness, let's use that kind of generic term, unhappiness, which could be all kinds of things.

Unhappiness starts with a slight irritation when you're waiting in line and the mind is not moving, and you have a slight irritation, and you're beginning to be unhappy. And then it builds up into something more, perhaps. Or unhappiness is when you arrive home and your house has gone up in flames.

A little bit more unhappiness. Or unhappiness is when suddenly your spouse leaves you, and you go bankrupt, and you lose your job, and you don't know what's going to happen next month, where you're going to live. Another form of unhappiness.

Many forms of unhappiness can arise. But when you look at the, you need a little bit of awareness to detect, and this is already kind of the beginning of a spiritual awakening, when you develop the ability to know what's going on in your mind. And when you develop, and this is awareness slowly arising, when you develop the ability to know what your mind is doing, what your thoughts are going through your head, then you may detect, where does the unhappiness come from?

Does it come, and you can then divide it into two types of unhappiness. One is completely unrelated to an actual event out there. It's entirely produced by dysfunctional thinking.

A typical example of that would be worry. You wake up in the middle of the night, and you start to worry. Worry means you have to create scenarios in your thoughts about

things going wrong.

You create scenarios about things which you might lose, things you might not get, but you need. Something may happen to you, and you play it out in your mind. You worry about problems that you say you have, but while you worry, there's no, worry is never given a solution to anything.

It's just pointless going around in your mind, and you don't even know it. Many people are addicted, there's no awareness there, they are addicted to worrying. Their sense, their personality, to a large part, is a worrying personality.

Take the worrying away, and a huge chunk of their personality is suddenly gone. Of course, they don't want that. They want to hang on to that.

I need to worry. Well, I mean, if I don't worry, I'm not taking responsibility for my life. Everybody worries, don't they?

When I look at movies, they worry. Everybody worries. You have to worry.

Okay, let me worry a little bit more. Now, worry is a very good example of dysfunctional thinking, and it produces an emotion. It's not just in the mind.

You have certain types of thinking, the body reacts, responds to the thinking, and creates an emotion that reflects a type of thinking. The energetic frequency of that thinking, the story that you create in your mind, the body can't tell the difference between an actual, real event out there, and something that only your mind is creating. So when your mind is creating critical situation, your body believes that you are in a critical situation, or that you're lying in bed at three in the morning, and it's very nice and warm and soft, but you're in a critical situation in your mind, and the body believes this is bad.

And then you experience the emotion that you would experience if you were really in a critical situation. And then that becomes, and the emotion fuels even more that type of thinking. So you're trapped in a vicious circle.

And so there are human beings who are burdened with these personalities that continuously produce totally superfluous, unnecessary unhappiness. All unhappiness is ultimately superfluous, but in this particular case, this type of unhappiness has nothing to do at all with any situation that's actually happening. It's created by dysfunctional thinking.

By dysfunctional thinking here means every thought that comes into your head absorbs your consciousness totally, and that you, when I say identify, this is the key. When you identify with thought, there's a sense of me, a self in every thought. There's no space between you, who you ultimately are beyond thought.

There's no, you're totally unaware of who you are beyond thought because you're so totally identified with that voice in the head that never stops talking. It goes on and on. Oh, why don't you shut up, shut up.

But that's the voice too. That's just another aspect of the voice. It says, why can't I shut up, shut up, shut up?

Well, that's the voice also, so that doesn't work. And some people are so unconscious when I say you have a voice in the head that never stops talking. Say, what are you talking about?

What voice? This kind of a voice. What is that one?

So from anybody who is not, who is totally identified with mind, is virtually trapped in that particular dimension. So you have unhappiness arising simply as a product of your mind, even without an external challenge. And then you have other types of unhappiness arising because there is an external challenge in your life.

There is a difficult relationship situation. There is a difficult work situation, a difficult financial situation, a difficult health situation. So you might think, well, I'm fully justified in being unhappy because let me tell you about what's going on in my life.

And then you will tell me that, yes, you have a right to be unhappy. And so, yes, but if you look closely at those things, and again, it requires a certain degree of awareness. When you seemingly become unhappy, and I'm using again, just reminding you, I'm using this as a generic term, it could be anything from slight irritation to extreme anger or extreme sadness or anything in between, or even an undercurrent of an undercurrent of unhappiness, which many, many people, almost everybody has, unless they have awakened.

There's an undercurrent of dissatisfaction, of unease. And it comes in every situation, whether they know it or not, there's an undercurrent there. It's also, it's emotional.

These are emotions that have been created by years and years of dysfunctional thinking, and that undercurrent is there. So something in your life situation is challenging. We can look at one small example of how unhappiness arises.

Let's say, just something seemingly insignificant, but life is full of seemingly little things and they accumulate. So if you become irritated with one little thing after another little thing, after another little thing, that eventually grows, and becomes part of your personality, and you become an irritated person. And the irritated person is actually, without knowing it, looking for more irritation.

Just waiting, just the slightest thing to go wrong. And then you make a phone call to your bank. Please wait, we appreciate your call, but we are in the Philippines and we can't

answer immediately or they don't say that.

You have to wait, please. Okay, there you are. And five minutes pass.

We value your call very much, but there's nobody yet ready. Okay. And then the mind starts saying things.

If it hasn't started already, this is dreadful. How can they do it? I'm going to change banks, but they're all the same, aren't they?

Why can't I get a human being to talk to? What's wrong with them? I hate this whole civilization anyway.

All kinds of things. And you become unhappy if you weren't unhappy already, because you were probably a little bit unhappy already, and then it grows. And then you're dealing with the next thing, or if you're lucky, you get a lovely Filipino person that is, hi, how are you?

And say, oh, but you have to be open. If you're not open, you don't even know that there's another. Finally, there's a human being there, but you don't even know that anymore.

I've been waiting for 25 minutes on this. And then the next thing comes up in your life, and you're already bringing that into that situation. And there goes an irritated person, an angry person.

And then you have to go to the airport, and you wait in line. It is not moving. Why can't they?

Why don't they? They're completely incompetent. What's the story?

Now, if you look, how does the unhappiness arise? And again, it needs a little bit of awareness so that you're aware of what your mind is doing. If you're totally identified with your mind, you don't even know what's going on.

You are the thoughts. Every thought has a self in it, a sense of self in it. There's an awareness.

You can suddenly see, oh, where is the unhappiness arising? Is it because I'm sitting or standing here waiting for this or that? Or is it because I am telling myself something about sitting here, waiting, and about standing here?

Where is the unhappiness coming from? Could it be that the narrative that I have created around this particular situation, rather than the situation, is causing the unhappiness? It's possible, but you have to figure it, try it out.

Now, because you've got plenty of time, because they're not answering the phone. So you investigate. It's a spiritual investigation while you're waiting.

How would I experience this situation if I did not add these thoughts to it? If I didn't add the possibly unnecessary burden of thought to it, how would I experience this moment without the addition of a narrative? Okay, let's find out.

I've got plenty of time. And so there you are, holding the receiver.

[Speaker 16] (3:10:44 - 3:10:45)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (3:10:47 - 4:24:45)

Well, I would experience this moment as I'm breathing, and I feel myself breathing, and I'm looking out of the window, and I'm looking around the room, and as I'm breathing, I can feel the energy in my body. There's an energy that's, the body is alive, and I can feel that it is alive. I've got nothing else to do right now.

I can feel the body is alive. There's an aliveness that pervades every cell of the body. And suddenly, you now realize what this is without the addition of thought.

Without the addition of thought that says, this should not be happening. This, because ultimately, that's what it's saying. This should not be happening.

Or it might say, this should not be happening to me. Or it says, why is this always happening to me? Those are, that's the type of thought.

And then you experience, okay, that's a relatively small situation, but you are looking into the origin of unhappiness. So you can become free in little situations of the mental, emotional, reactive patterns that before you were completely identified with, so identified that they became you, that they became part of your personality, part of the person. And so that's an amazing thing.

And then you can, after a while, these are all little challenges in life. And then occasionally a bigger challenge comes. And again, and a big challenge comes, you lose your job.

You go to a doctor and there's a health challenge. Relationship comes to an end or relationship is very difficult and toxic. Something collapses around you.

And again, you can, there is a similar, yes, you realize there is a challenge here and you realize that it may be necessary to take some action. But in the meantime, you can experiment and see, this requires, by the way, more developed, more intense presence when a bigger challenge comes into your life. But you've practiced already with little

things, telephone calls and lineups in the supermarket and airport and countless other things.

So you've already been successfully practicing with that, just getting ready for the next big challenge to come into your life. And it will come. And there it comes.

And then you have already developed the muscle presence power in you has already grown. The ability to relinquish dysfunctional thinking and being able to be with a situation as it is right now, without the addition of this burden of superfluous suffering, creating thought. And let's show you have developed that already.

And then the big challenge comes and there you are. Let's say you lose your job. And one day you go to the office and the boss says the famous expression, they don't usually say, you're fired.

That's somewhere else in New York, somewhere they'll say you're fired. But usually there are much more clients say, I'm afraid we'll have to let you go. As if you had been longing to go for a long time.

And perhaps you have, you just didn't know it. We'll have to let you go. Really?

Oh, thank you so much. Finally, they're letting me go. We'll have to let you go.

And, but usually it's not people who usually react as and there comes a slightly bigger challenge because who knows how you're going to pay the mortgage next month. Who knows? And there we go.

And if you, if presence has grown in you, you can then walk out of the office building with a, carrying the box of your belongings from your office. And then you put it in your car and then you sit in your car. And again, your question, if I didn't add any thought to this, how would I experience this moment?

It is as it is. And right at this moment, it's actually fine. It's actually, this moment is actually better than it would be if I were still stuck in the office.

This moment, certainly now the mind says, yeah, but you've got the future to think about. And of course, yes, you may have to take action, but the question is how, what is the quality of your consciousness in the present moment? Because that determines what kind of action you take is the basis for your action, a sense of fear or anger or panic.

I need to write another job. And then if you go, if you get another interview, you're so, so tense that they don't want you to say, no, we can't have a nervous person like that. But so you differentiate between taking action and even perhaps focusing your mind on what, what is it that I can do?

What steps can I take? What are the possibilities? I usually, when I do something on that,

I get a piece, I'm a paper and pen person.

I write it down on a piece of paper and then see the possibilities. And then you return into this present moment. So you develop the ability to always have your conscious attention anchored in the present moment rather than in your thinking mind.

So you're at, this is the, you're becoming aligned with the present moment and it requires, I must admit, some situations require more intense presence than others. If it's a bigger thing, more intense presence. You go to the doctor's office and the doctor says, okay, you have about 12 months and then maybe not beyond.

That's a big challenge. It's a huge challenge because it means, but by the way, he may be wrong, but it means time has been taken, virtually been taken away from you. It's like, like, like some deity, malevolent deity, or maybe a good deity that suddenly you have no more time or, because you had been looking for some self-fulfillment through time, unless you're 95 years old, but maybe even then, you've been looking for self-fulfillment, for some kind of completion of who you are, of the story you want.

You want the happy ending of the story of me. Of course it never comes, but don't tell anybody. It never, the happy ending of the story of me never comes.

And then somebody takes away time from you. And that could be the most dreadful shock to you as a person, because then you mentally go somewhere that doesn't exist anymore. No more vacation, no more this, no more that.

And so some people have become terribly, terribly, dreadfully unhappy in that situation, which has only been normal, I suppose, one would say normal, but others have become intensely present through having no more time. And they went, I've met some, and some, the body began to deteriorate more and more, more quickly. And they were like luminous lights.

They were just sitting there looking at me. And I remember a lady years ago who came to see me when I was still seeing people. She had developed this illness, only had a few more months, and she was just, every time she came, she was more luminous and just sit there.

And we were just present together. There was nobody left. There was no person left.

There was only a space of conscious presence. So the person had been burned up completely by this. That was amazing how, there's another thing I read a couple of years ago.

There was a musician in England, apparently quite famous, but I had never heard of him, which doesn't mean anything. So there was a pop musician and he went to the doctor. I don't know if he is still alive now or not.

He went to the doctor and he says he told him, the doctor told him something like that. And this is a very rare case. He said in an interview, he walked out of the doctor's office in a state of enormous elation.

He was just, and suddenly he said he was able to enjoy every moment intensely. And he said, why didn't I do this before? And what happened to him?

So some people are forced into awakening by a situation. Now, any big challenge in your life potentially is that it is a way of how life forces you into awakening. And there are some people who have never come into touch with any spiritual teaching and it happened to them.

Others encounter intense suffering and they suffer and suffer, and then they come into contact with the spiritual teaching that points to the possibility of transcendence. And suddenly the very same suffering situation suddenly becomes the opening. So any seemingly bad event in your life, which usually entails some kind of loss, disappointment, something crumbling, somebody leaving you or dying, somebody dies close to you, you lose your job, whatever it may be, that any such event can be extremely helpful and significant spiritually.

It's not only a foretaste of what is to come later. If you surrender into it, it can be an opening into the spiritual dimension and into a stillness. And even such a relatively mundane thing as, for example, finding your car got stolen when you go back to get to your car, it's no longer there, it got stolen.

Or even a pleasant weekend with friends or family coming to an end, anything coming to an end, having to say goodbye. Even such a trivial thing as dropping something and it breaks and you, some, an object that you liked, you lose your job. All these things, seemingly negative things, or there's some kind of loss or dissolution of form, can be an access point into a deeper dimension within you, traditionally called spiritual.

If you catch that moment, and instead of going into inner resistance, mental condemnation, telling yourself how dreadful that is, this event, then experiencing the corresponding emotions, the emotions that correspond to those thoughts, that these things that are happening right now or have just happened, should not have happened, have no right to have happened. This is something wrong with the world, because this just happened, or is happening. And the mental commentary that tells you all these things, and then the painful emotions, that's a natural reaction.

And the ego actually loves that, because it strengthens the ego, when it can resist something and become upset about something, make something wrong, or someone, usually it's associated, you can make yourself wrong too, or somebody close to you, another person, an entire situation that you're in. So those are normal reactions that the false self actually enjoys, even if they are painful, it strengthens itself. But if you catch

yourself at those moments of loss, something going wrong, something or someone leaving you, and if at that moment you come into complete alignment internally with what is, then that takes you into that stillness.

And you may experience a glimpse of peace that cannot be explained causally through the situation that you are in. In fact, it seems to contradict the situation that you are in, which looks negative, but suddenly, because you are surrendered to this event, suddenly you can sense that peace. And at that moment, you have become free of externals, you have transcended the normal state of consciousness, where your mental emotional state is completely dependent on what's going on around you.

If things are going fine, you're relatively happy. Things break down, there's loss, you become unhappy. So it's that continuous movement.

So you are at the mercy of other people, how they behave towards you, at the mercy of unpredictable situations, whether the plane is on time or not, whether you get to that place in time or not, whether this person does what he or she is supposed to do in relation to you, or whether he or she lets you down, as the little mental story goes. He let me down. Oh, yeah, terrible.

Now, you might have noticed that living in this world, it's fairly normal to experience being let down by situations and people. Even missing your plane is a letting down. Expectations crumble, disappointment happens.

So everybody living here, as part of a fairly significant part of their life experience, is being let down by situations, events, people. You can let yourself down because you have these expectations and you can't manage to do it. I'm always letting myself down.

So that's an interpretation. It's a little story in the head that causes painful emotions. And it's based on a misperception of what this world is all about.

It's based on the erroneous assumption that this world is here to make you happy. And the erroneous assumption that this world is not supposed to let you down. And if a person or situation or an event happens that lets you down, that there is something deeply wrong.

So if that is your underlying assumption, then you'll experience life as quite frustrating. And a lot of the time, time upsetting and disappointing. Because there's a clash between your assumption of how things should be in the mind and how things actually are.

And that gap is painful. Suffering arises. And suffering arises because you haven't recognized the nature of this dimensional world.

World where everything, to use the Buddha's terminology, everything is impermanent and unstable. But once you recognize that that's how it is, and you recognize that the

world is not here to make you happy, neither is it here to make you unhappy, but it's here to challenge you. How can I cope with the feeling of family members not understanding you and betraying you?

I feel my family has betrayed me and I can't forgive them. How can I understand these feelings? Thank you.

Now you have to see that when you say that your family has betrayed you, that's an interpretation of their behavior. It's a thought in your head that causes you corresponding to feel corresponding emotions. It doesn't sound very good, does it?

My family has betrayed me. And when that thought goes through your head again and again, what you feel is not pleasant. But is that the truth or is it an interpretation?

But this is frustrating to the ego because when there's no longer any story where you oppose the other, where you make yourself feel superior to the other, then there's no food for the ego anymore. Hopefully you had a light meal, otherwise all your consciousness will be drawn into the stomach. I'm beginning to receive your questions.

Thank you very much. And we will, this evening, have our first session dealing with questions. If possible, write as legibly as you can, otherwise I'll get really irritated.

And my mind will say, do they expect me to read this, to be able to read this? Why can't they write more legibly? Isn't it common sense that they should write legibly?

Why do people do things like that? That would be a normal ego reaction to something that in itself is perfectly okay because you can either read it or you can't, but the ego adds a story to it. And behind the story is always an attempt to be more right than the other person.

There's always an attempt to have in some kind of superiority. It's unconscious, of course, ego is always unconscious. And this is alternatively what actually I don't get irritated as you might have guessed.

If there's a paper that's not legible, I look at it. Okay, I'll put this aside and give it more attention later. In the meantime, I'll read the legible ones.

And then if there's time later, I'll give it more attention. There's no problem without a story. And there's no, you are not wrong and I'm not right.

This is just what is. It's just a tiny example of the difference between aligning yourself to the simple isness of the present moment and imposing a story on it in the service of the self that wants to inflate itself, indignation, irritation. They should.

Why do they, don't they know better? I said, oh, they're all stories in the service of a false sense of self. And so the, in presence, all this, what I sometimes call unnecessary

baggage that people manufacture mentally and emotionally or that unnecessary baggage that really is a, there's a heaviness to it that they carry around doesn't arise anymore.

And there's the simple, this is what is. I can either do this or I can do that. I can deal with it now.

I can put it aside. No story. But this is frustrating to the ego because when there's no longer any story where you oppose the other, where you make yourself feel superior to the other, then there's no food for the ego anymore.

But there's an incredible lightness and the lightness of being comes and the heaviness goes out of situations. That really, that's what the ego is. The heavy me.

And even when it attempts to make itself superior, what it doesn't recognize is that all these are really forms of suffering. The ego doesn't even recognize suffering as suffering. It doesn't realize that when you get angry or irritated about somebody else's behavior and bring up a big story about it, you are actually in a state of suffering.

If you were able to have attention in your body, you would notice that your body is suffering because those things affect the smooth, harmonious working of the energy field that goes through the body. So an angry thought has an effect on the body. Small irritation all has an effect and the body doesn't really like it.

But the ego, the ego itself is not in touch with the body. So it mistakes suffering for something good. Anger, I can really get into this.

So you can look at your own life and see where you are manufacturing unnecessary stories, both in small situations and in bigger life situations and in situations to do with relatives, family members, partners, ex-partners, a wonderful source of egoic stories, can talk about your ex-husband or wife for hours, either to somebody else if they're ready to listen or in your own mind. Or you had a confrontation or an exchange with somebody yesterday and you can go on, continue that in your mind and say so many hurtful things to the other person that unfortunately you couldn't think of in the situation. But you can relive it now and it's almost as good as the real thing.

So in that fantasy world of the mind, you can be right again and again and the other person can be wrong again and again. How wonderful. These things are not, all this is what we call unconscious.

So people don't know what they are doing. For them, that is their reality. Now can we understand why Jesus said, forgive them for they know not what they do.

They're unconscious. It's an automatic process of ego inflation, of ego reinforcement. It's conditioned, learned.

It's part of the structure of the mind. What part does willpower play in the awakening process, if any? Don't I use some willpower to motivate myself to follow your teachings?

I must listen to Eka now. I don't want to, but... So it's not willpower because if you use willpower and you listen because you think you should be listening or you're a spiritual person and you should be listening to a spiritual talk to just prove to yourself that you are spiritual or you are determined to awaken.

No, there is something in you that wants to listen and that responds. And that in you that wants to listen has nothing to do with willpower. It's an energy field that rises up.

And whatever, the only way you can listen to any spiritual teaching is from that deeper level, not from the conceptual mental level. And whenever you listen to a spiritual teaching, it's always from the deeper place. It's always a recognition of what you already knew deep down.

So the truth is always recognized because it comes from, you listen from the same place from where the teaching arises. And so it recognizes itself. The truth, you already know it, even though it may not, it may be too deep for you to access it for yourself.

Then you listen to a spiritual teaching and suddenly the truth that is in you is called forth and drawn out and responses, oh yeah. And you immediately sense, that's it, yes. Why didn't I know that before?

Of course you didn't know it before because now you recognize it. Now there's something else in you that does not want to listen. The egoic entity may sometimes take over and say something like, I can't deal with that spiritual stuff now.

God, it's just too much. What's the point of all this? It's not getting me anywhere, is it?

Been doing that for years. Where is it getting me? Nowhere.

The story in the head. And then you believe in what it says. And sometimes it can stop people temporarily from going to the spiritual teaching.

But then if that goes on for long enough, you start to suffer more and more. And finally the suffering becomes the thing that awakens you again, that creates the gap or the opening in you and you're ready, ah. Now you want to listen again.

Can't stand the suffering anymore. So willpower is not it. Now it may sometimes look to, at first sight, it may look, when I say, be present, you can choose to be present.

When there's a certain level of presence in you already, you can choose to be present rather than to drift back into your mind. And there is an alertness associated with presence. But it is a relaxed alertness, not a tight alertness.

It's not a, no, it's a, you see the difference? It's easier acting it out than talking about it. It's not the tight, almost fearful alertness, or even some anger behind it.

It's a relaxed alertness. So it's almost, it might seem incompatible almost, relaxed alertness, but it's not. So the alertness has an intensity to it.

And, but that's not willpower. The non-relaxed alertness has an element of willpower in it, and that's not it. You can sometimes see in paintings or drawings of Zen masters, that alertness, and in Zen masters, that particular version of spiritual awakening, there is a fierceness.

There's a fierceness to the way they look sometimes in the ancient drawings. And there is also a fierceness to the way in which they teach. That's partly culturally conditioned, because everything comes through the particular veil, the teaching is the same, no matter what cultural veil or conditioned veil it comes through.

But the way it manifests can be conditioned by a culture, or in the case of a teacher, it can be conditioned by the energy field of the teacher. Some teachers are, seem more forthright and aggressive, almost. It's not really aggressive, but it might look so to the ego.

So there can be, there's a fierceness sometimes to the alertness, which is sometimes required to break through all the mental stuff you need to go into. Now, whether you look fierce at the same time, doesn't matter, you can. But if you look, the greatest drawings of Zen masters, at first sight, they look fierce.

If you look more closely, you'll see that behind the fierceness, there's a compassion and a gentleness. And of course, those can only be done by artists who are masters, who can capture what the inner reality of the Zen master, which is both the fierceness and behind it is hiding compassion. The same applies to meditation practice.

Willpower is not a good way to ensure that your meditation practice is successful. In other words, it doesn't work. Because willpower in meditation is the famous lid on the boiling kettle.

You're holding it down, forcing yourself to be still instead of surrendering into the present moment so that stillness arises naturally, forcing yourself to be still. And then that may work for a while. And when the next episode of unconsciousness happens, which will be soon, when you go back into your normal life, after the meditation, you come downstairs into the kitchen.

And before you know it, you're shouting at somebody. And everybody's disturbing your serenity. Just to remind you, especially people who are meditators or have been meditating for some time, a few years or many years, perhaps the greatest obstacle to true meditation is the idea that you are doing a meditation.

And as part of that idea, the belief or assumption that you're trying to get somewhere or achieve something through the meditation. And so meditation becomes like the rest of your life. What you do is a means to an end.

And the end is considered more important than the present moment. So you're doing in order to achieve or get or attain something. And that underlies most people's meditation, that unconscious assumption.

And that's a great obstacle because true meditation is about something much more immediate. It's getting in touch with, we could say, being, which is prior to all doing. Now, being has been talked about in philosophy.

There are big books written about being. Jean-Paul Sartre wrote Being and Nothingness. Heidegger wrote Being and Time, two very big books.

They're interesting, well, in some respects. But they're still trying to reach being through doing. In their case, it's through thinking and conceptualization to reach what they correctly assume to be something absolutely fundamental that underlies all of existence.

They try to reach it through conceptualization and thinking, which is another way of doing, of course. Thinking is a kind of doing also. And they didn't quite realize, of course, they were professional philosophers, so they couldn't stop thinking.

Philosophy being the activity of thinking, at least in modern times. In very ancient times, there was something else there that went beyond thinking. So true meditation is getting in touch with something deeper than any kind of doing, where you no longer try to achieve or attain anything, any point in the future.

Add anything to yourself as some kind of additional achievement or even realization. In fact, the belief that what you need is some kind of realization is the great obstacle to true realization. So being, the substratum, to use a geological term as a kind of analogy, being is a substratum of all existence and all life, that which underlies it all.

And that can be known directly within you, but not in the sense in which things in this world are known. Not even in the sense in which anything is known that becomes an object in your consciousness. It's a direct knowing where subject, the subject that knows and the object that is known merge into one.

Now, being or to be, sometimes people overlook that when you say I am, that is the first person singular of the verb to be. So being can be sensed directly. Again, I have to mention not as an object, but as object and subject in one can be sensed directly if you realize the I am that underlies all of which arises in your life.

All sense perceptions, all thinking, all emotions, feelings, that which makes it possible for sense perceptions to be there, thoughts to be there, emotions to be there, what is it that

makes it possible for these things to arise and then to become your so-called life? Because your life consists of sense perceptions, thoughts, and emotions. I think that's about it.

I can't, there's nothing else is there. It's just a different combination of sense perceptions, thoughts and emotions or feelings that make up individual people's lives. So a different combination of sense perceptions, this is what constitutes individuality as we call it.

But if you look closely at what individuality or individual existence means, it is a mixture, a particular mixture of sense perceptions, thoughts, and emotions and feelings. So then we can then, the common denominator in all individuality so-called is they're all different kinds of mixture and there are billions of people on this planet with each one slightly different or sometimes fundamentally different mixture of sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions. Okay, we have that.

And yet what makes it possible for these sense perceptions, thoughts, and emotions to arise and to become a person? What is that? What is the light in which these are known?

What or who is the knower of all these sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions? And that is the substratum, that is the being or the knowing, the eternal subject of all knowing. And essentially you are that.

What is infinitely more fundamental than anything that arises in your life that's to do with experiences. When we say experiences, really it's sense perceptions and thoughts and emotions coming together, experiences that make up your life. So we are getting at now as an experience, an experiential realization here and now is who or what you are beyond sense perceptions and experiences.

Experiences includes those things, sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions, feelings. Is there a more fundamental dimension than the temporary coming together of your experiences, which of course come and go fairly quickly and then evaporate completely and then the person is gone. So the question is, who are you beyond those things?

But don't look for an answer on any kind of conceptual level, but as a direct realization here and now, sensing in yourself that which makes all those things possible, your life experience. And that is the being that underlies it all. We could say also the unconditioned consciousness that underlies it all.

So you can access here the silent spaces in our meditation. Become aware of the silent spaces. This is why we still call it a meditation or it's not a doing.

Become aware of the silent spaces here, like now and now and now and realize that when you become aware of the silent space, there is no thinking anymore. There's a cessation of thinking. It arises naturally.

And what remains of you when there's this cessation of thinking and with that, the cessation of doing? All you know then, what is left, is there is a presence there, but it has no form or attributes. What remains is a silent presence in the background.

And you can sense that silent presence not just with your head, but I could almost say with your entire being, with your whole so-called body, you can sense the silent presence in the background. And the background, when it temporarily actually becomes the foreground, and you sense it not as something, but as yourself. That is why I say subject and object merge into one.

The perceiving, it's not perception, the knowing subject and that which is known are one. And that's the realization of being. And you don't need to read 500 pages or whatever of Sartre's being in nothingness or Heidegger's being in time.

Oh, that's a relief. Perhaps the mind comes in and says, can it be that simple? Of course, it is the most immediate and the most natural thing to know that in yourself.

But somehow humans at some point lost it. Perhaps that's what's called the fall. And humans are now regaining it here and now.

And when you regain something that had been lost, you know it more deeply. So what was before a natural connectedness with being, perhaps many thousands of years ago, natural, by the way, means you don't even know it's there. You're just connected with being.

And there's that rootedness in being there now becomes a conscious rootedness in being. And that's the next step in the evolution. Could also be called the awakening.

Your challenge is in daily life to stay connected with that dimension, realize that dimension as the essential I am, the self-realization. So that remains then in the background as this silent presence or spaciousness. It remains in the background while in the foreground you deal with your daily life.

And you even you think again, you do things, you respond, you feel, you have emotions. But now there's a fundamental difference when that dimension is present consciously in your life. That which happens in the foreground of your life, which is thinking and doing and experiencing, never absorbs you totally anymore.

You give it its due, yes, but it does not take up the totality of your attention or your consciousness. Or in other words, you don't lose yourself completely anymore when you start to think and to do and to react, which is the normal state, lost, lost in doing and thinking. So you become a grounded, in the true sense of the word, in the deepest sense of the word, a grounded human being, rooted in being, and then able to deal with things in a different way also, because it does change when that dimension is present in the background of your life.

You can sense the beingness in the background. It's not difficult. Then the way in which you do, the way in which you think and experience undergoes a change.

You don't need to change it yourself. It just happens. And everything you're thinking and you're doing becomes imbued with quite a peaceful energy.

The next step, one could say, in the evolution of human consciousness is stepping out of self-talk, which is the conditioned mind, and realizing there is much more to who I am than this conditioned content of my mind. And that is a beginning of awakening. It's not those words, not that you need to believe that there is much more to who I am than the self-talk in my head, because that is still self-talk in the head.

I believe there's more to who I am, and you better believe it too. And suddenly you go, and your attention is suddenly in the present moment. The self-talk is never in the present moment.

And suddenly your attention is in the present moment, and you go, and the whole person at that right now is not there anymore when you go. You're not a person at that moment anymore. You are an aware presence.

So that shift in consciousness can happen very easily, whether it stays with you for a few seconds or a few minutes or an hour or a day or longer. It doesn't matter that much. The important thing is that it arises.

It arises. And suddenly the unhappy self-talk entity is disappearing, and what has taken its place is just a sense of presence. And that sense of presence is first of all aware of sense perceptions.

So you look more consciously, you listen more consciously, because there's so much to look at and so much to listen to. And it's not only looking and listening, it's also feeling the breeze on your skin, the air. Do you feel the warmth of the air?

And there might be a scent in the air. And you become conscious of that. But feeling the air, the movement of air on your skin requires a considerable degree of awareness.

A person who is immersed in the self-talk in the head, they cannot feel the breeze touching their skin. They can't feel that. It's a very subtle thing.

And to feel subtle things, you need to have that aware presence, that alert, aware presence. You cannot be immersed in the self-talk to really honor and appreciate deeply the present moment, which is life. We could say honor, appreciate deeply life, because present moment and life are synonymous.

There is no life away from the present moment. If you cannot appreciate the present moment, it means you are away from life. Instead of life, you have a substitute in your

head, which is abstractions in the form of thoughts.

So to notice the breeze on your skin, you need to be quite alert and basically still inside. And then you can go. Ego is something that needs to be overcome.

Schools should encourage children not to excessively identify with concepts.

[Speaker 14] (4:24:49 - 4:26:02)

Question is on kids. I have a teenager at home. And like many, most teenagers, they tend to get unconscious.

So I think what I've seen is when they are small, I mean, they are the most present, right? They are in the present and doing everything with the joy as they grow up, middle school, high school. Some stage we give them a cell phone.

They have computers to work on homeworks and everything. And obviously they're trying to identify themselves and they become unconscious. So the question is, and it is a good spiritual practice, even for me, sometimes I can be conscious when they are unconscious and sometimes you're drawn into the unconsciousness.

So the question is, what can we do to bring in that presence into their lives or what are, if there's anything that, you know, you are doing or Eckhart Teachings is doing with the schools, in middle schools or high schools where we can have a course or something where, you know, as a group, they can get some kind of presence teachings.

[Speaker 1] (4:26:03 - 4:45:19)

Yes. Thank you. That's very important.

Thank you. There's also, the question could also refer to parents. How to approach teenage years typically are difficult for, so the human ego has to, at that point, the human ego has to develop and grow.

Unfortunately, the way it is for most humans on the planet so far is, the human ego should be a limited time period when it grows in a human being, let's say up to the age of 20, 25, at the most 30, let's say mid-20s. Then you cannot prevent the arising of ego in a child and an adolescent, nor should you want to prevent it. It's not possible.

They need to develop a sense of separate identity that is part of the evolution. The tragedy is, unfortunately, if people get stuck with that ego for the rest of their lives, they never go beyond it. So for a parent, to begin with parents, it's to observe the growth of the ego in the child, which already starts with, may start at the age of two or three when the child begins to, well, the child learns his or her name and then the child learns that it is possible to possess something.

It learns the concept of mine fairly early and so it possesses a toy and it learns the concept of my toy. That's the beginning of ego. And then also the beginning of the suffering that comes with ego identification because if the toy is lost or disappears or somebody takes it, enormous suffering arises.

Oh, oh, my toy, mine. This is the early suffering of egoic consciousness. The next step would be for the child to assert that it is better in some ways than another.

I can jump higher than you. Can you jump this high? No, you can't.

Look at me. I can do it. And parents say, you're great.

You're doing it. And that's fine. If you don't overdo the praise, give praise when praise is deserved, but don't just praise anything because then there comes an inflation of praise and that can create a narcissistic personality, which is an overblown ego.

Many parents these days do that. They say, everything you do is so great. You're the greatest.

You're wonderful. It feels good for the child, but when you print money, when you print money, it loses its value. It's called inflation.

I know that, but many politicians these days don't seem to know it. And they probably have degree in economics. But that's on the side.

So you are there to gently guide them. You observe the growth of their ego as it has to gently guide them. And school ideally should prepare children for adulthood and should also prepare them perhaps for the transcendence of ego.

Even when I said 25 years old, just a number came to me. It could already be at 21. Ego is something that needs to be overcome, but something that is necessary for a certain stage of human development.

So schools should encourage children not to excessively identify with concepts. And there are a few alternative schools, I believe, that already to some extent do that. There are perhaps, I don't know, Montessori schools or Rudolf Steiner schools and so on.

They, to some extent, they encourage children not to be excessively drawn into conceptualization at an early age. That is very dangerous. Also to be given the devices at a very early age has a very detrimental effect on their development.

I know it's an easy thing to do for parents to keep them quiet, but it is not good for the growth of their consciousness. Children need to remain in touch for as long as possible with nature. Some way they need to be taken out into nature, even if it's just a park, but preferably out of the city periodically where they are encouraged to interact with nature, leave all the devices behind.

Every school should do that, take them out in groups where they spend time connecting with nature without their devices. These are all important things. To teach even abstract subjects like mathematics and so on at too early an age is also detrimental for their development.

So there are many things that I know, I have met quite a few teachers over the years who are already bringing that into their classrooms. But so far, mostly on an individual basis, it's rare that it has become, for it to become a already part of the official curriculum, that's still relatively rare. Although there are some schools now also, I don't know what schools they are, whether they may be private schools that teach mindfulness, so-called, I don't often use that term, but basically mindful is to be present in what you do.

I don't use that term because it implies that your mind is full. So I'd rather not use that, but they teach mindfulness. So for a parent to encourage the child not to get lost in conceptualization, to encourage the child to continue to interact with nature if you can't have an animal in the house, that is nature too, a cat or a dog, encourage the child to look after the animal, to relate to the animal.

Animal presence can be very important in a home, especially for children. So it requires the teachers to finally establish the teaching of presence as part of the curriculum. And that implies also, it signifies to help children to become aware of their emotions.

That was one of the most vital things. And if it's not taught at school, the parents have to do it or the parents would do it anyway. Help the children to become aware of their emotions because the emotions can wreak havoc with the child's life.

And sometimes they get amplified in the teenage years when many adolescents become very hostile and they're consumed by negative emotions, by self-hatred, by hatred of others, by hatred of everything, very destructive emotions. So the most vital thing that a child already at an age of four or five needs to begin to be taught to observe his or her emotional field rather than be always taken over by it. As I mentioned before, not that it's not challenging anymore.

There will be challenges, but of a different kind. External challenges will continue to come. The challenges, the problems and difficulties of the unobserved mind, however, will no longer be there.

And that's a huge percentage of suffering in a person's life. A huge percentage of suffering, of unhappiness to use a generic term, a huge percentage of unhappiness arises not created by situations, but by the mind. You can verify that wherever you are and see when you begin to feel upset, you begin to feel unhappy.

What is it that causes you to feel upset or unhappy? Is it a situation or is it what your

mind is telling you about the situation? What makes you unhappy?

You can test it in the most seemingly insignificant situation because the mechanism is the same, whether it's a big suffering or a small suffering. You're in a queue in the supermarket. It's not moving.

The person is so slow, the cashier, and so inefficient, and you have so much else to do. Well, why should you be standing here waiting if they could only find people who are more efficient and just can't stand it anymore? I'm not going back here anymore.

I really should be. That's the beginning of suffering. It's unhappiness.

And what's creating it? The situation or your mind? And this is only a small example.

You can take almost your entire life when suffering arises. Is it really the situation? In some cases, it may be because there can be dreadful things that can happen.

But if then, if you're still unhappy several months later, then it's also your mind again. But so observe how, when you become aware of what your mind is doing, when you're upset, when unhappiness arises, see, okay, is it a situation? Is it my mind?

And suddenly the awareness comes and your mind is no longer the unobserved mind. Now your mind becomes the observed mind. And then you realize what your mind is doing.

And then you stand in the supermarket and Nick you and said, okay, I don't really need all that. What would it be like to just accept this moment as it is without adding the mental stuff to it? Oh, not so bad.

I'm just standing here, breathing, looking at people. Okay, there's nothing wrong with it. If your mind doesn't tell you there's something wrong with it, it's actually okay.

It's just the present moment. If I were not standing here, I would be standing somewhere else. Or if I wouldn't be standing, I would be sitting somewhere else or walking somewhere else.

Not that different, but their mind tells you should be somewhere else. I shouldn't be. So you become, and you can tell the difference between situations where you can do something about it and situation where you can't do anything about.

But even if you can do something about it, make sure that you accept the present moment first and then you take action. Because if you don't accept the present moment, the action you take will be action arising from upset or from anger. And this is karmic action.

It creates more of the same stuff coming back at you. It might solve this particular

situation, but in solving this particular situation through your angry reaction, you've created two or three other situations in the next moment that reflect back this karmically. Insane.

Normal. This is why I say normal equals insane. So observe your mind.

See how much of your unhappiness is not the situation that you lost your job, your marriage collapsed, whatever it is, is that causing the unhappiness or the mental commentary, the story in the head, that tells you how bad this is. Either by blaming somebody else or by blaming yourself or blaming life or blaming God. Can choose whatever you want to blame.

The mind is happy. Whatever the mind can blame is the egoic mind is happy with that. But that's all those challenges or suffering or difficulties, those things begin to evaporate from your life.

What remains, however, is certain challenges that come in wherever you are, through situations, through other people who are still unconscious. There are a few left, you might have noticed, who are still unconscious and you can't remove yourself from that. So you're faced with certain situations that correspond to where humanity is at in their collective level of consciousness.

You might have physical problems still, although many illnesses are created by the unobserved mind, there are other factors too. And the body will eventually grow old. And that's a big problem if you make it into one.

And a dreadful thing, if you had completely identified with the body and now it's beginning to shrink or disappear or collapse, who am I now? If for the past few decades, you're looking in the mirror, gave you most of your sense of who you are or taking selfies, one day, a few years pass, then the selfies are not that satisfying to look at anymore. Who am I now?

There's something wrong, I need to get a new iPhone. So that's the, beware of what your mind is doing. And if you only get, there are many things from this evening that are potentially life transforming.

And even just taking one with you would be enough. Even if you took the one, the last thing we just mentioned, whenever suffering arises, upset, angry reaction, unhappiness, be aware of where does it come from? My mind or the situation?

And if it is your mind, do I want that? Who am I? Am I those thoughts?

No. Well, who am I? Do I want those thoughts?

Do I want that unhappiness? Is that my choice to think unhappy thoughts and feel

unhappy? Year, day after day, night after night, every time I wake up in the middle of the night, the same thoughts come, make me unhappy.

And I think this is the reality of my life. The thoughts that make me unhappy, people think that's the reality of my life. It's a total illusion.

And so you step out of that into, oh, that's just things that happened. And that's just life. Things come and go.

You lose, you gain. And then you lose again. And then you gain and loss.

Impermanence. Can't hang on to anything. There's no security out there.

No matter how many life insurances, insurance you have or whatever, it's an illusion. Life insurance. I have a big life insurance.

Well, to start with, it shouldn't be called life insurance. It should be called death insurance. But that's not so attractive anymore.

It would destroy the illusion. This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

[Speaker 6] (4:45:22 - 4:46:15)

I think it's even wrong to use the word consciousness because we make it a thing. We make it a noun. And as soon as we add ness to anything, we turn a quality or an attribute into something which we can talk about.

It's useful for language. Yes, it becomes an object again.

[Speaker 1] (4:46:15 - 4:46:25)

Exactly. A mental object. Yes.

But so can one talk about it all? Is there a better word that doesn't have that? Is it the Tao?

[Speaker 6] (4:46:26 - 4:46:58)

Well, I think we should not use nouns for it because as soon as we use a noun, whether it's Tao, consciousness, awareness, whatever, as soon as we use a noun, we're making it a thing which implies we're beginning to look for another object, another form of perception. And so even the question, what is consciousness, which they're asking, to me is a wrong question. It's like we are knowing, we are conscious, and then we're asking, what is it?

We're looking for something other than what we are.

[Speaker 1] (4:46:58 - 4:47:02)

The question immediately makes it into an object again.

[Speaker 6] (4:47:02 - 4:47:27)

So I prefer to use verbs for it. Let's see what that sounds like. Well, I am aware and there is a wearing.

I mean, what I know is there is, we could call it a wearing. There is experiencing. Consciousing doesn't work quite.

[Speaker 1] (4:47:28 - 4:47:37)

Well, a wearing, so you have to create a new word to get rid of the inherent error in nouns and so on.

[Speaker 6] (4:47:37 - 4:48:18)

Yes, or even knowing. Knowing. I mean, knowing is a word we do have.

There is that knowing. I know my experience. There is this experience now, being here, talking to you, and there is the knowing of that experience.

And that to me is, that's what we're referring to as consciousness. And that is, as you pointed out many times, that's what is always there. It is unchanging.

Just that knowing or the knowingness. So I think science is actually misleading itself by looking for something. Yes.

Not realizing it's the act of looking. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (4:48:18 - 4:48:53)

So in a way, science can never find the answer to consciousness until or unless the scientist becomes introspective, to direct attention away from there, redirects attention back to the source within himself. In other words, the scientist has to become a meditator or a mystic. Yeah.

And then, of course, whether the mystic would still want to be a scientist, I don't know.

[Speaker 6] (4:48:55 - 4:49:35)

I actually think the mystic can be a scientist. I think we have to, again, draw a distinction between science as it's practiced now and the belief systems of science, which are, it's a very materialistic belief system. Yes.

And it excludes awaring or consciousness and deliberately has done so because you can't measure it. Yes. You can't put a rule up against it.

And it hasn't seemed important. I mean, science is explanation of how the universe works, seems to work perfectly well without ever getting into this funny thing called subjectivity or knowing that we don't need bother about that.

[Speaker 1] (4:49:59 - 6:19:34)

I come from an evangelical Christian background and was a true believer until five years ago when my beliefs literally fell away. So many of the ideologies and stories in the ancient texts, both old and new testaments, began to ring as insane. I didn't want to let go of my faith.

I just couldn't continue to believe. It was as if the decision was made for me. It occurred to me at that time that a belief is just a thought and yet we hold beliefs to be this incredibly important thing.

Why are beliefs a source of identity? Have you ever heard of someone's religious beliefs just falling away? What are your thoughts on beliefs and consciousness?

Thank you. Now, obviously, you believe when you believe that something is the case, it implies that you don't know. You have no evidence for it, but you believe it.

So you wouldn't say, I believe in this table. I don't have to because I know it's here. Well, we call it table.

Who knows what it is on other levels? But you don't need to say, I believe in this flower. I know there is a flower here, at least that's on this level of perception.

There's so belief implies you don't really know, but you would like something to be or... And that's interesting in religions. Those things are regarded as very important.

You believe in certain things that have been transmitted to you from generation to generation that are in the books. And then you have a certain belief structure. And since you're not free of ego, it becomes incorporated into your sense of identity, the collective identity of we, the believers in these particular kinds of stories.

There is in the English language, there's the word belief. And there's also the word faith. And they're quite different, but sometimes people don't realize the difference.

In some languages, there's no difference between these two words. In Spanish, you have faith, which is faith, and cliencia, which is belief. But if I remember correctly in German, you only have one word for faith or belief, and that would be glaube or glauben.

But they're very different. Faith is, a true meaning of faith is a deep sense of trust. And

what you are trust, and you have that deep sense of trust because you are connected with the essence of who you are, which is one with the essence of the universe.

I forgot to mention that before. You are connected with the essence of who you are, that's the vertical dimension. You realize yourself as consciousness.

And that consciousness is not yours, although I sometimes call it your consciousness. It's not yours. Because if I said, my consciousness, I would have created a duality.

There would have been me, an entity who has consciousness. But there is no me without consciousness. I am consciousness.

It is the essence of who I am. So, when you know that you are connected not only with the essence of who you are, but that essence of who you are is linked to the very source of all creation, it emanates from there. And when you are therefore connected with that, then what arises is this deep sense of trust in life.

And what is trust? Well, one definition of trust would be absence of fear. There is no more psychological fear.

If you only inhabit the horizontal dimension, fear is inevitable to a greater or lesser degree. It is your companion as anxiety, as worry, and for many other manifestations of fear, including anger, which in most cases, hiding underneath anger is fear. So, faith is something wonderful that does not require belief, although in some languages, as I said, they are the same word.

So, when Jesus talks about faith, it is about that, that state of connectedness with being, with the essence of who you are and yet something infinitely greater than you could call you. For a long time, when human consciousness was not all that developed, the only way millions of humans could be reached with some kind of spiritual truth was through stories. And so there are stories that contain truths that are not literally, these stories are not literally true.

They have actually a deeper truth than a literal truth. And this is sometimes called mythological stories. Let's give another example of literal truth or historical truth.

And there is a deeper truth than the historical truth. If you read a great work of literature, that all the characters, they might've been inspired originally by certain historical events or they might've been inspired by people that the author knew and observed. But basically, all the characters that are described in this great work of literature, whatever it may be, they never existed as such.

These characters never exist. It's not an historical account of what happened. But in fact, this tells you more about the human condition than any historical work could do.

So it contains a deeper or higher truth than if it had been a historical account of something. And so there are many things in the old religions that are of that kind. And they have had a useful and continue to have a very useful helpful function of transmission of truth, which people, if you expressed them in a more abstract way, nobody would have understood a word.

But if people can identify with certain stories, there are more than stories. There are expressions of a deep truth. And then there are the literalist interpretations of these things.

In Christianity, for example, evangelical interpretations, they take everything absolutely literally. And then it can easily becomes an ideology in the mind. And there's no depth anymore suddenly.

So this is something that the questioner grew out of. Now it's important not to throw out the baby with the, what's the, baby and with the bath water into a funny expression. I don't think it exists in Spanish.

A child, baby, con el agua del baño. So it could then suddenly arise, all this is just nonsense. If somebody suddenly grows beyond the stories, sometimes they arrive at the conclusion, oh, this is all nonsense.

But that is not the case. There is a deeper level on which these things can be understood. And in the case of here, there are certain churches, of course, where you might not be able to continue if they are mainly ideologies, then you may not be able to continue in a particular church.

It is possible to deepen whatever your religion still is. You can see a deeper truth as presence grows. And in some cases, it may happen that you leave it behind completely.

That's possible too. Even in Buddhism, you have to separate the mythology from the essence teaching, very profound teaching about the human condition. And then you have the mythology, which says when the Buddha came out of the womb of his mother, he immediately uttered the word, I have come for the salvation of the world.

That's a lovely story. On the downside of the story, on the one hand, it's a way of transmitting certain things, but on the downside, it confuses form and essence. And then the Buddha becomes a kind of God, God-like figure to be worshiped.

The Zen masters recognize that. And that's why there's a story of when the Zen master was getting cold in the middle of the winter and he ran out of firewood, he used the wooden image of the Buddha for the fire to keep warm. So I have certain respect.

I know it can be terribly misused, the religions in the service of the ego, the personal and the collective ego. And they have been misused for egoic purposes over the centuries,

have been quite, have become part of the insanity in many ways of the human ego as it was growing. But despite all that, there is something there that is of value, of great value.

It's still, it might be deeply hidden, but it's still there. And that's, for example, why although a conventional Christian would probably, I'm not a Christian in a conventional sense. Well, I'm everything.

I'm a Buddhist. I'm Christian. I'm Hindu.

I'm a Muslim. I'm all religions. You know, the essence that underlies them, you can say I'm all of that.

But although I'm not a conventional Christian, Jesus has something, is something of profound significance. To me, and some people believe that he didn't even exist. Some people, there are some books that provide convincing arguments that actually he didn't actually exist.

And even that to me doesn't matter because Jesus exists in the collective human consciousness. And there was a time when they made a movie many years ago that the Monty Python team, they made a movie called, I think it was called Life of Brian. And that was a kind of parody of Jesus.

There was a man who spoke and behaved like Jesus, but he wasn't Jesus. But anyway, I read about it and I could not get myself to see it. I just did not want to see it.

And to this day, I wouldn't, I would not want to see it because I have too much respect for what that means that in the collective human consciousness. Let's start with the more complicated questions. This one is typed, so it must be really complicated.

I don't have any doubt that we are being, playing a human role. And I don't have any doubt that we are one with the entire universe. And that individuality as a person, an ego is nothing else but an illusion.

So when death occurs, it sounds natural to me that we will come back to the dimension we always have been in where we belong to the universal unity of the cosmos. Home. In the very seldom occasions in which you slightly touch, something's happening to my voice, the edge of the issue of reincarnation, I always get the impression that you, with your often used explanation that you are not a dead master.

I think that that was a Zen master who said that. What happens after death? They asked him and he said, how do you ask me?

I'm not. Well, they said, you're the master. And then he said, yeah, but I'm not dead.

So the obvious question then that keeps floating in the air is being every, here comes

the question. Being every one of us one with the totality and seen clearly that individuality is just an illusion created by the mind, then what or who is that unity that supposedly reincarnates? Now that's a profound question.

So if it's an illusion, what is it that reincarnate? That's an interesting word. It comes from Latin and it has in there somewhere C-A-R-N which means flesh and reincarnate.

It's the same as chili con carne. In the dish chili con carne, of course means meat because it's dead. When it's alive, it's flesh.

English language has two words because who would want to eat flesh? In German you eat flesh, but that's another story. Reincarnate is to assume a physical form, a fleshly body.

So you reincarnate into that. What is it then that assumes the form of the physical vehicle? And the answers to questions like that are best found through self-observation.

And you can observe reincarnation in yourself many times during the day when you identify with a thought because the moment you completely identify with the thought, you as the consciousness have forgotten your essential nature as consciousness, forgotten who you are, and you have reincarnated into a thought form. You have assumed a thought form. So that incarnation that happens many times during the day, unless you're really present, you may catch yourself completely identifying with the thought.

You become it and then you think you are it. It gives you your sense of self. And that's basically how reincarnation happens.

And now you know directly without needing some abstract philosophical discourse on my part, you can verify in your own experience what incarnation is and how it happens. You lose yourself in a kind of hypnotic state. It's a kind of, when you're completely identified with a thought, it's a kind of dream.

It's a kind of hypnotic state or dream. So the consciousness, then one could say you as a person, well, this goes a little bit into almost philosophical thought. You as a person is a dream of the one consciousness.

It's an analogy. It is not totally correct. Nobody could give a totally correct statement about something that transcends language and even analytical thought.

But just as an approximation, just to get you a feeling of what it might be like. You as a person, you can, well, I'm just suggesting to you that maybe for a moment, you consider the possibility, not trying to convince you of anything, or I'm not saying this is the ultimate explanation, but just suggesting that you might consider the possibility that you, the person that you are or seem to be in this particular life, time, incarnation, is an

aspect of the dream of the universe. You are a figure in the dream of the universal consciousness.

You are being dreamt by the universal consciousness. And then you disappear. And then perhaps you reappear again because you haven't realized your identity with universal consciousness.

So the dream continues in a slightly different form and to a bit more drama. And then you disappear again. And then the dream happens again in a slightly different form until the urge to, that this pull towards incarnating, identifying with form begins to dissipate.

And this may be happening in this dream character that you are here. The urge, the desire to reincarnate into the next thought, the next thought form, because the thought form gives you your sense of self and your identity. And you begin to awaken to a deeper reality of who you are.

And then you will notice in this lifetime, the urge to reincarnate into another thought and another decreases. And so you can observe in this lifetime that the urge towards reincarnation diminishes. So, and that's the, one could say perhaps that process happens because the universe is becoming more conscious, is awakening to itself.

One could almost say that the universe started off, it all started off as a big, huge dream, the dream of form gradually becoming more and more complex. And then another stage is reached when the dream begins to, there's so many things that you can, with reference to yourself and self-observation, that will tell you a lot of mysteries in the macrocosm. If you look into the microcosm of yourself and observe yourself clearly, because there's a famous ancient dictum, as above, so below.

So you are in a way, in many ways, you are a reflection of the macrocosm of the totality. So just through self-observation, you can find many answers to questions that arise concerning the universe. So in fact, the deepest answers you find by turning your attention within, the less deep answers you find by turning your attention without, and you get big telescopes.

And then you forget who or what is looking through the telescope. The mystery is out there. And you forget that the greatest mystery is the fact that there's a consciousness, that the universe is looking at itself.

And the universe is conscious, or becoming conscious, waking up. So these are not ultimate explanations, but approximations or analogies that perhaps can give you a sense of how this all works. Why is love not reciprocated?

Why does one-way love traffic situation arise? I'm placing my aching heart before you. So please operate.

Thank you, thank you. All right, I will begin the operation. Now, one form loves, and the other form doesn't reciprocate.

Why is that? And the pain that comes with that, great pain for many people, this enormous pain. Now, you know that the basic condition of the self, or the egoic self, is one of a very deep-seated sense of lack, of not enough, of not complete.

And then it tries to fill through strategies. The mind-made self tries to fill that lack that it knows and feels almost continuously, except for brief moments when something has been put in there. And then for a moment, the lack is not felt.

It never lasts long. So it looks for the next thing, and it looks to the future. It looks to add to me, to fill that hole that is always there, where I'm not myself.

I'm not complete. I haven't, I'm not home. I haven't arrived.

And so all kinds of strategies are there. But, and one of the main areas where it looks to fulfill that lack is in the area of relationship, the other person, he or she. And then when that happens, the entire focus of the self becomes focused on one other person who is perceived unconsciously as the one who is going to complete me, make me whole.

He or she is the one. And so almost an obsessive attachment forms to that image, that form of that person. And that is called falling in love.

And sometimes if you're lucky, the other person feels the same about you. That you are going to complete him or her also. And of course that is great.

You both feel that you are going to complete each other. And then probably you will want to get married, sign a contract just to make sure that for the rest of your life, you are going to complete me and you're not going to leave me because that would have dire consequences if you broke that contract and left me. Don't you even think about that.

And then you marry. This is where the films end. The director says cut here.

But life goes on. And you marry. And after, perhaps even during the honeymoon, the first doubt comes into your mind whether this actually works.

Whether the other is going to live up to that enormous task of fulfilling and completing you. And then you start an ordinary existence, jobs, family, and gradually it doesn't seem to be working anymore. The completion.

The sense of lack comes back. He or she isn't behaving in the way that he or she should to make me feel complete, make me happy. You read it in ads.

I don't know if you read it in India. Looking for man or woman to make me happy. Oh,

wow.

Who could live up to that? And nobody can. And then the luck that was covered up by the temporary delusion that this person was fulfilling you, this person who has a pain body, but you didn't know that.

The temporary delusion that this person should be fulfilling you, that suddenly the sense of incompleteness, aloneness, fear, not being yours reemerges. But now through your mind, you attach that to the other person and say, he or she is the cause for what I feel. You're feeling again the basic egoic condition.

You're feeling it more strongly now because for a little while, it was covered up by the love relationship. And so gradually, the love then periodically turns into hate. And every time the person is not fulfilling his obligations or her, the love turns into aggression, hostility, withdrawal, complete withdrawal.

What's wrong with you? Nothing is wrong. Just don't want to talk, whatever, or throwing something, whatever they do.

And then the relationship fluctuates for a while, it works again. And then it doesn't work. It works again, it doesn't work.

And then it becomes the periods when it doesn't work become longer. And you feel it feels bad. The happiness of marriage turns into the unhappiness of just coexistence.

The happiness of the honeymoon becomes the divorce and they're all one really. So it was an attempt to fulfill you through some form, some outer form. And then all that happens in the end, you sense the unfulfillment more strongly.

And then you blame that form for causing you that pain. It's egoic pain. This is the pain that arises out of love-hate relationships.

Now, the questioner, of course, is not at that stage because it is one way traffic, as he puts it. That great love is felt for this form, but it's not reciprocated. What do you do then?

Then you feel that lack even more strongly. And it's painful. And there's the tendency for the mind to weave all kinds of fantasies around it, all kinds of stories.

And the self gets in there and becomes a very painful self-image of me. And it can then, if it goes on, it can happen that that attraction turns into hate. Can happen.

Not saying it will happen in your case. And then you see it never was love in the first place. So what is called love is the deep-seated need of the ego.

It focuses on one form. So this is a retreat. You've been taken out of your usual

surroundings and put here.

For some of you who have come from more distant places, this is a very exotic environment. Tropical with wonderfully exotic birds and animals and kangaroos and Australian gigantic lizards and all kinds of wonderful things and trees that, if you're not familiar with this part of the world that you've never seen before. So all this is wonderful and helpful.

It can be a helpful thing to be in unusual surroundings because it's easier to be more present in unusual surroundings. That's the advantage of traveling. And that's why, as I've written somewhere, many people feel more alive when they travel.

And when they are at home, their surroundings are so familiar that they lose presence completely. They don't see things anymore. They go from where they live to their office or wherever it is, gone, done it so many times, they don't see it anymore.

And you would be surprised even at home, your usual surroundings, you might have a painting on your walls and haven't looked at it in the past three years, might be very beautiful. Or your garden or the plants in there. So this is the familiarity can lead to a kind of semi-sleep-like state.

And when you're traveling, you go, oh, and the good thing is you might not even have a name for all the new things you see. At home, you know what everything is called, but here you see things, you might see a weird animal. The mind stops because you can't name it and that's a wonderful thing.

Or you see trees that you haven't seen before and you go, or you might say to your friend, look at that. And you might notice in the moment of looking at that, you're not naming it in your mind because you don't know what it's called. So there's a moment, a few seconds of just being present, being the presence rather than the naming person.

And so let's hope we're here for a few days. Let's hope that by the last day, this place will not have become so familiar to you that you're not looking anymore. So it helps to be wide awake to your sense perceptions because that is one way of coming into the present moment, which is why we are here.

Because there is more to the present moment than we realize most of the time. There's more to it. It's the access point to the deeper dimension within yourself.

So as a general theme, underlying theme for our retreat, I recommend, surprisingly, that you practice being in the present moment. So we have this helpful thing that you are in unusual surroundings unless you live just a few miles from here, then it may be a harder job or you might even live next door. However, although you've been taken out of your usual surroundings, you have carried with you something else.

And of course, that's your mind that travels with you wherever you go. That is perhaps the meaning of the book that somebody wrote. I believe the title is Wherever You Go, There You Are.

So wherever you go, you carry your mind and the conditioning of your mind with you. So that is the challenge here on our retreat to transcend the conditioning of your mind, the habitual way of interpreting, the habitual way of reacting to things, habitual mind patterns, if a mind pattern in you is that you frequently and very quickly become discontent with where you are, if that's a pattern in you, then that pattern will arise here also. If your mind pattern is one that loves complaining and finding fault with things, then it's very likely that very quickly this mind pattern will appear here also, despite the fact that you are in these wonderful, unusual surroundings.

The first thing you might complain about is the dinosaurs. And the mind says, I'd rather see a big Buddha or something like that. Or the mind says, we've come here on a spiritual retreat.

Isn't there supposed to be a Buddha somewhere? So you get surprising things, that your expectations are not met in various ways. And that is a challenge to the mind, to the conditioned mind, because the conditioned mind wants its expectations met.

And if they're not met, it gets uneasy, restless, irritated, angry, starts talking about what's wrong. Either silently in your mind or to others. And if others can agree with you, then it's even better.

Or you can go on the internet and then you can get 1,000 people agreeing with you. So you always find those in some of you, maybe one or two of you that have that complaint pattern. I'm not saying if there's something really wrong, you shouldn't do something to rectify it.

So if something is leaking in your room, say, no, I'm not going to say anything because I'm not supposed to complain. No, of course. You go to reception, say there's something there that needs to be rectified.

That's not a complaint. It's just information. Complaint means there is an emotion behind it.

And the emotion says, this should not be happening. Then it becomes a complaint or it's your fault. Then it becomes a complaint.

If it's simply presenting information, it's not a complaint. It's just a fact. And then the question is, can anything be done about it?

If yes, good. Or if they say there's nothing we can do, do you go on insisting that this is very bad and create suffering for yourself? Or do you simply then accept this is what it

is?

And there is no situation ever, including at a retreat in a wonderful, almost perfect place, except for the dinosaurs, for some of you. Almost perfect place as far as the natural environment is concerned. You can't imagine anything more, the profusion of vegetation and aliveness that surrounds you.

You cannot imagine anything more wonderful. And yet it's not perfect. And not just because of the dinosaurs.

There will be other things too that are not perfect. You cannot find a place where you go, everything is just so perfect. It doesn't exist.

If it did exist, you would become incredibly unbearably bored with saying, it's so perfect. What am I going to do now? But of course, you're lucky.

There is no such place. So there's always something that goes wrong. And that's a wonderful thing.

You can not only anywhere, as you might know in life. I believe I'm not the only person who can say that since I was born, life has been challenging ever since then. And very rarely do you get a little bit of moment of freedom from challenges.

And then suddenly something drops behind you or falls on your head, metaphorically speaking. So something you can practice here is to have an expectation that things should be in a certain way and nothing should go wrong. And that reality, external reality, should conform to exactly the expectations of the conditioned mind that creates ultimately unhappiness.

Because a lot of the time, reality does not conform to the expectations of your mind. In some ways it does, in other ways it doesn't. And not only in a retreat, but also in daily life, as you might have noticed.

One damn thing after another. One damn thing after another. And then the mind says, I can't take anymore.

Of course, that's just another thought. Completely untrue. You can take anything.

If you drop the thought, this is what is. So you practice here letting go of the expectations of your mind and live in alignment with what is, internal alignment with what is, rather than demanding that something should be otherwise. The exception is conveying information so that something can be changed.

If it can be changed, that's understood. Or doing it yourself. Clean it up, do this, do that.

That's fine. But other than that, see if here, make it your spiritual practice to live in

alignment with the is-ness of the present moment and honor the present moment. And bring a kind of appreciation to the present moment.

Appreciate while you're here, appreciate whatever the present moment presents to you. Another word for it is you welcome the present moment. And that's not, this is actually a relatively easy place to do that.

It's not, nothing is perfect. We know that. But this is a, you're in a protected setting and it's relatively easy here to welcome the present moment.

It might be easier here than to be at a crowded airport and the flights have been canceled or to be stuck anywhere or to be in the hospital then things, big things, small things happen. Wherever you go, welcoming the present moment is the practice that gives you access to the spiritual dimension, to that which is beyond the person in yourself. It seems too simple almost, but let that be your practice here.

You may remember, I mentioned it once or twice before, there was a Zen teacher and a disciple came to him and said, I'm going away now on a journey for several years. And since I haven't made it, I've been in this monastery for five years and I still haven't got it. Can you give me some practice for my journey?

And the Zen master said, okay, here's your spiritual practice for your journey. Come back in five years and let me know how it went. Wherever you are, whatever situation you find yourself in, whoever you are with, whatever happens, say, thanks for everything.

I have no complaint whatsoever. Is that it? One imagines spiritual practice, some complicated meditation method that takes years to master, but no, he said, make it your spiritual practice to say, thanks for everything.

I have no complaint whatsoever, no matter what happens. So if you miss, whether you catch the bus or you miss the bus, you catch the bus, say, thanks for everything. I have no complaint whatsoever.

You miss the bus, thanks for everything. I have no complaint whatsoever. You're in a lovely hotel room, in a warm bed, thanks for everything.

I have no complaint whatsoever. Or you're out in the cold with nowhere to sleep. Oh, then it not only gets more challenging to say that, but if you say it, and you mean it, saying it is just words.

But if you say it and mean it, when instead of being in a luxury hotel, you find yourself penniless in the street, if you then say it and mean it, that will take you much deeper than being in a luxury hotel bed and saying, thanks for everything. I have no complaint whatsoever. That's relatively easy.

Or you might say, the pillow is not quite the way I want it. But it is, it's relatively easy to say, but say it when you're out in the cold and you can't get a hotel because you don't have the money or whatever. There are no hotels, nowhere to sleep, cold, wet.

Thanks for everything. Thanks. Thanks.

That's a sarcastic thank you. Thanks, God. It's just what I needed.

That's not the thanks. That's not it. It's if you say thanks, which means a total acceptance of this moment, not a total acceptance of the, okay, I might as well accept it for the rest of tonight.

I'm going to be out in the cold. You don't know. Maybe a minute from now, something will happen and you'll find somewhere or somebody will offer you a place to sleep.

It's just this moment. Thanks for everything is thanks for this moment. So, and thanks really here means a complete acceptance of this moment.

And if you accept a moment that seems difficult to accept, that takes you much deeper than accepting a moment that's easy to accept. If you have a nice meal, you have a, you're drinking a cocktail and then you've ordered the starter, which is whatever, let's say oysters, half of what, if some people love them, some don't, but it's, that's a general thing that people think, oh, that's okay. And they can, thanks for these oysters.

Thanks for everything. I have no complaint whatsoever. Thanks for everything.

And then you go home and suddenly you feel sick in your stomach. So when you were eating the oysters, thanks for everything. I have no complaint, right?

But what about now? Because you ate too many oysters. So it's bringing your inner self into alignment with the present moment, a very powerful spiritual practice.

Why is it so powerful? Especially when it's, when it's a situation that's challenging and you still say it and you mean it. Because everything that sustains the person, the exclusively personal sense of self, in that act of complete surrender to what is, the personal sense of self gives way to a deeper transcendent sense of self, which the Buddhists call no self.

A deeper consciousness of self. Suddenly shines through. So really it's a kind of denying your form identity.

It doesn't mean you don't have it anymore, but you are no longer trapped exclusively in your form identity. The form identity is strengthened the more you can be in opposition to what is, the stronger your form identity, me, the person, the me, the more you are in opposition to what is, the stronger the me becomes, your form identity. And if you can have enemies, lots of enemies, it loves, that gets even stronger.

They're all against me or us, if it's a collective ego. The collective ego loves its enemies, can't actually survive without them. Every collective even needs the others.

We're not us. This is us and that's the others. So that's the wonderful thing that the person, the exclusively personal sense of self becomes weakened, subsides, and something else emerges when you are no longer habitually oppose what is, something emerges that is deeper than the personal sense of self, the transcendent dimension, presence, whatever we want to call it.

Some people call it your higher self or you could call it your deeper self, words, doesn't matter. But something emerges that is from beyond the person. And that is a place of great power and aliveness and possibility.

And that is where you are connected with a vastness and with everybody else too. So it's when you feel, when that transcendent dimension arises, you feel a greater sense of connectedness, no longer the separation with, not only with nature, but also with other humans. You no longer feel the otherness of the other.

It's just yourself in another disguise. That's really becomes your experience. Whoever you meet, there's yourself in another disguise.

Isn't that a wonderful way of being with other humans that essentially you can sense not only your connectedness, but you can also sense your inherent oneness with others. Becoming aware that is more to you than meets the eye. And that's an interesting expression, meets the eye.

Not believing that there's more to you than the physical body and the thoughts that go through your head and the emotions. Not a belief that there's more to me than that, but knowing that there is infinitely more to me, and I'm talking for every I here, knowing that there's infinitely more to who I am than what meets the eye, and what goes on in my head as thought, or in my body as feelings or emotions. If you don't know that directly, real knowing, not knowing about something, but knowing, then you'll just inhabit the surface reality.

There's a philosopher, Ken Wilber has the expression, flat land. I don't know if he coined it or borrowed it from somebody else, but it's a good word. If you inhabit flat land, there's only the horizontal dimension to your life, then there's no depths.

And that includes thought, and that's a very impoverished existence. If you cannot feel or sense, it's not a feeling. Let's use the word knowing.

If you cannot know your own depths, not as an occasional high that you experience at a retreat or after meditating for a long time, and then you go, and then the moment you go back into your daily life, it's gone again. But to know that continuously, a little analogy, or we could say a visualization, it's what I'm saying now, it's going to be halfway

between an analogy and a visualization. That could be helpful, is to imagine yourself, the person that you are on the surface of a globe, which in a way, you don't have to imagine, it's actually you are.

You exist on the surface of a sphere, a globe, and that's where your life happens. You run around the surface. Some people stay in one small spot on the surface and others move about the surface a lot.

They go around to different places. So you exist on the surface of this globe and your reality is what you see around you on the surface. You look around and big things happen there.

Your life happens there. And then there's a little bit of, below that which can be perceived on the surface, there is the activity of thought. It's a little bit below the surface, but it's really still also a surface phenomenon.

So you exist on the surface of this globe and everybody else that you see and every other life form that you see running around or not running around on the surface is a totally other. That's what the word other comes from. It's not you.

There's another. Every human being, you could have a human being next to you on the surface and it's the other. You don't really feel any true connection with that person because there's a distance between you and that person.

There's a separation. Now, let's say this person that exists on the surface derives his or her life, the life that animates this life form from the center of the sphere. And this person who is perhaps only aware of the surface of the sphere is not aware that he or she derives his life and is connected with, is only an outer expression of a deeper life that originates within the center of the sphere.

Because he or she doesn't know that, because what happens on the surface of the sphere is so hypnotic or seductive and there's so much going on and there's continuously, the attention is drawn to the surface phenomena. And then another thing happens and then there's many things you need because as the little surface entity, you feel very incomplete. You feel there's something very important still missing in my life.

You may be familiar with that feeling or that belief, there's something missing here. And so, but the surface entity looks around the surface to find what's missing here and continuously reaches out on the surface to grasp at something that hopefully will make him or her feel more complete. So there's that search for that.

But there continues to be this underlying sense of, either in some entities, it's felt as there's something wrong. It's not quite right. Hopefully at some point in the future, when I have explored more of my surface reality, it's going to be right.

There's something not right or there's something I'm not complete. And this is an underlying feeling that majority of the population on the planet has a sense of lack. And even if they become wealthy, it's still there.

And also the sense of fear, you feel threatened, feel threatened by other entities that are moving around the surface. What do they want? Oh, there's another one coming.

And there's always completely other. So there's this sense of separation, but occasionally you grasp at another and say, I want you to complete me. It's called falling in love.

And after a while you realize that doesn't work either because it's short-lived. And then you realize one morning, that's not the person I married. What happened?

Totally different person is suddenly here. Something again is fundamentally wrong. So the wrongness comes back, no matter where you go and what you do, that sense of there's something missing or wrong, always sooner or later and usually sooner, creeps up on you.

And so, because you don't know that what really would make your life feel complete and whole and remove the fear would be knowing that the life that you are comes from a very deep place that far transcends who you are as this surface, temporary surface reality. So, and this is where really any spiritual teaching, even might use different terminology, is about that. And to some people, the realization comes without any spiritual teaching because they are so frustrated by their surface reality that somehow suddenly their attention goes deeper.

So here you are connected with deriving your life from the center of the sphere without knowing it, that the life that you are transcends the form reality. So we could differentiate between your form reality, the person with a name and a history and a body and the essence reality, which far transcends the person. If you know your essence reality, then the form reality is far less problematic.

You are no longer then a problem to yourself as if you don't know who you are in essence, you are inevitably a problem to yourself. You create a world of, the way in which you experience the world is problematic and you create a world of problems for yourself. And then of course, you do it to others too.

You can't create problems to yourself without creating problems for everybody around you. So you become the source of the problems in the world, not the solution. But you're accusing others that they are the source of the problems in the world.

So let's, again, this kind of visualization that you are on the sphere and suddenly your attention moves from sense perceptions and from thoughts to a deeper place. And that is easily done when you allow thought activity to subside and the consciousness that

usually would have been absorbed by thinking is suddenly free to realize its own depths. You become still.

And as you become still, you become aware of your own depths. When I say that, it sounds dualistic, but this is only because we're using language. It's not so much that you become aware of your own depths.

Really, there's not two here. The depths that you are is becoming aware of itself. And that's what we call self-realization.

So there are many ways in which this can be pointed to. I sometimes say you become aware that you are spacious inside. You're not just the stuff in your head and that does not make up your true identity, whatever goes on in your mind.

You become spacious as the mind, as there is a gap between two thoughts, for example. Or right now, when there isn't really very much to think about, you suddenly realize there is something else to who I am, although I cannot analyze it in any way. I can only sense it as my own aliveness.

I can only sense it as my own essential beingness. But the dilemma or the fallacy is the belief that whatever you manifest is going to make you happy. It's to seek the fullness of life through what you manifest.

So to go about wanting to manifest material abundance in your life is perhaps not the right way to go about it because you're concentrating on the outermost layer of abundance. And even if you manage to manifest abundance on the outer level, it's not going to give you the true feeling of abundance. It's not, in other words, it's not going to make you happy.

It's not going to fulfill you except for a few days. The new possession, nice and shiny, whatever it is, and there you look at it, got it now, it's mine. And after a few days or a week or two, or give it a month, it wears off.

It's no longer that fulfilling to be driving the Ferrari or whatever it is. There's nothing wrong with the Ferrari, but if you're looking to the Ferrari for happiness and fulfillment and to give you the feeling of, it's not going to work for that long. If you're just driving it because you enjoy that experience, that's a different matter.

There's a very, there is a difference here. So don't condemn the world of things. This has been done traditionally by many religious people.

They were afraid of it. And so don't go there. You must not have any possessions in many religious orders and so on, not just Christian, but also other religions, monks, nuns.

No, you must not have any possessions. In some traditions, Buddhist monks are not

allowed to touch money. Of course, I can see the reason behind it, but it would be even greater, of course, if you could touch money and you're free of attachment to the money that you touch.

I'm not attached to that, and you can touch it. It's fine. Rather than being a, ooh.

And of course, you're not allowed to touch a woman. Oh, ooh. It's dangerous because, of course, the reasoning behind it is, it will take you into complete unconsciousness.

The sexual urge will arise up in you and will make you totally unconscious. Maybe that's the reason why in some cultures, women are covered, scared. It could be chaos.

And yet, if you are connected with a source, then all that is not a problem. So, manifesting abundance is not really the right way. Go to the source and allow from the source for abundance if it wishes to manifest in your life.

You start with the source, then you go into enjoying all the forms of life, next level of abundance. Then you enjoy relating with the forms of life, the play of whatever you do in life. You enjoy that, and then that is how, and out of that enjoyment of what you do, that energy most likely also brings things into your life, forms that before you thought you needed desperately to feel abundance.

So they come as icing on the cake, and you might give them away again if they come. You have them for a while, just, oh, I've had this for long enough, now you have it. And so the flow is there beautifully.

As you give things away, new things come. And if they're all taken away from you, that's fine, too. You're quite happy with that.

So manifest abundance from the inside out, not from the outside as hoping that you go find some inner state through external things. That is a dilemma of many people who practice manifesting, which, of course, manifesting is a something that you can use, and it works if it's done rightly. But the dilemma or the fallacy is the belief that whatever you manifest is going to make you happy.

It's to seek the fullness of life through what you manifest, through things. And that doesn't really work. So when people manifest something in that way in their lives, a material thing, initially they're quite elated.

I've got it now, I've got the house or whatever it is that I wanted to manifest. And then that manifestation wears off and after a while brings about its own problems and a new level of problems. And the feeling of fullness does not stay.

It doesn't stay with them. Nothing can give it to you, can give you the true feeling of abundance. And that's the amazing thing, which implies nothing that you achieve in the

future can get you there.

You have to start with that and you don't need to ask for things to be different in your life. You start here and now where you are. And here now you go within and see if you can find that place within where life is born continuously, but which in itself is unborn, timeless, consciousness itself.

So don't start there and allow abundance to come from there rather than start with the outermost layer, hoping that it will fulfill you. If you are in touch with the, whatever you want to call it, that which cannot be named, the Tao which cannot be named, what about manifesting something? Yes, you can.

If you want, it's part of the play of life. If you've wanted to manifest something and you feel the connectedness with source and say, oh, well, I'd like to manifest maybe a bit more space in my life on an external level and some greenery. It's a preference.

You don't need it for your happiness and fulfillment, but a preference. You can do that. You can visualize.

It's a play of form and if you feel the abundance already, visualization is very easy of abundance if you wanted it. Usually it comes even by itself. If you're connected with abundance, it comes by itself.

If you want to add something just as a play, as a preference, you can. It's playful. Nothing more.

It's not that important. There are many books that tell you how to manifest, but some forget to tell you that it's not going to make you happy. So you could get the impression that if you've manifested enough pairs of shoes, I don't know how many it would take to make you happy, but maybe 200.

Maybe a few more, 300. Or ask the great master of manifestation of shoes. Apparently it's Mrs. Marcos, they say. She has several thousand pairs. Yes, so just a little thing that some of these books don't mention, but otherwise they may be quite useful. But that little thing is quite vital.

It won't make you happy, by the way. Because happiness is really another word for... I don't often use the word happiness because it sounds a bit superficial.

Something good has just happened to me. It's been so great, so great. And then the next day is, oh no.

Happiness, happy, unhappy. So I don't, and some teachers use the word happiness, even some great teachers, and I know exactly what they mean. Ramana Maharshi, the great Indian sage, used, said, happiness is your true nature.

But I know exactly what he means, and he's absolutely right. Except the term happiness as a pointer may not be the best, but if you know what he means, then you can see beyond the limitations of the pointer and say, yes, he is absolutely right. Because happiness is the connectedness with the unmanifested, with, it is the joy that is not caused by anything out here.

Uncaused joy. That is the joy of aliveness itself, the joy of being conscious, of consciousness itself, life enjoying itself, life recognizing itself. And in that self-recognition, there is joy.

I am life. That's joy. And it's very subtle that it's in the, that joyful aliveness in the background of your life is very subtle at first, and as you pay more attention to it, you feel how there's a vast power there.

Your mind has to become still, by the way. As long as you're interested in every thought that comes, you can't sense that. You have to let go of the thoughts, at least don't be drawn into every thought that comes up and follow it with your attention.

Like somebody pulling, has got a piece of a carrot on a string or something, and pulling, you're running after it. Or yeah, a dog running after a bone on a piece of string. That's the thought that comes into your head.

And you follow every thought that comes. And before you know it, half an hour has passed, and you followed up a train of thought into all kinds, into weird places of fear and anxiety and feeling not good enough and anger towards others. And finally, you have depleted your life energy just by following up one thought, which led up to a train of thoughts.

And then your mind doesn't leave you alone. And another one comes up. Oh no, go this way now.

So you don't follow every thought with your attention. If a thought comes, say, okay, let it go. If you don't give it your attention, you're not interested in following it up.

You just let it. It comes, it comes. Where's your life going?

Where are you really going with your life? Have you, what are you going to achieve? What have you achieved?

You haven't done anything with your life, have you? What are you? And you recognize it as just a thought.

Don't follow it up. And then your attention becomes free for presence. Before it reverts back into the formless, where it came from, it's consciousness.

Consciousness born into a thought becomes limited. And consciousness, the attention is

taken out of the form, the thought form, and remains as pure attention.

[Speaker 2] (6:20:03 - 6:20:08)

She heard this in her voice, this is a course in miracles, please take notes.

[Speaker 1] (6:20:10 - 6:37:29)

And she went to her colleague and said, I hear this voice, I think I'm going insane. And her colleague said, just write down what the voice says and then we'll decide whether you're insane or not. When I was young, a long time ago, I had some interest in that and experimented a little bit with that.

And I had a little bit of experience with presences. But when I went through my awakening, I lost interest in that. My focus was not on that.

Although I have come into contact with quite a few people who, over the years, who channel spirit, spirits and spirit presences, who you know what channeling is. And I've looked at various, I've spoken to and looked at what is being channeled. And the important question is, these presences are also just manifestations of the one consciousness, obviously.

So whatever you contact, and even if you contact extraterrestrials, they will be manifestation of the one consciousness. So ultimately, there's nothing alien in this world. As far as my interest, for many years, even after awakening, has been in channeling, although I never attempted to channel myself.

Channeling would mean one specific entity uses your mind and speaks through you. Some people, occasionally people thought that I was channeling when I speak. But I don't have the sense that a specific entity is speaking through me, rather than that consciousness is using my mind directly, rather than through an intermediary, so to speak.

Because the entity that speaks through the channeler, again, is an expression of consciousness. You always get, it's always consciousness. I've had some people who've told me that, I don't know, they saw me being overshadowed by some, I don't know whether that's the case or not.

I don't want, I don't need to explore this. In a way, when I speak, it flows from the presence. In that sense, it's channeled in the sense that I do not, as a person, I do not construct the sentences that I speak.

They flow from a deeper level. But I don't feel that they are dictated, so to speak, by an entity. I have examined the product of channelings.

Lots of channelings are not that profound. They are very nice words, but ultimately don't

say very much. Or there are exceptions.

I'll get that in a minute. Or they tell you stories that could be very interesting science fiction. What Ashtar is doing, the commander of the galactic fleet, and so on.

Maybe he is, maybe he is not. I don't need to know that. There are some channelings that are exceptional, where there's actually a higher consciousness at work.

So, for example, the Course in Miracles is a book that was channeled through a medium, a medium, Helen Schucman was a psychologist at Columbia University. And this voice came through her and spoke through her. And she was writing, basically taking down dictation every day in her office at Columbia University.

She only told one colleague about it. She had to lock the door when she was doing it, because they would have thought she was insane. So she was taking down dictation.

It started with, she heard this inner voice, this is a course in miracles, please take notes. And she went to her colleague and said, I hear this voice, I think I'm going insane. And her colleague said, just write down what the voice says, and then we will decide whether you're insane or not.

And she wrote down, and it was not insane, it's actually a deeply inspired teaching, not for everybody, because the form in which it comes is not suitable for everyone. No one spiritual teaching is suitable for everyone. But the Course in Miracles has survived and will survive as a spiritual classic.

There are other channelings too that are quite profound, but they tend to be exceptional. So my main interest is, as far as the spirit realm is concerned, what comes through when people channel the messages. Now, there is the belief in many people that if they have passed away, they automatically are in possession of greater wisdom.

And I don't believe that to be the case from some experience. According to the famous dictum, just because they are dead doesn't mean they are smart. So you get a lot of posturing from these entities, sometimes they want to be taken seriously, they exaggerate their importance sometimes.

And at other times, it can also be the case, I observed, that the ego of the person channeling is actually the entity. So there isn't an entity, but the ego gets blown up and amplified, and the ego realizes how much power it can have over others when it suddenly changes its voice and looks up at the ceiling or something and goes, Hello, entities. I am here to guide you.

And it's very impressive. I mean, it's scary when you listen to them. Oh, my God.

He really must know the secret of the universe. So I wouldn't, spiritually speaking, I

would not seek that out too much. It is comforting, of course, if you go to somebody who can contact deceased, it is very few who are genuine.

It can be very comforting to know that a loved one is still there, has not disappeared into nothingness. But there's also a lot of deception there with people who do that. But a few are very good.

But don't lose yourself in that, because then you give your own power away to other entities, and that can be also quite dangerous. So don't lose yourself in that realm. Go to consciousness directly, rather than seeking an intermediary through which to access wisdom.

Rather than that, find the wisdom that is within you. You don't need an intermediary in order to provide you with wisdom. Because it is inseparable from the essence of who you are and what you are.

The wisdom is in you. So don't seek it. If something like that happened to Helen Schucman, that's a different thing.

Suddenly, you are overpowered by this. And in most cases, when a voice comes to you, it's not good news. This person asks, after many years of meditation and all the twists and turns of life, I'm now in the grip of intense fear and anxiety.

It seems it was always there, only more intense now. Sitting with it, letting it be there seems to make it grow. So, well, fear, anxiety, which is a form of fear, very common.

Some people have it, many have it in the background continuously. And I would say there's some degree of fear, even if you're not conscious of it. If you're totally identified with the egoic mind, you will have fear, if only in the background.

And it may come out in other forms. It can come express itself as anger. If you look at anger closely, you'll usually find hidden underneath the anger is a state of fear.

So if there's fear, one important thing is to, of course, you need to direct your attention to it. You acknowledge that there's fear. The important question that arises is, are there any thought processes connected with the fear?

In other words, what are the thoughts that your mind is producing while you're feeling the fear? Is it possible that certain thoughts that you think frequently or habitually produce the fear? Is it possible you project yourself into the next moment, into the future moment, excessively trying to control something that you have no control over?

What's going to happen to me? Or creating an imaginary scenario of loss that you might suffer. It's not happening now, but it might happen.

And many things that the thought activity, the excessive thought activity, often creates

scenarios of things going wrong that are not happening now, may never happen, often probably will never happen. And even if they did happen, the actual situation would actually be easier to face than the imaginary situation in your mind because there's nothing you can do. There's no action you can take to remedy an imaginary situation except to stop thinking it.

But if an actual situation arises, you face it and you give it your attention and then you take the action that you need to take. But an imaginary situation, you're totally at the mercy of it, so it only exists in your mind. So you need to see whether your mind is creating the fear by thinking fearful thoughts, by projecting itself into the future.

And if that is the case, then you can see, oh, so I'm creating those because my body cannot tell the difference between an actual event that's happening outside and what my mind is producing. So when I'm thinking thought, my life situation is critical. If this is basically what your thoughts are telling you, then your body believes that this is the actual truth, that you are being threatened at this very moment.

The body doesn't know the difference, that the tiger isn't in the room. The threatening presence is your thoughts. The body reacts in the same way, whether there's an actual threat in the room or your thoughts can create the same, even palpitations.

You can be shortness of breath because you're thinking fearful thoughts. You go, ah, at night. I had that for years.

It's an awful state. It's insane. It's a disease, but nothing is happening.

Absolutely nothing. There's a quiet room, nothing. It's all happening in the mind.

So if that's the case, see, okay, then you need to tackle the thoughts because they will cause the fear. And how do you tackle thoughts? It's by realizing the futility and the destructive nature of these thoughts and choosing to step out.

And what do you do to step out? First, you don't believe your mind that tells you, no, you can't step out. You have to continue thinking.

No, you step out and take a conscious breath or put your attention into the inner energy field of the body. A conscious choice to remove attention from thinking. And you may have to be really alert to do it.

If you are immersed in a mind stream, it could even be that it's so powerful that you just cannot get out. It has such gravitational pull. It pulls you, but at least you know that this is what's happening.

So there's a state where you cannot help yourself yet, but at least there is a beginning of a disidentification from it when you know that this is what is happening. So at least

there's a part of you that knows this is not totally real. This is the fears being produced by my mind.

Or in those early stages, you may not yet be able to step out of it. It may be so strong that you're still totally in the grip of it, but at least you know that you're in the grip of it. The worst thing is to be in the grip of it and not even knowing it because you're so identified with it.

It is absolutely real to you. So even to know that this is happening is already a step forward. And then perhaps after a while, the energy exhausts itself a little bit of this, and then you can begin to say, okay, you will step out of those fearful thoughts because they are creating suffering.

And you take a conscious breath. And another. And another.

Then begin to feel the energy field of the body. Wow. It's like this huge burden is suddenly dropped away.

Now the important thing is then when you show the child what is wrong, that the showing does not come from a place of fear. It's always easier to answer something that's a concrete situation. So for example, with your child, can you give just one example of choice of behavior?

[Speaker 15] (6:37:30 - 6:37:31)

Well, there are some children who bite.

[Speaker 1] (6:37:32 - 6:37:33)

Bite?

[Speaker 15] (6:37:33 - 6:37:33)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (6:37:33 - 6:37:35)

Okay, now we're getting somewhere.

[Speaker 15] (6:37:35 - 6:38:27)

There are some children who bite other children. And it's true. And they do it.

Some do it just because they're still sensing with their mouths. And others do it out of anger. But it's a behavior that's harmful and frightening for others.

So parents certainly are confused about whether the child is able to understand

consequences or whether it's just more love, more love, more love that's going to help that child to grow out of that particular behavior or running into a street or breaking away in a parking lot. Any of those behaviors are dangerous. And it's important to modify them.

But is it through firmness or is it through grace and love?

[Speaker 1] (6:38:28 - 6:46:12)

Now I understand completely what you're asking. You needed to mention the biting, then now I get it. Well, that's a very subtle balance because, of course, certain behaviors have consequences.

And if that's completely ignored on the side of the parent, then eventually the consequences of that type of behavior will come worse. So at some point, they will learn that biting others is wrong. And they will experience the consequences if you don't show them the consequences or make them aware of what they are doing.

We'll talk about how in a second. If you don't, then eventually when they go to kindergarten or school, eventually another child will bite them back, which may be a more painful way of experiencing the karmic result of their behavior. So the more you wait, the more painful the karmic result of your behavior becomes.

Or youngsters who are left free to do whatever they like. And eventually the parents try to shelter them from all consequences of their actions and protect them from consequences. And eventually then they will do something and then society will show them in the form of the police coming to your door that there are consequences to actions.

And then the karma might have worsened by then because the consequences may be... And what they do to others may be far worse than what they would have done at the age of six. So eventually the universe will show you the consequences.

So it's good for a parent in a gentle way to show the child the consequences of certain unconscious actions if only not just to protect them from karmic retribution at a later stage, but also sometimes simply to protect them from themselves because they might get themselves into a very dangerous place if you don't. And I've seen some parents that allow their children to walk along the seawall or whatever and they can go one false step and they would be gone. But the parent just doesn't want to interfere.

So they lose the balance between allowing and showing the child what is not right and protecting the child. Now the important thing is then when you show the child what is wrong, that the showing does not come from a place of fear because if it comes from a place of fear in you and that could be for example when you see the child going close to a precipice or close to the traffic or the road and sometimes I observe mothers or fathers

who become almost hysterical because out of fear and then they run up to the child and they shake the child. Don't you ever do that again!

For the child it's a dreadful trauma. It's almost worse than being run over by a car or it's the emotional equivalent of being run over by a car. Can you imagine the trauma inflicted on a little child when a big grown-up shouts at them and there's an outflow of extremely destructive fear energy onto the child and that moment within a space of one minute the child's pain body is growing.

It's absorbing all that and then they are surprised if a little later the child goes into extreme negative emotions and moods and shouts and screams. The child has already absorbed the fear of the mother but of course the mother wanted to do well. It wanted to protect the child but the mother was unconscious.

She doesn't realize that the protection is almost worse than that which she's being protected against. It's almost like using an insecticide that is far worse than the insects. And so the question then, your question, grace is very important that you use that word.

Grace must be part of the showing. Grace is a compassionate space where you recognize that the child does not know yet. You don't punish the behavior.

You simply show clearly that this is wrong in the same way that we have to show our dog in some ways. Dogs also need to be taught that certain behaviors have consequences. So you don't hit a dog.

Well, I don't know. Maybe if you have a put book, what are they called? Pit bull, you might occasionally have to slap because it might have enormous energy but our dog doesn't need that.

Our dog comes, we hold out a little treat and usually the dog will go, ah! And sometimes it gets, you get your finger in there and that is karmically not good for the dog. So we say, we say, when it happens, we go, ouch!

And the dog is a little bit shocked and realizes on some level that she has just hurt you. You go, ouch! And the dog realizes, oh, I shouldn't have done that.

That's a very gentle way of doing it. So the grace when you do that child, the worst response is always the one that comes out of fear because out of fear also comes anger and so on. So when you pull the child back from the road, getting too close to the traffic, then you might have to act fast.

But the important thing is that just enough consciousness in you that you do not put fear onto the child. So you pull back in awareness and then, oh, this is very dangerous. But not the fear, just an alertness rather than the fear.

That's grace. And so that's the, every parent has to walk this, find this balance, of course, between interfering and stopping the child and showing the child consequences and allowing the child. There needs to be a balance.

It's not always easy, not always immediately obvious which one, whether to allow or whether not to not allow. But if you're not allow, the important thing is that it doesn't come from negative reaction. So that's the, might maybe helpful a little bit for you.

Again, self-awareness is the key, especially in a moment of crisis. You need to be doubly alert within yourself. The more critical a situation is, the more alertness is required.

[Speaker 10] (6:46:40 - 6:47:03)

I have a question about relationships. You mentioned yesterday not to have any expectations. And my question is, how do you differentiate between expectations and what you want and what you need?

Because I'm aware they both come from the ego. But where do you draw the line? Okay.

Well, there's nothing wrong with expectations.

[Speaker 3] (6:47:04 - 6:48:14)

Just don't attach yourself to them too much. If you believe in your expectations and you demand that they should be met, then you're setting yourself up. Of course, we have needs and we have desires.

But then you need to ask yourself, where are those needs and desires coming from? Are they coming from the egoic self? Are they coming from the pain body self?

Or are they just coming because that's part of a healthy, successful relationship, to have a balanced relationship? So you have to ask yourself that and then look at that and answer honestly. So are you speaking about like, who does the dishes?

No. Okay.

[Speaker 10] (6:48:14 - 6:48:29)

Give a real example. So for example, spending time together. So me and my partner, we don't agree on the amount of time because we don't have the same needs.

And he tells me it's my ego who wants that.

[Speaker 3] (6:48:29 - 6:48:38)

Ah, that's a good one. So you want more time with him than he wants with you. Okay.

[Speaker 10] (6:48:39 - 6:48:55)

Why do you want more time with him? Because I need to connect and spend time together. That's something I need.

Okay. But the amount of time that you spend together, are you together with him?

[Speaker 3] (6:48:55 - 6:49:00)

Yes. Like really together? Yes.

And that doesn't satisfy you?

[Speaker 10] (6:49:01 - 6:49:03)

No, it's very, very limited.

[Speaker 3] (6:49:04 - 6:49:08)

Very limited. So when you say limited, you spend one minute a day together?

[Speaker 10] (6:49:09 - 6:49:10)

Two evenings a month.

[Speaker 3] (6:49:11 - 6:49:16)

Two evenings a month. Do you live in separate countries or something?

[Speaker 10] (6:49:17 - 6:49:20)

No, separate areas in the same city.

[Speaker 3] (6:49:21 - 6:49:37)

And is this a monogamous relationship? Yes. Okay.

All right. And what's his reason for two days a month or two evenings a month or whatever it is?

[Speaker 10] (6:49:37 - 6:49:59)

So he's very busy, but his main reason is spiritual. Have you been to this guy's house? No.

Interesting. Why not? He hasn't invited me.

How long have you been together? I knew you were going to ask this. Two years.

Two years and you've never...

[Speaker 3] (6:49:59 - 6:50:02)

Is this guy married? No. Are you sure?

[Speaker 16] (6:50:03 - 6:50:03)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (6:50:05 - 6:50:10)

And he hasn't invited you. So have you invited yourself?

[Speaker 10] (6:50:11 - 6:50:12)

I tried.

[Speaker 3] (6:50:12 - 6:50:24)

Oh, and he says no. Well, this is very interesting. This would put up a red flag for me.

Me too. Well, okay. So what are you doing with him?

[Speaker 10] (6:50:25 - 6:50:26)

That's the question.

[Speaker 3] (6:50:27 - 6:50:39)

So the question... Okay. But my question, because...

No, my answer would be different if you were to say, oh yeah, we spend every day together, you know, but I still want more time with him.

[Speaker 10] (6:50:42 - 6:51:00)

So... But this is putting up a red flag for you. It raises a question for me in terms of which part of me...

How can I differentiate the part of me that wants to spend time that comes from the conditioned self and the part of me that wants to spend time because it's healthy needs? That's where I get confused.

[Speaker 3] (6:51:02 - 6:52:10)

I don't think you're confused. I really don't. I think you're justifying.

You're trying to fit this all in. You know the amount of time that you need. But how do I

know?

If you want more, say for example, you're spending almost every day together and you're still saying you want more, this is probably more of the pain body wanting more. But... This one's a challenging one because you're only spending two days out of a month.

So you haven't even yet figured out what your real need is compared to this other thing that's just two days a month. So now I'm not saying two days a month is wrong. It would be good if you were happy with it too.

Then what's the problem? You're both happy with it. But you are not happy with it.

You would like a partner who is able to spend more time with you. So I'm asking you, why are you with him still?

[Speaker 10] (6:52:11 - 6:52:19)

Because I got confused as to maybe it's my ego that wants this. Why can't I just accept what I have?

[Speaker 3] (6:52:22 - 6:55:23)

But you're not accepting your inner self first. You're not accepting the inner calling for you and that divine desire to have a partner that you can spend more time with. Every relationship is a challenge, but we have to find our way to be in relationship with each other.

You're not finding, and he's not meeting you, to find that relationship. You haven't even been to his home yet after two years. Hello?

Wake up. Wake up to yourself. You know the answers.

You know it. But my sense is there's fear there. There's fear.

And you got to work past that fear. That fear of being alone. You're willing to sacrifice yourself and your needs and your wishes, your wants, your desires, human desires.

And take a little crumb and go, oh, I guess, you know, I don't want my ego in a way, so I guess I just have to accept what is. But you're accepting the external before you accept the internal, where it needs to be the reverse. You accept the internal, and then the external will follow.

And that might mean when you accept the internal, it's bye-bye. Unless you can accept the internal, and then suddenly you accept the internal, and you're just like this presence. And he might turn around and want to spend more time with you.

You don't know. But you need to be present first and accept what's in here first. So I will be very interested to hear what is going to happen.

Because the longer that you stay in something that is not feeding your soul, because relationships do and can feed our soul, not that we expect and want it to and demand it to and think that this person will make me whole, because another person cannot make you whole. It just enhances your relationship, your life situation, and challenges it too. So what do you think you'll do?

[Speaker 10] (6:55:24 - 6:55:26)

It's pretty clear.

[Speaker 3] (6:55:27 - 6:55:29)

But say it.

[Speaker 10] (6:55:31 - 6:55:38)

I want to hear what you're going to do. I'm going to look after myself first. Right.

[Speaker 16] (6:55:39 - 6:55:39)

And leave him.

[Speaker 10] (6:55:40 - 6:55:41)

And leave him.

[Speaker 16] (6:55:41 - 6:55:42)

All right.

[Speaker 10] (6:55:45 - 6:55:47)

You got the support behind you, man.

[Speaker 1] (6:56:21 - 7:13:11)

So your task is not only to find moments in your life when you become still, alert, present, and to realize for yourself the possibility of stepping into no mind, not thinking, and yet being fully conscious and alert. It's a wonderful, wonderful thing. It's part of the awakening, essential part of the awakening, to be able to stop thinking.

For example, now, and now, and now. Don't get scared. It's only the ego that might get scared, because it says, I'm disappearing.

There's just a nothingness. You're not disappearing. Who you are essentially is emerging

more fully when the mind stops, like now.

And there's not just a nothingness. There is an intense field of alive presence. It has no form.

It has no location. It is within and without. So it's wonderful to be able to step into that state of consciousness, means you're awakening.

The awakening process is happening. Even to say you are awakening isn't quite correct. But the awakening process is happening.

But make sure that it's not confined to moments that you set aside to become still, to become present, or to listen to this teaching. That's wonderful. You need that also until you don't need it anymore.

But it's essential to have your daily life, your working life at work, your relationship life, relationships, family relationships, other kinds of relationships at work, interspersed continuously with the presence of the stillness, so that you have, you don't spend, let's say, where you work in an office, you don't spend nine to five getting lost in doing, and in your mind, and getting upset, and getting angry, and participating in all that. And then you get home, and then finally you sit when you've had your dinner, and finally you say, ah, now I'm going to meditate, or be present, or practice stillness, and then you become still. Well, it's better than nothing, but it hasn't changed your life.

Make sure there's not a separation between your spiritual life and your working life. Some people tell me, well, I can be spiritual when I'm alone, or I can be spiritual when I'm walking in nature, but I lose it when I start talking to people, or I'm back at work. So you need to be aware of that, so that even while you are engaged in doing, so that even while you are engaged in doing, you're still rooted in being.

Be aware of your mind, of thoughts that arise, so that you don't become possessed by every thought that arises. It helps when the mind is very active, and it's being challenged by people or events. It helps to have some attention in the inner energy field of your body, and feel the presence that is in every cell of the body.

It's alive. You need to know and decide for yourself that you don't want to be part of the madness of this world anymore. And when something challenging happens, you lose something, your bank manager calls about something, and then the assumption of the egoic mind is, this isn't the time to be spiritual, I have to deal with this first.

What does it mean to be spiritual? It means to be aware of yourself as the presence. That's your prime responsibility in life.

The very purpose of your life is that. The very purpose of your life is not to succeed at this or that undertaking or endeavor or business activity or whatever. That is not the

purpose, it's to succeed on that level.

It's not your real purpose. It's a secondary purpose, perhaps. But your primary purpose is presence.

To know yourself as the presence, as the alert presence. And then deal with things. And then you will notice what happens or does not happen.

You recognize that as secondary. Whether some endeavor succeeds or doesn't succeed is also secondary. You still, you are very active, and yet you realize everything is secondary to secondary.

Something else that's primary. I've told the story before, I haven't mentioned it in a while. On the spiritual teacher, Krishnamurti, who passed away in the, I believe in 85.

He used to travel around the world giving talks for 50 years or more. And in one talk, towards the end of his life, he said, people have often asked me what my secret is. And now I'm going to tell you what my secret is.

Everybody got very alert suddenly, including the people who had been following him for 30 years without getting it. And then he said, my secret is this. I don't mind what happens.

So the people listening, they thought something else was going to come, but that was it. I don't mind what happens. What does that mean?

First of all, in the English language, I don't mind is very different from I don't care. If English is not your native language, you can look up the difference. If English is your native language, you know intuitively that I don't care is a negativity.

I don't care what happens. I don't care what happens to me anymore. I'm fed up with life.

I don't care. That's, you really, you still do care. You're in a negative relationship to the world and to yourself.

I don't mind is a detachment from what happens or doesn't happen, but you can only be detached because you are rooted in something deeper in being. And with that comes a detachment with which you not only observe things and other people and events around you, but also a detachment that comes into your doing, the way you relate and do things. First of all, important aspect of detachment is you are not attached to the result.

You're not attached to the outcome. It creates a lot of fear and anxiety if you are attached. So you do your best.

It works out fine. If it doesn't work out, it's also fine because you are rooted in being. And

the strange paradox is, it's more likely to turn out fine if you're rooted in being and you're not anxious about the outcome because the anxiety about the outcome creates a lot of secondary negative energy.

If the outcome is threatened, for example, you got angry. If the outcome is threatened, you get upset. Lost, completely lost.

So that is the secret of life. The rootedness in being. And then enjoy the spectacle of life around you.

Every moment there is beauty. Every moment. And you can even enjoy the doing.

You might not be as hyperactive as somebody who is completely lost in doing, but that you're doing whatever you do do will be more effective because there'll be an unconditioned intelligence behind it and a power flowing into it that is deeper than the merely personal realm of mental power, not separate from it, but deeper. Every moment there is beauty and aliveness around you. You appreciate what is.

So I wish you a happy Christmas and I'm here in British Columbia, Canada, just outside Vancouver. And the beauty here is the trees and the sky. You can perhaps see a little bit of that on the screen.

And wherever you are, it'll be something else. Let's give it attention, whatever is there. Acknowledge it's being.

When you are rooted in being, you can acknowledge not only the being, you can sense the inherent aliveness of other humans, of animals, and even of inanimate objects, of nature, of course, but even inanimate objects. Everything has a beingness to it. It is.

I'll leave you with that. And the contemplation of the trees here that I can see from my place. I wish you well.

Be at peace.

[Speaker 16] (7:13:41 - 7:13:42)

Thank you.

[Speaker 9] (7:14:11 - 7:14:35)

I'm not really attached to things per se anymore, but I find myself being very, very attached to people, even people who abandon me, whether my father or my best friend. And it's clear to me that they don't want me in their life, so why am I so attached and cling on to wanting them in my life?

[Speaker 3] (7:14:38 - 7:14:41)

Is this still happening today, where they don't want you? Yes.

[Speaker 9] (7:14:41 - 7:15:05)

You're alive, your parents? My father, yeah. Your father.

And my best friend. So the two people I thought would never leave me has left me. And whenever I go into a very, very deep meditation, there they are.

And I just get stuck by this complete feeling of suffering, and I don't know why I'm still chasing these people. Attachment, I guess.

[Speaker 3] (7:15:11 - 7:15:24)

We keep chasing something when we haven't fully, really accepted it and felt the repercussions of the event. When did your father leave?

[Speaker 9] (7:15:25 - 7:15:27)

When I was about 10.

[Speaker 3] (7:15:29 - 7:15:31)

And he's still out of the picture. Have you seen him at all?

[Speaker 9] (7:15:31 - 7:15:38)

Yeah, I have, but we only see each other when it suits him. Oh, you're angry.

[Speaker 3] (7:15:39 - 7:15:44)

Yeah, of course. Yeah. So have you ever felt that anger?

Really feel it?

[Speaker 9] (7:15:44 - 7:15:52)

Yeah, I feel it all the time. The problem with the anger is that I latch it on to other people now, people I don't even have any connection with. I find myself being angry with them.

[Speaker 3] (7:15:52 - 7:16:33)

Yeah, yeah. So the problem in itself isn't anger. It's what you do with the anger that becomes the problem.

So you latching, attaching it to other people. But the anger that is inside of you, have you really felt that? Or do you go, I'm angry, but your mind might say, oh, but I really shouldn't be angry.

And maybe on some subconscious level, on an unconscious level, you maybe say, oh, you know, I'm too spiritual for this. To really feel anger? No, that's somehow wrong.

[Speaker 9] (7:16:36 - 7:16:41)

No, I've been a very, very angry person. I think everyone around me knows that.

[Speaker 3] (7:16:42 - 7:16:58)

Yeah, so it manifests outwardly, but I'm asking you, have you actually really felt it without the manifestation of it, outwardly? It's manifesting in you, but outwardly. So in other words, you don't react to this feeling of anger.

[Speaker 9] (7:16:59 - 7:17:03)

Have you really just felt it? I feel I have, but.

[Speaker 10] (7:17:07 - 7:17:08)

But what?

[Speaker 9] (7:17:10 - 7:17:13)

But I think that anger is a cover-up feeling.

[Speaker 3] (7:17:14 - 7:17:15)

Okay, covering up what?

[Speaker 9] (7:17:16 - 7:17:19)

Well, I think that anger is the easiest feeling to have.

[Speaker 3] (7:17:19 - 7:17:20)

Okay.

[Speaker 9] (7:17:20 - 7:17:31)

Instead of being terribly sad, I mean, who would want to say, nobody wants me? Or the most important people that I love don't want me. It's much easier to be angry.

[Speaker 3] (7:17:32 - 7:17:45)

Yeah, you're right on that. Anger is a stage of the grief process. So if you know that, then can you uncover and go deeper than the anger?

And have you felt that?

[Speaker 9] (7:17:48 - 7:17:49)

That's a good question.

[Speaker 3] (7:17:50 - 7:18:03)

You answered it, actually. I'm just saying, can you feel that? Can you go underneath the anger, and what is it that you feel?

Go there now.

[Speaker 9] (7:18:07 - 7:18:18)

Yeah, I feel that. Then there's no point in me being here. Like, if other people.

[Speaker 3] (7:18:18 - 7:18:22)

Talk to me more about that. What do you mean, there's no point in you being here? Did you have that feeling?

[Speaker 9] (7:18:23 - 7:18:39)

Yeah, I mean, if the people you love the most don't love you back, I know I'm supposed to be one of a bigger consciousness and say, well, that doesn't matter. Nobody loves me, but I'm part of a greater consciousness. But in reality, that's very difficult.

[Speaker 3] (7:18:39 - 7:19:58)

So that's the error that you're holding onto is the expectation of what love is and how love should be shown to you. We are only able to love at the level of consciousness that we are at. So I don't think your father doesn't love you.

I think your father loves you. It's just he is more unconscious. He's unconscious.

So he can't love you the way that you desire and the way that you want and the way that you expect and maybe even need because he's just not there. Can you accept the level of consciousness that he is at? It's hard because you have the expectation that parents ought to love me.

Unconditionally. The only real unconditional love unless you're fully awakened is awareness, your own inner stillness.

[Speaker 9] (7:20:01 - 7:20:01)

That's true.

[Speaker 3] (7:20:04 - 7:22:04)

So right now, what I see is a disconnection from your head, your body, your emotions. They're disconnected. You have that thought, that expectation of, geez, a mother and a father should do this, do that, do this and love this way and only this way and forgetting that their level of consciousness might be quite low.

In fact, it might be really low. So who am I now as this adult? Who is going to love me unconditionally?

So long as we are stuck there, we're gonna point and look out there for that person who's going to unconditionally love me and whether it's a male or female girlfriend, oh, there is that girlfriend who I know will unconditionally love me, who will love me and you've had this great friendship for a while and then as all things happen, including relationships, they'll dissolve. We may live together until one of you dies. It's still an ending of a relationship.

So as long as we keep that unprocessed event that happened to us when we were younger and keep that in our consciousness and think now because we have read in books that good parents do this. I mean, maybe the words aren't said like that but basically we read these things, we hear these things and we believe that this is the now new way how parenting should happen. Well, it's a lot more complicated than that because shit happens to everybody all the time.

Where did they come from? What part of the world were your parents from?

[Speaker 9] (7:22:04 - 7:22:13)

They're Danish. They're Danish. So and how old are they?

He's 73 and she's 63.

[Speaker 3] (7:22:14 - 7:23:22)

Let me see, I'm not really good at math but in a sense, what I'm trying to get at is that if they were brought up, say, during the war, they've got that shit. So that shit gets piled. This is where Christ says the sins of the generation be passed on from generation to generation if we're not awake.

So it will get passed on. So he's just passing on his shit but you have awakened, hallelujah, really. And it's a tough call to be that first to awaken in a family because that's what you're still having to deal with.

But then that's where you go through that process and learn that compassion and you learn that compassion by actually then feeling what you're really feeling inside. That sadness, that grief of that little girl who just needed to be loved, wanted to be felt like as if my parents want me.

[Speaker 9] (7:23:25 - 7:23:32)

Thank you very much. You're welcome. It helped a lot.

[Speaker 3] (7:23:33 - 7:30:10)

But that is our work for each and every one of us because we most likely, it can happen, though. It can happen where our parents awaken and then they come and they do that apology bit and it's a sincere apology and then things shift. But a lot of times it's not gonna happen that way and it may not happen that way.

And as we awaken in consciousness, then we feel all that suffering that has happened in our childhood and not only our childhood but that is now in our cellular structure, that of our ancestors, our parents, our grandparents and theirs. It's in us, it's like in our bones and that's the collective consciousness. So that's what we then have to also transcend and transmute.

It's hard work, I understand that fully because I have to do that as well. It's work, it's not only my shit but it's also the shit of my parents and then their parents. And I can sometimes feel that.

When I've worked through mine and I still have this sense of something that is there, I go deeper and I go, okay, is this mine? And I feel it and it's like a definite no but I can feel that it's coming from my family. I mean, we are all connected, all connected.

Just because we appear to be separate, there is a connection on an energetic level and not only an energetic level but on the actual cellular level. So I really applaud you. It is really good work that you're doing and sometimes it feels really lonely to do this work but we only feel lonely because we still have that little bit of expectation that somebody should be there.

But you know what? Somebody is there but sometimes it's not in form. As we awaken everybody here today, there is a connection and even though that you may leave this room after this weekend and we go through our everyday lives and awaken and we may be alone, we are not alone because we are the formless dimension and the awakening consciousness that is you and me, it's one.

And if we can remind ourselves that, that alone feeling begins to dissipate and disappear. I had this sense, this image come up for me when it's like making that leap to cross from that form world into that unknown world and being suspended kind of between that mid-air point and it's like standing on that edge and I'm like, oh, I don't know if I can make that jump. I don't know if I can make that jump.

Nobody is around telling me, yeah, you can do it, you can do it, but it was like this feeling inside where I just felt, oh my God, everybody who has crossed this path was

standing there saying you can do it, you can do it, you can make that leap but the only thing is is that they can't do it for you. You are, so which in a way you are alone in this, you are the only one that can finally just jump, nobody else. They can say, go, yes, yes, yes, go for it, go for it and they won't push you.

So this is a critical time in our spiritual awakening. Am I going to make that leap? Consciousness and everybody out there in the so-called awakening consciousness, very patient, very patient, will not push you, just kindly and gently encouraging you and waiting for you on the other side and on this side saying, yes, you can, go ahead, you can do it and when you're ready because we're only going to do something when we are ready.

It's like what I mentioned about the flower. There's a certain point that just keeps blooming and blooming and we can't make it bloom any quicker. This intuitive, natural, spontaneous, so-called action will occur and happen where we will just finally just go, poop, no thought.

It's only while we're just sitting on the edge and our thoughts are still there so there's still that attachment to the world or to the pain body and emotion, something old that's happened to us. So it's not just material items. I'm speaking about emotional items as well or thought patterns or anything that we attach ourselves to.

So long as there's this attachment, we will not make that leap, but that's okay because we are getting ready to make that leap by looking at what we are attached to, by disconnecting from all that we are attached to. And usually it's deep suffering that will bring about a deeper awakening where we just finally cross.

[Speaker 1] (7:30:56 - 7:44:05)

Something you can practice here and for the rest of your life is to perceive things, look and listen. Sometimes even smell or touch or taste without any mental label. This is an ideal environment to do it in, in nature, but you can do it anywhere.

And it's not even a doing, we call it doing. Just you look at something or even just looking around. So either a specific thing or you take in the totality of what's there, either in the room or out in nature, the sky, the trees, or you look at one thing and you don't, you're still while you look.

And that's very important practice. And then you listen, various sounds arise most of the time and you just, then always two things are there. There's that which arises in your sense perception, listening, seeing, and there is the space of consciousness in which it arises.

You can also call it the light of consciousness in which it is perceived without which there would be no perception. And whenever you do that, you are not a person in that

moment. You are not a person.

You are what comes to the forefront is the transcendent dimension to who you are, the consciousness. And so you can sense yourself as the consciousness, which is the space for whatever is being perceived. And that's, it's, there's almost a kind of joy in that, an aliveness, a beingness.

You're really, you can sense your own identity beyond who you are beyond the person by just perceiving something. And then at the same time, sensing your own presence, which isn't your own, but let's call it your own, the presence. And that is a passive thing.

It seems seemingly, it's a taking in what's there. The next step is to practice being yourself. Being in that transcendent state of consciousness while things are going on around you.

More challenging. Being in that state while you're engaged in some activity, start with simple activities. And again, there's a, the background is the presence.

You can, you're doing whatever it is you need to do for certain activities. Of course, you need to think and your thinker will start up. That's fine.

When you speak, there's thinking, but you can, if you are, while you speak, you can still be connected to the transcendent. Then you don't speak from the level of the personality. Then you speak from a more intelligent level of consciousness, the unconditioned consciousness.

Very different kind of speaking. When you speak from the personality, whatever you say is colored and determined by the conditioning of your mind as the person. There's another way of speaking.

Even if it's a simple conversation, you're speaking from a truer, deeper level of who you are. And those words are, have a certain quality. They may, you might not be saying necessarily anything significant, but those words have a certain aliveness and quality that is different from what comes from the personality level.

So at any given time, there's, there's the two dimensions to who you are, one could say. Let's, for the time being, let's put it like that. There's the personal level.

And there's the transcendent you. And usually the transcendent in your normal daily life will be in the background. If you can sense that in the background, then you can deal with the stuff you need to deal with in the foreground of your life, to this and this and this.

Even thinking is in the foreground of your life. Think, I have to think about this. And yet, at the same time, you sense yourself as the presence.

So that's the, the depths within you. There's a stillness. There can be a stillness even while you're speaking.

There's a stillness in the background. And when you've come to the end of a sentence, you might notice, you might get, there's a gap and you're not thinking between the end of one sentence and the beginning of a new sentence. And so more and more, the transcendent self comes in, emerges more into your life, comes in more.

And the conditioned self does not disappear completely, but the conditioned self becomes more, less dense. The density of the personality, that many people are in the grip of that. There's a heaviness to it.

I can sometimes see how people carry this burden of a personality without any, not the slightest glimpse of anything beyond. And it's a terrible burden to carry. The only sense of self they have is that conditioned sense of self.

And it's a, there's a heaviness to it and a density. And as the transcendent emerges more, the personality level becomes more lighter and more, one could say transparent almost. So the light shines through more.

You can, the analogy you could use is a lampshade. When there's only the personality, the lampshade is so heavy, there's only a little bit of light shining through, but the layers of the lampshade are so thick that only very little comes through. And whatever comes through is totally formed by the lampshade.

And then the shade gets a bit more transparent and there's more light coming through. The same person is still there, the same lampshade, but there's more, there's a transparency to something deeper. And that's the only way you become more authentic.

You become more truly yourself, the deeper, unconditioned self, which the Buddha calls the no self. And if in spiritual terminology, you could call Buddha nature is arising, Christ consciousness is arising, whatever you want to call it. So you cannot love your neighbor as yourself, as somebody once said, he said, love your neighbor as yourself, but he didn't give that as a commandment because he would have known that that's impossible for the personality.

They missed a little bit when they wrote down what he was saying. He said, when you put the kingdom of heaven bit goes together with the loving your neighbor as yourself. So when you find that dimension within yourself, that is the kingdom of heaven, which in modern terms, I would translate as the dimension of kingdom is dimension.

Heaven is in many languages is the same word as sky in French, in Spanish, in German, heaven and sky are the same word. So Jesus uses this thing, the sky, the vast expanse of the sky as the closest word he can get to describing the inner space, the inner spaciousness. Sky has no form.

Sky, we have a word for sky, but sky doesn't actually exist. There is no sky. There just seems to be a sky because what you're seeing as the blue, if it's blue, is just the light against the background of space, the dark of the space behind this creates that illusion that there is something there.

But if you travel upwards, you will never reach the sky. You may reach the clouds and then you go to the clouds and then there's more sky. And finally it's gone.

Where was the sky? There is no sky. So it has no form.

So he used the best word he could find was heaven or sky, the kingdom of heaven, the dimension of formlessness, which is within you, he said. And that's the most important thing in your life to find that, that's priority number one. And then as he found that, then you love your neighbor as yourself because you recognize the same formless essence in you is the same formless essence in the so-called other.

And then you love your neighbor as yourself. But no matter how hard you try, you can't really, real empathy, real loving kindness, real benevolence, real goodwill towards another. It's not really, you cannot sustain for very long if there's only the personality level, you have a resemblance of that, but it's usually the ego playing a particular role.

This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

[Speaker 8] (7:44:40 - 7:44:54)

Hello, my name's Dominique. I'm a doctor in Australia and I work combining natural medicine and Western medicine. Just breathe for a second.

[Speaker 1] (7:44:54 - 7:44:59)

That's good, take your time. We are not in a hurry. Thank you.

[Speaker 8] (7:45:04 - 7:46:46)

Just like, I guess some pointers about how to think about the situation that I've seen in medicine. I'm really shocked quite often by the standard that Western doctors work at. And I see that it seems fairly straightforward to do a reasonably good job, I think, to assist people who are starting to have early signs of sickness and imbalance.

And there's so much knowledge now about how to address that and how to help them feel better. And it's really important to me that for myself and I think for patients as well, that when we're in balance, when we're physically well and stronger, it's easier to be at peace. It's easier to be conscious and to access the transcended dimension.

So it's really important. So yeah, I see this kind of, I don't know, I feel really compelled and concerned by this gap between what's being practised in medicine and this need. Because people do the right thing, they go to the doctor.

And I feel really sad.

[Speaker 1] (7:46:51 - 7:46:55)

You're talking about mainstream medicine, the way it's practised?

[Speaker 16] (7:46:55 - 7:46:56)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (7:46:58 - 7:47:07)

Which does not consider the entire human being and the consciousness of the human being, but the symptom only.

[Speaker 8] (7:47:08 - 7:47:40)

Well, yes, but even in that, often I see that very basic tests are not done and drugs are given, like antidepressants, for example. Someone will go to the doctor because they're tired and maybe they're a bit depressed because they're tired. And many, many times a blood test isn't even done, which is really bad medicine.

But that's very normal now because of this alignment we have with drugs.

[Speaker 1] (7:47:40 - 7:53:18)

Yes, yes. Well, I'm sure there's, although I know personally some doctors, even within mainstream, who are practising it consciously, but those are still the exceptions. I just want to acknowledge that within mainstream medicine, there are some people who are conscious and making a wonderful contribution.

Also, before I say anything else, to acknowledge other practitioners like nurses who are doing a wonderful job. They somehow, although some nurses are under great stress, but they provide the human dimension, which is often lacking in mainstream medicine. And having said that, mainstream medicine is, to a large extent, still very unenlightened and creating a lot of, almost as much suffering as it solves.

So a change is imminent in mainstream medicine. And I don't think we will have to wait for too long before it happens. In the meantime, we depend on people like you to do things differently.

And don't focus on what's wrong. You can point out what's wrong, but don't focus too much on what's wrong and focus only on how things need to be done with awareness

and you can show the way. You can show the way and then things will change more quickly.

So don't focus on, don't, instead, don't, even criticizing too much can be counterproductive. Just point out certain things that people need to know and make your contribution. Focus on that, show others, explain to others.

And then the change starts with you or you are contributing, important contributing factor in that change. So many things are going to change as consciousness awakens on the planet from science to medicine and many other things are going to go through deep changes so that in a few hundred years, we look back on this age in the same way in which we look back on not just the middle ages, but even much before then, almost the stone age. And we think we know it all right now, but we don't and even science only knows the surface of reality right now.

It's very, it's done a very good job with exploring the surface of reality, but there's far more than meets the eye, far more than Higgs, what was that thing called? Higgs particle, bosom, bosom, bosom. So do your thing and allow the change.

Change starts with you and then it'll spread from you. So don't dwell on what's wrong, focus on what's right. That's very important.

And sometimes if you allow, then people change and sometimes they don't, but they're more likely to change if you bring an acceptance. If you no longer oppose a person who always putting out their old stuff towards you, if you don't, which is her egoic identity, is continuously reasserted by her criticism of you. Her criticism of you, she doesn't know that, but her criticism of you asserts her sense of self, her false sense of self, because every time she criticizes you, she is right.

She is so right. And the ego loves nothing better than to be right, because the more often you are right and the more right you are, the bigger the ego is. You feel more acknowledged in your sense of who you are.

That's why she loves criticizing, but of course she doesn't know what she's doing. It's all unconscious. But if you recognize that this is what she's doing, then you realize that's not your mother at all.

The true being of your mother is somewhere hiding underneath all that stuff. It's obscured by all the egoic conditioning. It's hiding somewhere there.

But you strengthen the egoic patterns by opposing them.

[Speaker 11] (7:53:36 - 7:53:39)

How do I deal with the election of Donald Trump?

[Speaker 1] (7:53:41 - 7:53:43)

I thought somebody might ask that.

[Speaker 11] (7:53:51 - 7:55:34)

But last night I listened to you. I listened to you at my home here in San Diego. And what you told me and what I've done, and Donald has helped me, he's made me go deep very quickly.

Okay? And he is going to be my spiritual practice for the next four years. And you help me with that to understand instead of saying, you son of a gun.

I don't like you. I don't want you to be there. Why are you there?

This is impossible. It must have been some sort of alternative fact. Okay?

It isn't. It wasn't. But that's okay.

Because I'm going to accept it. And it's going to be my spiritual practice for the next four years. Thank God.

It's wonderful. Now, my question. I read your books.

And there's one little phrase that you have that, and I listened to the tape you've done with Oprah, the ten sessions you did, about five times. And you talk about it. But the part of when you say, life is the dancer.

And we are the dance. And Oprah said, isn't it the other way around? And you explained it somewhat.

But I didn't grasp it. And you being here in front of me is the most joyous thing in my life to have you answer that. I couldn't ask for anything more.

This is one of the most special times of my life. So if you could answer that.

[Speaker 1] (7:55:34 - 8:01:36)

I think a lot of people have that question, too. Thank you. And first of all, thank you about what you said about Donald Trump.

That is very helpful. I hardly need to answer any more questions about Donald Trump, because you've said it already. Thank you.

The acceptance of what is, because that's what is. You can't argue with what is. That is what is.

Not being, I'll just talk for a moment about the first part. That wasn't the question, but

you beautifully told us your realization. To use any condition, we talked about the comfort zone.

So there's also collective comfort zones that people want to be in. You are drawn, for example, to the news sources that correspond to your beliefs, the conditioning of your mind. So you don't want to be taken out of your comfort zone.

And this happens, life does it to you. It does it to individuals. And then it takes entire groups of people out of their comfort zone, which has happened here.

And this is a relatively minor way of being taken out of their comfort zone. People in Syria are being taken out of their comfort zone in a much more violent way than what's happened here so far. So people experience collectively these upheavals.

And it's also need to realize that, if possible, try to enter the mind space of the other part of America who are in their comfort zone now, who were not in their comfort zone before. So why is that? They are now in their comfort zone and we are not in the comfort zone.

Try to enter what is it that, how do they see the world? I'm not talking about the fringe extreme, because those exist, obviously, deeply unconscious people who, well, there's not much one can do there. But it wasn't just the extreme, the fringe extreme fringe that brought him into power.

There were many ordinary humans who genuinely felt that deep change was needed. And then he happened to be there and represented it. So what is there?

I listened to Marianne Williamson, who is much more engaged in politics than I am. And she even ran for Congress. And she went to some events in Washington soon after the election.

And she talked to some supporters of Donald Trump and in a very open way. And those were not deeply unconscious people that are on the on the fringes. And they said to her, you didn't vote for him, did you?

And she said, no, I didn't. And she had a human interaction beyond the mindset of those people. She was able to reach these people.

So not to demonize half of the population. So because it's not that simple. There is unconsciousness on both parts of the population.

So hold it all in that space of awareness. And do what if you feel you want need to take action, make sure it is not a reaction that comes from anger, because the more you're motivated by anger, the more you contribute to the unconsciousness. If you see the rising of unconsciousness in here, don't contribute to it and become angry because

unconsciousness is rising.

Because then you become what you are fighting against. You need to be very careful that you do not become what you are fighting against. And this happens, for example, when people start smashing up places, destroying property and cars, because they're wanting to fight the fascists.

So don't become that. So let's take consciousness and then disseminate information, talk, create your YouTube channel if you feel you have to, and explain how you see it in a loving way. You don't need an angry YouTube channel.

There are enough of those already. So don't need to add another one. And then this is just one example of what you can do.

I don't know much about social media. There's also Facebook. I don't know how that works.

But although I have in the past occasionally posted something by, not personally, but I gave it to somebody to post. I may do so again, by the way. I may even comment on political situations.

So. And then your question is?

[Speaker 11] (8:01:40 - 8:01:47)

Life is the dancer. Yes. And we are the dance, which is the opposite of what we would think.

[Speaker 1] (8:01:47 - 8:01:58)

Okay. I'm not sure if I can answer that question, because that's something that I said a long time ago. So fair enough.

[Speaker 11] (8:01:58 - 8:01:58)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (8:01:58 - 8:02:23)

If I said it right now, I would be able to tell you what it means. But give me, just one moment. Well, I believe what I meant was, it's always strange when one goes to the past and people say, what did you mean when you said that 10 years ago?

Did I say that?

[Speaker 11] (8:02:23 - 8:02:27)

I'm sorry. I went fairly deep.

[Speaker 1] (8:02:28 - 8:04:32)

The dancer and the dance, this analogy, if that's what it is, that I used is. The dancer is the consciousness and life as this unfolds in the world of form and multiplicity on this planet and many other places is the dance of life. The dancer is who you are in your essence.

The dancer is God, ultimately the one consciousness. You are the one consciousness. And the one consciousness expresses itself as this so-called person or human being.

I love that expression, human being. You remember how I interpret human being? Human is the form.

Being is the formless. Being is the dancer. And human is the dance.

That's beautiful. Thank you so much. Thanks.

Once you've asked a question, while you listen, you direct your awareness into the inner feeling of your hands. And that keeps it there so that it doesn't, your mind doesn't take off.

[Speaker 12] (8:04:36 - 8:04:57)

For someone who's a little bit hyperactive, what's the best way to get a balance between removing content, which is really good, but then not getting annoyed when content comes in and you think, oh, it's spoiling my peace. Is there some way to get a balance?

[Speaker 1] (8:04:57 - 8:05:00)

I assume the question applies to yourself.

[Speaker 12] (8:05:00 - 8:05:01)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (8:05:01 - 8:05:30)

So that someone is you. Yeah. Okay.

Just wanted to make sure. So you are hyperactive. Yeah.

Now, rather than explaining it to us in an abstract way, can you give an example or one example of where this is problematic and how it manifests in your life?

[Speaker 12] (8:05:31 - 8:06:08)

So, for example, here after the talks, I can go out to the nature and it's, I get a glimpse now of some kind of presence. Yes. And I also want to engage with other people.

But I know once I get on a roll, for example, speaking, how good the talk was, I'm into a, just a torrent. So it's almost, should I just go and sit in the park for hours and hours? But that's too extreme probably.

I'm creating probably more content trying to analyze whether to keep up, stay out of the way or...

[Speaker 1] (8:06:09 - 8:06:15)

So when you engage in conversation, then do you tend to speak fast or...

[Speaker 12] (8:06:15 - 8:06:15)

Yes. Yeah. Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (8:06:15 - 8:06:54)

I just totally lose... The mind takes over and you're dragged along. Yeah.

Yes. Now this being dragged along by the mind happens to many, many people, but perhaps you slightly more extreme form, your mind is even more powerful than the normal mind. And so you're dragged along before you know it.

And so do you tend to sometimes avoid interaction in order not to be dragged along? Yes. Yeah.

So it's either you get dragged along or you sit there and can't interact. Yeah.

[Speaker 12] (8:06:54 - 8:06:56)

It's like two settings, full blast or off.

[Speaker 16] (8:06:58 - 8:06:59)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (8:07:04 - 8:07:23)

When somebody talks to you, of course, what is, how do you experience yourself when you listen to somebody? What is your, how do you listen to another person? Is your mind already preparing what we're going to say or...

Yeah, definitely.

[Speaker 12] (8:07:23 - 8:07:31)

Whenever anybody tells me the name, never, ever remember it because it's, I'm probably somewhere else when that's coming in.

[Speaker 1] (8:07:31 - 8:07:40)

Yeah. Have you done any practice, meditation, any kind of meditation practice, formal meditation?

[Speaker 12] (8:07:40 - 8:07:49)

Yeah, I try and I'm guessing if I do reasonably well for that first five minutes, when I get up and go outside, it's lovely.

[Speaker 1] (8:07:51 - 8:08:06)

Now, when you're out in nature by yourself, are you able to be present to some extent or is your mind still active while you're looking at the trees or at the sky?

[Speaker 12] (8:08:06 - 8:08:13)

To some extent now I can. So that's progress definitely because I couldn't do that before.

[Speaker 1] (8:08:13 - 8:08:21)

So you find little spaces when you're of presence, when you're not interacting with people.

[Speaker 12] (8:08:21 - 8:08:27)

Yeah. Like wet tarmac for some reason, just, yeah, that works. I don't know why.

[Speaker 1] (8:08:28 - 8:11:02)

It's just a reflection of the... Oh, well, the most unlikely things can help you. That's fine.

It doesn't really matter what it is. So do you, are you in a relationship, married or? No, no, no.

Do you, have you had relationships? Yeah, but yeah, not enough. Okay.

The but is enough, but I don't want to go too deeply into it because I'm not a psychotherapist and don't need to be. Well, I would recommend that you practice here. There's still some time left.

Everybody knows now who you are. And the people here are much more conscious than people you would normally meet in everyday life. And everybody will be very happy to help you and to help you.

And you can also help, for example, by just refraining from giving too much input when you're interacting, engaging in conversation. Be more a listener than a speaker. Make that your practice for the time being.

Just, I'm not saying don't say a word, but be more like 80% a listener than a speaker. And that, for example, you can do by asking questions when you're in a, rather than stating your view or whatever it is, ask questions that encourages the other person to speak more. If the other person speaks more, it forces you to listen, and then make the listening into a practice while the other person is speaking.

Are you able to, let's say, at any time to feel your inner body? Can you feel that?

[Speaker 12] (8:11:02 - 8:11:06)

Yeah, the hands, but then I seem to lose them quite quickly.

[Speaker 1] (8:11:06 - 8:11:12)

Okay, but hands, you can feel the energy in your hands. The rest of the body is more difficult.

[Speaker 12] (8:11:12 - 8:11:13)

Yeah, yeah.

[Speaker 1] (8:11:13 - 8:12:00)

Okay, well, it's a good start. It's a start. So I suggest that once you've asked a question, while you listen, you direct your awareness into the inner feeling of your hands.

And that keeps it there so that it doesn't, your mind doesn't take off. So you ask the question, what, where are you from? How long have you been with Eckhart?

How did you first discover the books? Have you been to other, many questions you can ask, and people will be happy to help you by answering your questions. And they will be happy to help you by not asking you too many questions.

[Speaker 12] (8:12:01 - 8:12:03)

Yeah, no, thank you. That's good. Yeah, that'll help.

[Speaker 1] (8:12:04 - 8:13:36)

So, and so while you listen, have your attention in the inner energy field of your hands. If you can amplify that and have your attention also in other parts of your body, for example, your feet and hand at the same time, that's even better. But hands is fine too.

So you feel your inner, the aliveness in your hands. And from there, you listen and you know, just give it, this will help you prevent the stream of mind from taking you over. So that's the beginning of a little, a little practice.

Another practice you can do is while you listen, you're aware of your breathing. And so you can even bring the two together. You can be aware of your breathing and your hands, but it's probably better for you to just choose one or the other.

So please help this gentleman and allow him to ask you some questions and give exhaustive answers. And don't ask him any questions except, well, I'll ask you a couple of questions so you don't need to ask him. Where are you from?

[Speaker 12] (8:13:36 - 8:13:37)

Yorkshire in England.

[Speaker 1] (8:13:37 - 8:13:52)

Okay, Yorkshire, England. And so you don't need to ask him that. So that's good.

And have you been to retreats before with us here?

[Speaker 12] (8:13:53 - 8:13:54)

No, it's the first one.

[Speaker 1] (8:13:54 - 8:30:22)

First one, okay. Well, that's another question you don't need to ask. Okay, I believe you can get there.

So, and of course, in addition to this practice with people, go out into nature and be engaged, if necessary, even involve other senses, not just the visual sense, although for most people, the visual is the predominant sense, but also perhaps touch something, see what it, a leaf or plant, pick up a stone or on the beach, the sand or whatever it is, water, give it, be aware of the tactile sense perceptions. All these things help you get out of your mind. At least put aside just maybe once a day, 15 minutes when you check your Tinder.

It's all very important, but there's something more important. And that's why you're here. And a few more practical tips so that you don't get distracted too much while you take your attention more deeply while you're here.

Take your attention more deeply into being or into attention itself, purely practical. Don't turn on the TV in your room, please. I have not installed hidden cameras to check on you.

So, second, limit your interaction, the interaction with your devices. If you cannot eliminate interaction with your devices completely, and I understand that you may not survive if you do, at least put aside just maybe once a day, 15 minutes when you check your, whatever it is that comes through, whatever, text, email, Facebook, Snapchat, Tinder. It's all very important, but there's something more important.

And that's why you're here. If you, so now let's see, I suggest to you that you make an agreement with yourself that not to go there unless any more than is absolutely necessary. And I mean, if occasionally you get it out and to take a photo is okay, but also don't interact with things around you only through imagining what it would look like as a photo on your phone.

And then say, okay, I'm going to fully experience this beautiful thing when I get home and look at my photos. In the meantime, I'm more interested in taking this photo because that's what the, there's a species that has developed out of Homo sapiens, a branch species called Homo turisticus. And they walk around continuously with either camera or things.

You see them every day. They come in buses. And then in the evening, the Homo turisticus goes home mostly.

And then you are left here. And you might notice it becomes quite still outside at this time. And the days are very, very long here.

You may find that unusual if you come from a more Southern place. There's still daylight around even at 1030. There's still light in the sky.

So, and then it becomes very still here. So you can walk along the lake or just wherever you are and just become aware of that surrounding stillness. And as you become aware of the surrounding stillness, of course, you become still yourself.

And if you are still, it means you're not thinking or very little thinking. And it means you're aware. It means you're present.

It means you are living through the deep eye. So use nature that is around you. Live through the deep eye.

And during the daytime, if you're walking and there's lots of, there's a long weekend here and tomorrow is a holiday in Canada here. So there's more tourists, Homo turisticus than usual. And if you get upset by the fact that there are so many tourists walking around, then you just practice this beautiful spiritual practice of acceptance of the isness of this moment.

And immediately you become still too without needing external silence. Complete acceptance of this moment, including the tourists. And you're still, oh, I don't know how

tourists will develop in the future as a species.

In Thailand, in, just near Bangkok, somebody, they interviewed some near Buddhist monastery. They interviewed some farmers and farm workers. They would give food to the monks.

That's a tradition in Buddhism in Thailand, in the South, Theravada tradition of Buddhism. The monks come with their begging bowls every morning. They just stand there.

And then the local people come and put food. They are dependent. It's done on purpose.

There's a wisdom behind it. Or the Westerner would say, why don't they work for a living? The monks stand there with their begging bowls and then the poor people who hardly have enough, who hardly have enough themselves, they come and put some food, a bit of rice, whatever, in the begging bowl.

And the monks just stand. They don't say thank you because it's a privilege for you to give food to the monks. That's part of the tradition.

So the Westerners interviewed the farm workers. They, why do you give your food to the monks when you have so little yourself? And they began talking to each other and say, well, because we want a better incarnation next time.

So we are accumulating merit. So next time we come, we are born into a better condition. And then the Westerner asked, so what do you want to come back as in your next lifetime?

And then they talked amongst each other. And finally the agreement was, we want to come back as tourists. Because they observe these people.

They are out of their, step out of their buses. They're well-dressed and some are obviously so privileged that they are quite big bodies, which means they have plenty of money. They can eat as much as they like.

So that's a great thing. And then they do all kinds of things. They seem to have sex all the time.

And so it's a great thing. So wouldn't it be great in my next lifetime to spend my whole lifetime as being a tourist? They don't realize it would be a dreadful nightmare.

Oh yes, one more practical thing. Intoxicating beverages. There's no prohibition here on anything.

There's just a recommendation. And that is to refrain as much as possible from intoxicating. If English is not your native language, it means alcohol.

So refrain as much as possible from intoxicating beverages. However, if you cannot enjoy a dinner without a glass of wine, then you can have a glass of wine. One glass of wine would not unduly interfere with the arising presence in you, but two might and three will, unless you're really already deeply engaged in presence, deeply rooted in presence, in which case you wouldn't even want to drink too much and you certainly wouldn't get drunk.

So as little as possible, I recommend none at all would be great. But since everybody here is spiritually advanced, if you do have a glass of wine, you will not be judged. I'm not one of these spiritual teachers who are very unconventional ways of teaching.

I know of two or three that did that. And they give their students as much alcohol as they want and said, drink, drink up, in order to observe if they can stay conscious even while they are intoxicated. A very questionable practice, but I won't do that here with you.

I think one or two are feeling sorry now. I don't know. So we've talked about the distractions on the external level, television, devices, intoxicating beverages or other intoxicating substances.

I would advise against it, at least here, and never indulge even when you're not here. As you probably know, I've already mentioned, I tried it a couple of times. I have to because people ask me questions about it.

I cannot answer if I haven't tried it. It wasn't that great. I prefer my normal state of consciousness.

It felt a little bit almost oppressive. But I can see a person who is tortured on a daily basis by their mind. It can be a relief to have a smoke, but here we have something better.

We are not falling below thinking. We are rising above thinking. And that is the next step in human evolution.

When you rise, as you rise above thinking, you don't need to fall below thinking anymore because you become liberated from your mind in the dimension that is transcendent to thought. So, and another practice, of course, here is the daily, the moment-to-moment practice of accepting the is-ness of the present moment. Just that's a powerful way of, and a quick way of going beyond the surface self, the egoic self, which means stop complaining, either internally or externally.

Of course, if there's something that needs to be changed, of course, you go to the reception or you make a phone call if suddenly there's water coming through the ceiling. Hopefully, I'm not manifesting it by talking about it. But if there's water coming through the ceiling and the mattress and you are on it and getting drenched, you don't say, well, accept what is, stay.

Stay on the bed. Eckhart said, don't complain. So that's not the practice.

But it does mean that when you finally go to the telephone and tell them what happened, it's not done in a complaining manner that says, how dreadful this place is. How can you allow something like this to happen to me? This is dreadful.

That strengthens the ego. No, you just explain what is and what can we do about it. And in the meantime, you surrender to the fact that you're wet.

So that's what is.

[Speaker 2] (8:30:50 - 8:31:38)

So just being present with your sense perceptions. Some people tell me that sometimes I have to demonstrate the arising of the inner space without thinking.

[Speaker 1] (8:31:38 - 8:34:33)

I sometimes go like that. So in between the left hand and the right hand, there's a space of no thinking. So normally in the unconscious thinking state, there's no space, just one thought after another.

And then you become alert enough to create a space between thoughts. And some people have told me that they actually find it helpful occasionally in daily life when nobody's looking to hold your hands like that, because that's an outer representation of an inner state. And it can be helpful to have the outer representation as an anchor, at least as you practice the thoughtless state, to have that as an anchor for thoughtless.

So you're holding that space of no thought, both externally, so to speak, and internally, more importantly, of course. So eventually you don't need it anymore, but some people do find it helpful. I will talk just a little bit more, but with lots of spaces between the words so that you can practice meditative listening, which means you're aware of the words that you're hearing, but you're also aware of the spaces between the words.

And while you're aware of the spaces between the words, you may notice you're not thinking. If you are thinking, you cannot be aware of the spaces between the words.

[Speaker 5] (8:34:39 - 8:37:41)

And this is good practice to be aware simultaneously of form and formlessness of things and of space. And you may notice when you are aware of that space, you're really aware of yourself as the presence, because that presence is in a space. And you may notice when you're aware of space, you're not waiting for the next thing to happen.

You're not waiting for what I'm going to say next, no need, because you know that what I'm going to say next, whatever I'm going to say next, cannot add anything important to

the realization of your presence.

[Speaker 1] (8:37:49 - 8:38:26)

And so intentionally, I'm not saying anything very interesting right now, because if it's too interesting, you will get drawn back into the words and into thought and into form.

[Speaker 2] (8:38:32 - 8:38:35)

So it's good that this talk is boring.

[Speaker 1] (8:38:38 - 8:39:23)

That leaves more room for the awareness of space. Music, when it has a spiritual dimension, also has spaces in it or an underlying spaciousness.

[Speaker 5] (8:39:36 - 8:40:02)

Some visual art also has spaciousness in it. And when you look at it, you may find there isn't much there.

[Speaker 1] (8:40:08 - 8:40:46)

For example, certain Asian paintings, a little tree in a corner, a little distant mountain, a tiny human standing somewhere, and 85% of the painting is empty space.

[Speaker 5] (8:40:48 - 8:41:38)

It might be the sky or just empty space. And you look at it, and if you really look at it, you become aware that the essence of the painting is not what's there to be seen, but the essence is what's not there, space.

[Speaker 1] (8:41:39 - 8:46:38)

And so looking at that can be a realization of your own spaciousness. It's so liberating to realize the essence of yourself as stillness, space. You are so much more than the little me, more than your personal history, successes and failures, the successes that turned into failures, the failures that turned into successes.

One little practice I would recommend, take five minutes or so. You can practice here, of course, but at home, everybody has five minutes. Don't believe your mind when it tells you you don't have five minutes.

And the practice is sit somewhere outside or indoors for five minutes and practice perception without interference of thinking, which means you just look around wherever you are. You may look at occasionally your gaze rests upon one thing for a little while, and then you look on. Then you take in the totality of whatever surrounds you.

And as you do, you're aware simultaneously of what you are seeing, but without calling it anything. And you're aware of the stillness that is your essence. That's the background to the visual sense perceptions, like a canvas.

And so this is a blank canvas. And whatever you see is the painting on the canvas. It appears and disappears, appears and disappears.

But the canvas is the spacious stillness.

[Speaker 5] (8:46:39 - 8:46:44)

It's a beautiful way of perceiving the world.

[Speaker 1] (8:46:48 - 8:51:44)

And another practice similar to this, is particularly good when you're outside, but also indoors. Sit for five minutes again and be very alert. Pay attention to whatever you are hearing, alert listening, the slightest sounds.

No sound is better or worse than another. Just every sound is received. Beautiful bird song, a motorbike driving past.

But you are again the canvas for the sound this time. And it's all just register. And you have no preference, any sound is fine.

And you're aware of yourself as the presence, the listening presence. The alertness that makes the hearing possible. And again, as much as possible, no mental labeling.

The subtlest sounds are the best that wake, because they require your greatest alertness to some distant sound. So if you sit in a very still place, in nature perhaps, see how far you can hear. Do you remember the story in a new earth, the Zen master walking with a disciple, and they sit down, have something to eat.

And then the disciple says, can you explain how to enter Zen? Which means, can you explain how to enter the state of consciousness that is Zen? And the master says, can you hear that distant mountain stream?

And the sound must have been really distant. And the disciple at first can't hear, and then he becomes more alert. And of course, as he becomes more alert, he stops thinking because you cannot be really alert and think.

Thinking implies a certain degree of non-alertness. So the disciple listened.

[Speaker 2] (8:51:47 - 8:51:49)

Can you, yeah, I can hear it now.

[Speaker 1] (8:51:54 - 9:08:59)

And the master says, enter Zen from there. In other words, that's a portal into presence. I've been working for 13 years in an office, and I feel that my job is boring and useless.

I learned to surrender, but I'd like to change my job, but don't know where to apply. How can I find out what will give me joy and happiness and a feeling of meaningfulness? Well, start with where you are.

Rather than trying to get away from where you are, you start with always the present moment. And you say you have surrendered, but have you surrendered enough? Have you truly surrendered?

So I suggest when you travel to work every morning, enter the state of presence rather than drifting off into thinking so that you're present every moment, whether you're driving or taking public transportation or walk to work, be there, absolute presence. And when you're at work, do one thing at a time and bring in spacious moments as much as possible. They can only be a few seconds, as one spacious breath after you made a phone call, two spacious breaths.

And then when you go to have lunch, wherever it is, either you eat the lunch that you brought with you or you go to the restaurant or the canteen, or again, present with every moment. So you use what otherwise would be a boring situation and just use it as the background for presence. So you're not ultimately, you're not looking for some satisfaction in the work, but you bring a different state of consciousness to it.

So in a way, your work situation becomes like a canvas. It's just an excuse for practicing presence. And you're lucky that you have a relatively boring job, gives you a great opportunity for practice.

If you had a very stressful job that kept you in a state of excitement all day long, it would be more difficult. So be thankful that life has given you something relatively boring. And then you make it interesting, not in the conventional sense of interesting, but you bring that, the alertness to it.

So you're not working at the stock exchange, shouting like a mad person, sell, sell, buy, be on the computers. Now, if there's any stockbroker wanting to ask me a question, please do. That'll be a different answer.

I don't know what I'd say. There's a way there too. What it is, I don't know until you ask the question.

But yes, use the situation. And so that as you do that, discontent disappears. And so, and that is true surrender.

You say you practice surrender, the questioner says, but if there's discontent, of course there's still not complete surrender. You're still, I'd rather be somewhere else. Or the mind telling you in 13 years, how many more years to retirement?

Oh, and then you start counting the years to retirement. So you're losing yourself in past and future. And you're carrying the burden in your mind of past and future, missing the opportunity of the present moment because it's not interesting enough, says the mind.

So that's good practice. And you may find if you come into such an alignment with the present moment, you feel more alive, even within the routine activities, there is then an added dimension of aliveness that comes in. And you perform even the routine activities with a greater sense of aliveness.

And it is often then that change comes into your life when you align with the present moment, instead of trying to get away from it, internally align yourself with it so that any kind of no to the present moment dissolves in an inner no. And so you're so aligned that actually power begins to flow through. That's why I call that the power of now.

It's the power of life itself begins to flow through you. At first it flows into your routine activities and the way in which you relate to your colleagues at work becomes more present, different, somewhat different. Some people may notice it, others may not.

And so, and gradually the universe or life notices that you are in a different state of consciousness. And often it is then that change comes into your life. Either through a chance event or a chance encounter or a sudden idea or realization that comes into your head one morning.

In whatever form it comes or some drastic thing like suddenly your company goes bust. The company that you worked for for so long, suddenly they close down. Everybody loses their job.

Wow, you're free. But you were free already because internally you already became free. So in what way change comes into your life, we don't know.

It is much more likely to come in but you no longer depend on external change for your inner state. That's the main thing that you don't depend on it anymore. You already, and even if nothing else came into your life you would continue practice until your last breath.

And your last breath would be a conscious breath. And you would have fulfilled your purpose on this planet in this form, which is to be a vehicle for consciousness to come into this world. So you don't need to depend.

You don't depend on anything. Change is more likely to come, yes. But this, the presence practice is not a means to an end.

You're not practicing. You say, okay, I'll practice. But if nothing happens within six weeks, I'll stop practicing.

Or the lady, do you know the lady who, a church going lady who saw, she lived in a house and outside her window there was a hill that blocked the view of the ocean. So there's a little hill. And of course, if that hill hadn't been there her house would have been worth much more.

So because of that hill, her house wasn't worth that much. But in church she heard if you only have face of as big as a mustard seed, you can sell to this mountain, move from here to there and it will move for you. She heard that in church, Jesus said.

And then she said, oh, okay. I only have a hill there so I can let's see. And said, okay, I'm going to believe that this hill is going to move.

And then tomorrow morning I'll open the curtains and see what happens. So she, in the morning she got up and opened the curtains and the hill was still there. And she said, oh, I knew it wasn't going to work.

That's the faith. So to all of you who are bored at work, there may be quite a few, make it into a spiritual practice, a consciousness practice. Bored at work also means you're not particularly challenged at work.

And in the absence of life challenges, there's always a danger that you fall below thought and you come into a routine where you, what you think it's acceptance, but you're really falling below thought and you go to work and there's a decrease in your sense of alertness and aliveness and you become dull and you go. And sometimes you see people who've been working in the same place for a long time. They have not, it's not surrender or presence.

They've just gone below thought, not risen above. This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

Many questions have come from people asking about feeling drained after working with people for a long time. For example, I work in a healing capacity and often find helping professionals come to us asking for help when they find their energy to be drained by those they support. Health professionals, social workers, even hairdressers who spend much of their time listening to the problems of others can feel exhausted at the end of each day.

Any advice from you would be welcome. This is Sally asking and several, quite a few other people. The energy loss mostly happens if you engage too much with the mindstream of those people.

Now, this is for people who listen to people, talk like counselors and so on. If you engage with the mindstream that comes through the words and follow it, that tends to take energy out of you. So the art is to remain, while you listen, to remain aware of your own presence so that you don't allow the mind to link in with your mind and then pull you along.

And this is why you may remember I mentioned when I used to work with individuals, I would sometimes, a smile would come to my lips when I was listening to them, their problems. And the smile comes because the presence is so peaceful and beautiful. And it knows that that person also, their essence is also that presence.

So you allow the, you listen to the words, but they, instead of being drawn into that mindstream, you allow it to go through you. So to continue to have your awareness in your inner space while you are engaged in listening. So it's the, so that I would almost say at least more than 50%, if one could even quantify it, more than 50% of your attention, 70% of your attention needs to be in the energy field of presence, your stillness, and then you listen from there.

Then it's not draining to listen. But if you listen with, then it draws you, it draws your attention and you link into the other person's mental stream. Your mental stream unites with the other person's stream and then you get dragged along.

So that almost looks as if you were a little detached and I don't know if detachment is the right word, perhaps it is, but detachment is a, limits it because you're not only detached, you're on a deeper level, you are more at one with that person than you could ever be on the mental level. So on the mental level, there is some detachment, but on a deeper level, there is a sense of some, there's the unifying field of awareness that is there between you of presence. So there's no separation.

Yes, attachment on one level, detachment on one level, but on another level, there's the realization of oneness beyond the conceptualized identity. It's again, it's a practice. It's an art.

[Speaker 2] (9:09:29 - 9:30:19)

This is not a conventional meditation. You can do that by yourself easily by using a meditation method and focusing the mind and coming still. I haven't planned this session at all.

So I have no idea how it's going to unfold. It's much more interesting and alive. I'd like to mention for those of you who are new to this, to be aware as you sit here and listen and watch, to be aware that I don't talk continuously.

There are short gaps in between words or sentences. And as part of our meditation, please just notice that there are gaps when I don't speak. Notice means pay attention.

Just note, oh, one could even say the gaps are more important than the words. You need a certain alertness to notice the gaps. I could say what you notice is the silence in between words or sentences.

And to the mind, the thinking mind, that is something silly and absurd because the thinking mind is mental noise. So it doesn't know what to do with silence. It's not high on your list of thinking minds, your list of priorities.

And the thinking mind says, I've got other things to worry about than silence. But that's the problem. It worries a lot.

The thinking mind is not ever silent. But to find that dimension is very important. I would even say the most important thing.

Now, what happens inside you when you notice the silence between words, the gap? You become silent. When you notice that there's a silence, a silent space, like now, in that moment of noticing, whether it's two seconds or five seconds, in that moment of noticing, you're not thinking, but you are conscious.

And that's meditation, to be conscious without thinking. In addition to noticing the silent gap, gaps, you could also become aware that you are breathing. The breath flows in and out, flows in and out.

So it may help you to be aware, not only of the silent space, spaces, where it's only ever one space because there's only the present moment, to be aware of the one space, the gap between words. It may be helpful while you're aware of that space to be aware that you're breathing also, you're breathing. You feel it, sense the air flowing in and out.

So there's a knowing in the background that's not thinking, a conscious presence, but you're not thinking. It's vitally important to be able to access that dimension, not just when you sit and say, okay, now for the next 10 minutes, 15 minutes, half an hour, one hour, I'm going to do my meditation. That's fine, can be very helpful, but it's more important to access that dimension in everyday life.

That's stillness in a word for it. And in that stillness, you are there, but not the historical you, the person that thinks about his or her problems and fears and desires in the past and the future. It's all connected in a stream of thinking.

Me and my life, think about that. Think about who I am as defined by thinking, the judgments about myself, things I'm proud of, things I'm ashamed of, things I regret, things I'm anxious about might happen. All that usually gives you your sense of who you are.

But when that comes to a stop, there's a cessation in that stream of thinking that usually provides you with your sense of identity. Then, now, you become aware that there is

another dimension of consciousness in you that's, one could say, deeper than thinking. One could say, higher than thinking.

Awareness, presence, stillness, spaciousness. And you can sense that there is something there that has no form. When you think about your life, your problems, your anxieties, so on, so on, it's all form.

Every thought is a thought form. And yet there's another dimension in you that most people don't know about that is formless. One could say you become aware of your own, your being, your beingness, your presence.

When there's a moment of no thought, is there nothing there anymore? Well, there is undoubtedly a conscious presence left, the light of consciousness. And that is you, more essentially than the story of your life.

That is the universe of which you are an intrinsic part, the universe becoming aware of itself. It's conscious. You are conscious.

And suddenly you know that you are conscious. You sense that consciousness, that presence. That underlies everything.

Your entire order of thinking couldn't happen if you were not conscious. You couldn't have any emotions if you were not conscious. You couldn't have any sense perceptions if you were not conscious.

It underlies everything. It's the foundation for everything. It's the one thing that is totally beyond any doubt.

And maybe your entire life is a kind of dream, could be. So you can doubt the absolute reality of your so-called life. What you cannot doubt, because the evidence for it is here and now and immediate, what you cannot doubt is that you are conscious.

The essence of who you are is that presence, that consciousness. I want to leave aside today for our meditation the question that may have arisen in your mind, whether the brain, the physical brain, produces consciousness, or whether the brain receives consciousness, like a radio receives the signals and translates them. I would suggest the second is the case, but we don't need to explore that here now.

Our session here is practical and direct. We don't need to go at the moment into abstract speculation of philosophy, although it's interesting. The fact remains that that presence that's there is the essence of who you are.

Most people are not aware of their own presence. They are only aware of what arises in that presence, in that consciousness. Sense perceptions, the look, the hear, the touch, thoughts, and emotions.

Those are the things that arise in that light of consciousness. So, most people's attention is completely absorbed by those things. So, they're totally drawn into, identified with, those three things that constitute your so-called life.

Sense perceptions, thoughts, and usually sense perceptions are perceived through the filter of your thoughts, which are conditioned by the past. So, you don't really see that clearly. Sense perceptions, thoughts, feelings, emotions.

So, that is your life, it's a kind of hypnotic state. It's like going to a movie, see it in the cinema, and you watch it, what's happening. You're on the screen, and you're completely drawn into it, and you forget yourself completely.

Identify with the characters, or with one of the characters. And that's how most people live. They live in that, oh dear.

Sometimes, almost accidentally, moments arise when thinking subsides, and they go, and they perceive, but they're not burdened by sense perceptions. Sometimes spontaneously, that spaciousness, or stillness, or presence can arise, and suddenly life feels good. It's good to be alive.

There's a joy, an intensified sense of aliveness.

[Speaker 1] (9:30:54 - 9:49:58)

The French writer, Albert Camus, wrote this one sentence, that's the best sentence he ever wrote, because it's based on a spiritual realization. And he wrote, in the depths of winter, I finally learned that there was in me an invincible summer. And obviously, winter and summer are used metaphorically.

I finally, in the depths of winter, I finally learned, finally means, he spent quite a long time in the depths of winter. I finally learned that there was in me, or maybe he said there is in me, because that is the timeless. If he didn't say is, he should have said is would have been even better.

In the depths of winter, I finally learned that there is in me an invincible summer. And of course, summer refers to the inner state of transcendence, of spaciousness, where a sense of aliveness, a peace, not an asleep peace, but a vibrantly alive peace, emanates, and goodwill, lovingness, a sense of connectedness, all emanates from that transpersonal, to use that word, transcendent, perhaps, but it's transpersonal too, because it transcends the person. This was the entire, our days here, that's the essence of what this is all about, as you know, the realization of the transcendent dimension within yourself.

And so, you live, your life is then a balance between dealing with things on the personal level, being a person, using the person, it's a, it's your form, identity, it's fine, you have

to honor that also. It has its shortcomings, and you become compassionate with that. I, my form identity has lots of shortcomings, not answering emails is only one of them.

But they are, those shortcomings, once you connect with the deeper dimension within yourself, they are not seriously dysfunctional anymore, in the sense that they would create suffering for yourself or others. But there are certain idiosyncrasies and things that could be better, and perhaps you can improve on the level of form, there are many things you can do, but if you add something here, you might lose something there, so it's never, you're never full, that, that completion on the level of form is just not possible, and not necessary. And there's always something else you can do, to explore, to acquire, to learn, and yet the essence of you is already absolutely complete, and you don't need time to be yourself, you already are yourself, fully, on the level, on the formless.

I call that essence identity, your form identity, your essence identity, the invincible summer, in this sentence by Camus, okay? That metaphor refers to the, your essence identity. The winter is the suffering that the form identity undergoes, but if he hadn't spent a lot of time in the depths of winter, as he calls it, he probably wouldn't even have found the invincible summer in him.

And just as many of you, if you hadn't spent time in suffering, and had not had deep challenges, you wouldn't even be here. I know I wouldn't. You, one thing you need to be careful about, the moment you start to speak, you remember last night, we looked at ways of interacting to bypass the mind, which quickly can bring up the ego.

The ego is mind-based, a mind-based sense of identity, and we saw these video clips where people just looked at another human, so you bypass all that, so it's easier, if you're not even engaging in any dialogue, so you're not even attempting to connect on the conceptual level, which can quickly, completely pull you into that dimension of thought, and back into ego. The moment you completely identify with the thought, it becomes part of your ego. Thought in itself is not ego, it's just thought.

Complete identification with a thought that arises would be part of your ego. Emotion is not ego, but complete identification with an emotion that arises will become part of your ego. So the ego is complete identification with form, which in this, and the primordial form is thought form.

Of course, the ego also identifies with a physical form, but more importantly, underlying that is identification with thought forms. So the danger is, yes, to be present when you are not being challenged by other humans, and interacting with other humans on the verbal level, it's easier. The challenge comes the moment you start to engage in a conversation with someone, and then the challenge is to have some of your awareness in the underlying awareness, stillness, to be aware of that underlying spaciousness, so there's not complete loss of stillness, even while you speak.

That's a skill you can, it requires vigilance to see that you are not dragged along with a mind stream as soon as you start to open your mouth and words come out. So you can, you're very present, and then somebody says something, and then you're, well, well, and you're gone. And then it gets worse, because the other person has a slightly different opinion, and then it amplifies your mind stream, and then what it's all, you're just totally in your form identity, and something is terribly important now, something has become so important, much more important than anything else, like your essence identity just, it's disappeared completely within three minutes, two minutes, it's gone. Because there's a, there was, for example, there was a difference of, slight difference of opinion that became so important, you needed to show that your viewpoint is absolutely the right one, and then all your energy flows into that assertion of yourself, ego, you don't know it, it's the ego, you want to, the opinion doesn't really matter, I mean, who cares if you are right or he is right, it's just a game of thought, and it makes no, in most cases, it makes no difference to any situation, but it is the desire of the egoic identity to assert itself, and to emerge victorious. It's unconscious, it's an unconscious movement, but you can see that even in relatively insignificant exchanges between two people, even if the viewpoint slightly differs, there's a force behind the way in which you express your mental position, your viewpoint, it's not just presenting your perspective, your viewpoint, or your mental position, if you are vigilant, it's of course much easier to observe in another, you can start by doing that, the force behind what people say is completely superfluous, unnecessary, but there is, so there is another dimension, this is not just what people are saying, they are, they may be doubting what you've said, and they express, it's not just that, because that in itself would be a neutral thing, it's a neutral, you put forward your perspective and said, I believe your viewpoint is not quite right, here's mine, but in itself, it's neutral, there's nothing, there's no egoic involvement, it's just that there's an awareness behind it, in the way in saying that the android data last night in the video clip, in the same way that he presented his viewpoint, there was no force behind it, because he's egoless, he's not human, he's egoless, so in that sense, there was no, there's no force behind what he said, he just presented clearly the situation as he saw it, and with humans, that is not, not easy, so it requires great vigilance, I'm always surprised when I observe humans interacting, my initials are ET, so I call them human, I'm always surprised when I observe humans interact, how quickly this, this force flows into what they say, so there's not just whatever their opinion is, whether they question yours, or whatever it may be, it's not just that in itself, it's completely harmless, but there is a force behind it, that as an, is aggressive in a way, even if it's not obviously aggressive, there is that element in what they say, why? Because it is a, you have identified with the arising thoughts, which means lack of awareness, awareness has been lost, or a better way of putting it perhaps, awareness has been obscured, or covered up, and all there is to you now, is that movement of thought, and therefore, you've identified with it, your consciousness has completely been hijacked by thought forms, and then you identified, and then you're really not defending, or any more your position, or you are fighting to triumph as an, as an form identity against the other, who

has a slightly different opinion. So that is the, the presence, that has no form, that is a, something opens up within you, that is very deep, and far transcends your form identity, it connects you with something vast, it's not even something, it connects you with a great depth, and therefore, I often use the analogy of the ripple on the surface of the ocean, and every human being is that ripple, in this analogy, as long as the ripple is not aware of its true nature, it only knows itself as a little ripple, and it looks to other ripples for fulfillment, or wants to protect itself from other ripples, or to compete with them, or compares itself to other ripples, it's a very problematic existence, because it only knows the surface of reality, it's an entire, experiencing entire reality as a surface phenomenon, and continuously trying to find some kind of ultimate fulfillment, happiness on the surface level, through other ripples, or other situations that are also ripples, and it's frustrating to live as a ripple, because you're just a little, this little thing, and, and some ripples manage to get bigger, they might, they might gobble up a few others, and then they grow into a wave, in this analogy, it means, you have your private jet waiting nearby, it's a clear sign that you have grown into a wave, you're no longer just a little ripple, but you're just as short-lived as the ripple, and now you have to compete with other big waves, so it becomes problematic again, and a moment may come when the ripple, or the wave, suddenly, perhaps becomes frustrated with that surface existence, and says, hmm, is that all there is, that I can't take anymore, because things continuously, obstacles continuously arise, and there's always things that are unfulfilling, and even the most promising things that you enter into.

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[Speaker 1] (0:01 - 2:03:52)

Relationships, situations, places, all kinds, even the most promising things, there's always, sooner or later, some flaw appears in it. What's wrong with the world? Why is there always this not, this ultimate, the fulfillment is always kind of short-lived, because you're still on the surface, only.

And then the moment comes, hmm, and perhaps accidentally, or because another ripple close to you, who has gone beyond its mere ripple existence, says something, or you can sense something, and then perhaps for a moment, there's a cessation in the stream of thinking, without loss of consciousness, and the ripple goes, the ripple goes, oh, there's more to me than I thought. It doesn't know what it is, it doesn't have a name for it, but it can sense the depths, suddenly. And as it senses the depths, that is, suddenly the vertical dimension has come in, it's no longer just the horizontal dimension, there's the vertical dimension of consciousness, where there's only the present moment.

Past and future exists in the vertical dimension of reality, and there's a transcendent reality, there's the vertical dimension, and the ripple suddenly discovers that it is a manifestation, a temporary manifestation of something vast, and it is not separate from it, it is a manifestation of it. So it's no longer just a little ripple, it senses its origin. In Buddhism, and sometimes in Zen, you have strange expressions, your true face, before you were born, all kinds of expressions to point to it.

It discovers that it is the ocean, or it probably doesn't have a name for ocean, it discovers its connectedness to something transcendent, that transcends its ripple existence, and then gradually, that's the first discovery, and then it occasionally loses it again, but gradually it is able to have some attention in that depth, even when it is occupied with its surface ripple existence, and operates there, it does that, and yet there is a depth, there's a rootedness in being, and that transforms the way in which the ripple, we'll let go of the ripple in a moment, as you know, the ripple is you, the ripple existence then becomes no longer as problematic as it was before, a little bit more sane, the dysfunction that has created an enormous amount of unnecessary suffering, the reactivity that amplified every challenge that the ripple encountered in life, that amplified it and made it a huge thing, and then through reactivity, that challenge actually grew even worse, because you amplified it, well, the ripple, sorry, it's not, the ripple amplified it, it's easier, we can bypass the remnants of ego in you by talking about ripples, and then the ego doesn't feel offended, that's the power of parables and stories, so the ego doesn't realize that it's about me, so it listens to a story, and whereas before, the ego would have created a barrier, without knowing, it's a little bit like a sugar-coated pill, so you give to a child, and it tastes good, and then you swallow it, and then it begins to work, it's called, I believe it's called the red pill, before I forget, I would like to

acknowledge all those people who are with us, not physically, but in other parts of the world, and apparently, if I look straight ahead, there's a, into the camera, then I can connect with them visually, it's nice to have you with us, wherever you are, whatever time it is where you are, of course it's the present moment, there may be more people there than here, but it doesn't really matter, I have a feeling that we may have questions and answers in this session, it's no more than a feeling, so we'll see, remember, being here in this environment especially, the sensory perception, not just visual and auditory, have you noticed that there's a fragrant scent in the air, a very wonderful freshness and scent, be aware of that, there's a breeze coming from the sea, you can feel it on your skin, so you have all the senses simultaneously, that should bring you into the present moment, can't do a lot of thinking when you're aware simultaneously of visual, auditory, tactile, and I suppose olfactory senses, very helpful, and have you noticed that there are quite a few ancient olive trees around here, which these must have been here, of course, before this was built, there must have been a olive groves or olive tree plantations here, and you can see that some of them are of an enormous age, what perhaps you may not know, I know it because I googled it, it is, olive trees can reach an age of two to three thousand years, so it's not impossible that you look at a tree here, it may be 2,500 years old and was a young tree when Socrates walked past it or sat or looked at it, or said what a lovely young tree that is, or some other ancient Greek philosopher might have already been sitting, leaning against this young olive tree and giving philosophical discourse, they have almost a presence, they have a presence almost like an old, even almost a personality in addition to an invisible presence, one last bit of information, there's a tree apparently on the Isle of Crete, not that far from here, that is supposed to be the oldest or one of the very few olives that is probably 3,000 years old, olive tree, that was 500 years before the Buddha, but that tree continuously lives in the timeless dimension of now, deeply rooted not only in the earth but also deeply rooted in being, if I start speaking now, there may be no end to it, so I won't say too much in order to allow time for questions in case any questions have still survived in you after being present here, some questions you may notice dissolve at some point because they're not important, because the mind had a curiosity, I wonder Eckhart, how many incarnations have you had, what did you have for breakfast, questions like that tend to dissolve in the presence, and other questions, an answer may suddenly arise from within you because you became still, there's a story of, I believe it was a British writer, Paul Brunton, I think it was, who in the 30s visited the guru spiritual teacher Ramana Maharshi at his ashram in India in order to, he was preparing a book on the spiritual teachers of India, the book was later published under the title In Search of Secret India, and he visited Ramana Maharshi, the guru at that time was not too well known outside his immediate circle, and he had a list of questions, very important questions for his book, so he came into Ramana's room and Ramana looked at him in a state of thoughtless awareness, and Paul Brunton looked at him, and he didn't ask a single question, all the questions dissolved in the presence on that particular occasion, that was the first time he met him, he may later have asked him questions, another little anecdote connected with Ramana

Maharshi, the famous British writer visited the ashram, Somerset Maugham is his name, and again he was preparing a book, a novel that involved an Indian spiritual teacher, and just before he was to meet Ramana Maharshi, Somerset Maugham fainted, probably because it was so hot, so they carried him into a room and he was lying there on a bed, and when he came to, Ramana Maharshi was sitting there next to his bed looking at him, and he was confused, he didn't know what to say, and Ramana Maharshi said something like, silence is the best speech, and that was the end of that encounter, and later on in a novel called The Razor's Edge, Ramana Maharshi appears as one of the characters. This meditation period is always an opportunity to connect with who you are at a level deeper than the person, the surface self, and not only connect with, but realize that that deeper self is the essential self, and the person, which is the surface self, is the non-essential, temporary, conditioned, time-bound self. They are not entirely separate, the conditioned self, the person, of course, could not be without the deeper self, which you can sense at this very moment by becoming aware of the presence, or the life presence, whatever you want to call it, within you.

One way of doing it, as we sit here together, is to be aware of the spaces in between my words, and realize that when you're aware of a space, whether it's short or a little longer, at that moment, you are not thinking, you're simply present, like now. And you can then sense your more essential being underneath the surface self, which is the physical body and the mind, and emotions. No thought, no thinking, is the essential self, you can only become aware of it when thinking subsides, without you going to sleep.

Thinking subsides, and an alertness remains, an alert presence. One could almost say a kind of nothingness, and yet it is evident that it is only nothing in the sense that it is not a thing, it has no form, but there is clearly a presence there, which you can sense with your entire energy field. So you become aware of yourself as a space of consciousness, the sense of an underlying sense of aliveness, of beingness, which has nothing to do with your past or future, or who you are as a person.

And then you also may become aware that there is a presence that pervades the so-called external world, that the entire universe is pervaded by a sense of alive presence, although in you, so to speak, it becomes focalized, and in you, it can become aware of itself. Another way of putting it, of course, is to say that you become aware of yourself. And gradually then your daily life becomes interspersed with moments of presence.

That's how your life begins to change, which means the conditioned mind, with its habitual thinking, thought patterns, reactions, reactive patterns, mental positions, likes, dislikes, is no longer all there is to who you are. So you become deeper. The more your life becomes interspersed with the presence, you deepen.

It's not really the person that deepens, but the opening up of the dimension of depth in you, so the person remains the person. So it's a welcoming the challenges, we talked

about it before, welcoming the challenges of everyday life. Without that, first, you wouldn't get the reflection of where you are at as far as your state of consciousness is concerned.

How upset do situations, how much power do situations and other people have over you and over your state of consciousness? How often do you get upset, irritated, reactive, and so on? That's a good reflection of how present you are.

Not, although this meditation is a wonderful device, a wonderful tool, but how deep you can go when you meditate is only a small part of the transformation of consciousness. You can't really tell the state of consciousness unless you go into normal life and then get reflections of yourself there. Human beings, it's not the case that humans either have an ego or are totally free of ego.

The ego manifests in human beings to varying degrees. Most humans have a lot of ego that determines their thought processes and their emotions, but a little bit of awareness also in between. They may still be capable of empathy, sometimes with a limited number of people, perhaps only as empathy with your family members or empathy with the people who belong to your particular group, your collective.

And there are, when you look at, you can see the, understand the ego more deeply. If you look at the extreme manifestations of ego that a certain percentage of humanity suffer from, where it's actually labeled as a mental disorder, then you see that many mental disorders are actually just a more extreme form of what is the normal egoic state. And when you see the normal egoic state in a more extreme manifestation, then you can recognize it also when it appears as a normal state.

An example of that is paranoia. Paranoia is the belief that there are people who are plotting against you, enemies who have spent most of their life following you or plotting against you. So it's a delusional system that is the result of the egoic state of fear on the one hand, because there's always fear in the background when you live through a false sense of self.

And so the mind tries to explain the fear and then it creates a story. And then you believe in the story. Secondly, another reason why the mind creates paranoia is to give itself a heightened sense of significance.

I am so important is the implication that the CIA has 55 people whose full-time job is to control, try to control me. Now I'm not saying that CIA don't, they don't, I'm not saying they don't do things, they do sometimes as you know, but I don't think they have 55 people or even one in my case that try to, who knows, I may be wrong. If you work for the CIA, please raise your hand.

But you can see if that is a story that your mind believes in, how important you suddenly

feel. So sometimes paranoia arises because the egos need to enhance its sense of existence, its sense of significance, its sense of importance. And if life doesn't tell you that you are important, then you have to create a story that you are important.

And paranoia is one way of creating a story that gives yourself importance. There are slightly less extreme forms of that are people who believe, for example, believe they are great geniuses, but they are so, so superior to everything that they never even try to create or do anything because that's beneath them. So you can have, occasionally I've met people who tell me, oh, I'm a spiritual teacher too.

They tell me, oh, I see, that's great. Have you written anything? No, no, no, I don't write this.

The true teachings are all beyond words. I don't bother with that. Oh, that's fine.

But that gives you a sense of you are actually superior to most people, all these insignificant people who are so, in their sense, in their insignificance, they have to write books. Many stories that one creates to give oneself a sense of importance, stories that have, in the more extreme cases, little relationship with external reality. And then there is the talking about narcissus.

There's another extreme form of ego that when you look at it, you can see that it has all the elements of the normal ego, but greatly emphasized, and that's called narcissistic personality disorder. And people who suffer from that are totally obsessed with themselves, with their appearance, and the way they are perceived by others. They live for that.

They are totally incapable of empathy. In fact, they're hardly aware that other humans exist. They only see other humans through how they can help, how they can amplify their own ego.

So what they want from other humans is attention or other forms of so-called narcissistic supply. They are always looking to enhance their self image through being told that they are awesome, they're wonderful, they believe they know everything. The moment you question their opinion about something, they will become very angry and aggressive.

You see quite a few of them on Facebook. But there's still a human being underneath that dysfunction. It's just an extreme form of ego.

Nobody knows how many people suffer from narcissistic personality disorder, but the estimate is three to 5% of the population. Now, that means three to 5% of the population suffer from this very extreme form of ego. And perhaps you've all met somebody who can think of somebody to, oh, I wonder if that was my dad, or that was my ex-husband, my ex-wife.

Hopefully not your present husband or wife. So continuous vigilance so that you are there in the background as the awareness. When you become aware of your ego operating, it's not really ego anymore.

The real ego exists in complete unconsciousness, in complete identification. When you notice something in you that's egoic, with the need to be right, the need to be superior to somebody, whatever it may be, by noticing it, that means you are there as the observer, the awareness. So, strictly speaking, it's not even ego anymore.

Once you notice your ego, what you are noticing is a deep-seated pattern in you. And it's only really ego if you are completely identified with it and there's no awareness whatsoever. This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive.

To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. Partners evolve sometimes at different speed, the evolution of consciousness, and some may not evolve for a while at all. So it's possible that suddenly the awakened consciousness comes into you and your partner remains where he or she is, and you go into enormous presence and aliveness and newness, and you still see he or she is still no change.

And then wait a little and see. It's quite possible that your state transmits itself. It says even the slightest degree of readiness in the other, the fact that you do not strengthen his or her mind anymore by opposing his or her mind, the vital thing, don't oppose the mind.

Can express your viewpoint without opposition. Something may happen, an opening may happen. Often it is, or it is possible that you may have to separate and it may be that this, the other partner will leave you because it is no longer satisfying to live with you without the drama.

The pain body, of course, many of you know about the pain body and hopefully not only know about the pain body, but have direct knowledge, immediate knowledge of your own pain body. The pain body, of course, is the favorite place for the pain body, which is the old accumulated pain, which is an energetic, almost an entity that lives in you, that lives on emotional suffering. It loves its vibrational frequency.

It thrives on relations, close relationships. That's where it gets its food, most of its food. There isn't much you can do with, if your pain body needs food, it can't do much when you go to the supermarket and only see the cashier for half a minute or one minute.

Even there, it could happen. I've been standing here for 10 minutes and you've been talking to this customer instead of serving me. But favorite place for pain bodies to renew themselves are families and intimate relationships.

That's their place. And so you will know your partner has a pain body, which occasionally takes them over and makes them say and do things that one could say they're completely out of character. Well, yes, it's unconscious.

It comes as a surprise when you've started living with a person and you've experienced their pain body after perhaps two or three weeks for the first time. And that used to be the big surprise when people got married. Nowadays, often people live together for a while before they get married.

So they already know that the other has a pain body. It's good. And you haven't committed yourself yet.

You can still get out. But what a dreadful thing when you have to, when you marry somebody, start living with that person, and two or three weeks after the honeymoon, a totally different person is suddenly there. A person who is in a deeply negative energy field, says hurtful things, misinterprets what you do.

You say, who did I marry? And you think this must be the real person. Maybe I married, this was all a disguise.

The real person is coming out now. That's of course not the case. It's not the real person.

It's the pain body. And where's yours? Oh, your partner's pain body wants yours, wants your emotional reaction.

Pain body is an emotional aspect of ego. It's part of the egoic consciousness. Pain body needs to be recognized in yourself and the other as it arises.

It's not usually there all the time. That would be dreadful, but it comes periodically. And then you go back to normal for a while, and then it comes back.

And so you need to recognize it, be there as the space for it, be the presence in the other and in yourself. Perhaps the most destructive thing in relationships is the pain body that people carry around with them, that takes them over and makes them, even sometimes people who are already awakening, they still periodically get taken over by their pain body and completely lose consciousness and then completely identified with that energy field. It uses their mind.

It rises up when the pain body needs to renew itself, feed on somebody else's reaction. It moves into your mind, and every thought you think is the thought of the pain body. It completely, the emotional energy field takes possession of your mind, which is probably, if you're not conscious, is probably problematic enough as it is even without the pain body.

But then the pain body rises into your mind, and then if you observe it in your partner,

because if it happens to you, you can't observe it anymore, the presence is lost, but you can observe it in another more easily. Every word they say to you is the pain body speaking through them, as if an entity, and in a way it is like that, has taken possession of them and is now using their mind and speaking through their mind. You need to know that so that you do not react as if that were who they are.

So that is where a degree of compassion comes in when you recognize that they are being possessed at that moment by this entity called pain body. That helps to know it. But this entity is very cunning and knows exactly how to get an emotional reaction from you.

It will accuse you, blame you, mention, it knows your weakest points, and it will go in there and press all the right buttons until you finally go, and your own pain body has awakened, and you're in the grip of it, and you start shouting, and whatever form the pain body takes. Or you may be present enough so that you don't get taken over by your own pain body. But even being in the grip of the pain body, if you're awakening, if the new consciousness is arising, there is a good chance that at the back there is still an observing presence, and you are able to say to your partner, I think my pain body has just come up.

I can feel it. There it is. And if your partner's pain body has not come up yet, then he or she can help you to stay present with it.

You can address it, see it happened just at this moment when you said that, or that happened, that, and now I can feel it. Okay, let's stay with it. You may also point out to your partner that the pain body has come up when you observe it, and if you're lucky, there's still enough awareness there to recognize it.

But the pain body is very cunning. It may even be that your own pain body is coming up, and you're accusing your partner that their pain body is there. Whoa, very cunning.

And, of course, the interesting thing is if somebody says to you, there's your pain body, if there's a reaction, then he or she was right. What do you mean my pain body? If there is an open looking, you say, that's my pain body?

Okay, let me just feel into this. Then probably wasn't my pain body. Well, that's strange.

Didn't feel like a pain body, but maybe. We feel a certain aliveness pervading the body. It's very simple, but some attention has to go there.

Otherwise, you can't feel anything, which means you have to take some attention away from thinking. If you're fully in thought, you can't feel your body at all. You don't feel alive anymore.

Just abstractions. So the beautiful thing is, it's not only that your body loves being

acknowledged and getting your attention. It's a very healing thing to do.

And most importantly, it slows down your thinking considerably, if it doesn't stop it completely. Because if you have your attention here, you can't have it there. And this is the embodied state.

It's quite nice. What you're feeling is not ultimately the physical body. It's already halfway beyond the physical body.

Qi, life energy. And I call that halfway between form and formlessness. It's a bridge.

Qi is a bridge between the formless dimension and the form. So it's wonderful to sense that. You can do it anywhere when there's enough room.

You don't need to focus on externals 100%. Have some attention in the body. Boredom disappears, for example, when you have attention in the body.

You're not bored. You actually enjoy feeling alive. And that can serve as an anchor for staying present.

And that can be one way of looking around at the world without unnecessary mental labeling. There's clarity of perception. And looking at the situations that arise in that clarity of perception.

And from that clarity of perception, you know what you need to do or what needs doing in that situation. It's a higher intelligence that you contact via the body, a higher intelligence than the quiet knowledge of the human mind. And then you know what to do.

So you have an insight or spontaneous doing. Or if there's nothing to do, being is enough. You can enjoy just being.

Sleepless nights are a wonderful opportunity for going into the body. I can't sleep. Why don't you do something useful?

Go into the body. And then you lie there and feel the aliveness. And before you know it, you've gone to sleep, perhaps.

And then you wake up in the morning. Perhaps you still feel a lingering sensation there in the body. And if you don't, as you wake up, put your attention into the body first before you start thinking about the day.

Or just a couple of minutes, three minutes, two minutes. It's a good start of the day to feel alive. It can't be a bad start of the day.

I'll tell you what a bad start of the day is, is listening to the news. It's a grounding, but

not a heavy grounding. It's rooted in being.

Oh. Welcome to our Christmas meditation. Lots of people are joining us today from all over the world.

Let's start with a moment of silence. And so we can be aware of our breathing, breathing consciously in and out. I was reading the other day about something that happened at Christmas in the year 1914, in the middle of the first world war, when the soldiers, I believe it was in France or Belgium, the soldiers were in their trenches, French, German, British soldiers.

And then on Christmas Eve, the fighting spontaneously stopped. And the soldiers could hear from the opposing trenches singing of a Christmas song that everybody recognized. And that song was Silent Night, Holy Night.

And gradually they came out of their trenches. And in the area between the trenches, so-called no man's land, they shook hands, started talking to each other, exchanged gifts of food and other little items. And they sang together that song, Silent Night, Holy Night, each in their respective languages.

They talked to each other, showed each other photos of their families. And that became known as the Christmas truce of 1914. Somebody even wrote a book about it.

And then the superiors, the officers, the command in the command centers were informed that this was happening. And they said, oh, we must put a stop to this. Fighting must resume as soon as possible.

And of course, a few hours later or the next morning, the craziness, the insanity continued. And in a way, that event that happened spontaneously the instantaneous arising of ultimately is what is only sanity between human beings. That seems almost miraculous.

And the insanity seems almost normal. So if you believe that our present political discourse, not only in the United States, but also in other countries in Europe, if you believe that's crazy, then of course, just think back to the first half of the 20th century and the insanity of all that. So that moment and that song, which triggered it, that Christmas songs, Holy Night, Silent Night, brought about a shift in consciousness.

It didn't last. And that's an interesting song to me. That song embodies something that transcends anything cultural or anything belonging to any particular religion.

It transcends all that. Because the song Silent Night really embodies the essence of spirituality, which is inner stillness. It was composed in the early 19th century by an, was the lyrics were written by an Austrian priest in a village in the mountains in Austria.

He had written these lyrics a year before and then Christmas Eve arrived. And he had to present a piece of music in the evening service in the church. So he had the lyrics and then he went to the schoolmaster of that village.

I believe he was. And he, in the last few hours before this, the church service composed the music to it. And then that evening, they both performed it together in the church.

And then it's gradually over the years, it spread all over the world because human beings recognized something in that, that went beyond any particular culture or even religion. All of the words point to something specifically Christian, the birth of Jesus, the spirit that this song embodies goes beyond that it transcends or that it goes very deep. And so it was actually declared by UNESCO as something, I don't know what the official designation was, world, an intangible world heritage.

So in many ways, Christmas, of course, has degenerated into consumerism and so on. Although there's nothing wrong with buying gifts and giving gifts. That's a beautiful thing.

But it has degenerated into that. So it's important to rediscover the essence of it. In the English language, Christmas in English speaking countries, many people don't use the word Christmas anymore.

They call it holidays. The intention behind it, I suppose, is to not to exclude people who are not Christian. And I can see the reasoning behind that.

But there is something there that is of great value. And somehow, to me, the word holiday does not, although originally that word is also beautiful because it refers to a holy day, but it's been used in so many other contexts that it no longer really has that, does not carry that sense anymore of holy. But Christmas still has the Christ in it.

And that's a very interesting word. Christ. In English, it's pronounced when it's only in its by itself, it's been of course pronounced Christ, Christ.

It's usually associated with Jesus, of course. But we need to remember that Jesus, Christ was not his name, Jesus or Joshua was his name. Christ is a title that was given to him later.

In the same way that Buddha was not a name, it was a title given to somebody. And Buddha means the awakened one. And Christ means literally the anointed one.

It refers to anointing with sacred oil, which a holy person, you could do that to a holy person, you would pour sacred oil over them. It's the anointing. That is a literal meaning.

But I believe there is a deeper meaning behind that word. And I also believe it's no coincidence that Christ or Christ and Krishna, the deity, one could say in Hinduism, the

most important figure in the Hindu tradition, those names are so uncannily similar. Christ comes from the Latin Christus, which comes from the Greek Christos.

And then we have Krishna, Christos Krishna. Now, is that just a coincidence? Or are they etymologically related?

I believe they are. And if it's just a coincidence, it's a very interesting coincidence with a deeper meaning. Because what that Christ refers to, in its esoteric sense, is a particular state of consciousness.

In mystical Christianity, that's called Christ consciousness. And in some traditions, even the term Krishna consciousness is used. And a similar term in Buddhism is called Buddha nature.

It refers, all these refer to a particular state of consciousness that is possible for humans to realize. Not to achieve, to attain, to acquire, but to realize. Why am I making that distinction?

Because that state of consciousness is not something that is not already here. That consciousness, which we could call the awakened consciousness, Christ consciousness, Buddha nature, is a potential that's already there, dormant in many humans, but already there. So you don't need to acquire it or go somewhere else or find it in the future.

It's a realization that within you, there is a deeper state of consciousness than the one that you experience mostly in everyday life. And that's the realization of, in mystical Christianity, it's called the realization of the Christ within. In Buddhism, it's the realization of your own Buddha nature, which is your deepest sense of identity, of being.

So you are, on the one hand, a person or a personality, and the kind of personality that you are is determined by your past, all the things that have contributed to the arising of that particular personality or person. And beyond this person, which consists of mainly of mental and emotional conditioning, beyond that, you are something deeper. And Jesus pointed to that in his teachings when he said to his disciples, disciples, you are the light of the world.

And somewhere else, Jesus also said, I am the light of the world. I believe the I am the light of the world is in the Gospel of John. You are the light of the world is in one of the other Gospels.

In other words, the essence of who I am, is also the essence of who you are. The difference between us, this is the implication. The difference between us is only that I know, I realize the essence of who I am, and you have not yet realized it.

That's the only difference. And therefore, Jesus also said, all the things that I do and greater things you will also do. So ultimately, we are one, the essence of who we are,

Jesus said, is the same.

You just have to recognize or realize that essence within you. But how do you do that? Now, I could use examples from Buddhism or examples from Christianity that point to the possibility of realizing that dimension within you.

Let's look just at one saying of Jesus again, because this is Christmas, our Christmas meditation. Jesus talks about the kingdom of heaven. That's perhaps the very foundation of his teaching.

Seek and find the kingdom of heaven, which is within you. That's the foundation. Some people believe that love your neighbor as yourself is the foundation.

But I would suggest to you that that is not the foundation, because that cannot be a starting point. It is pointless to tell anybody who has not realized the essence within themselves to love their neighbor as themselves. They won't be able to do it.

Not for long, because if they have not recognized their own essence, they cannot recognize the essence in the other and realize that who I am in the essence of my being is one with who you are in the essence of your being. And when I realize that, then I love the other as myself. But I cannot tell somebody, you must love the other as yourself.

They live totally trapped in the mental emotional conditioning of their personality or their ego. They may want, genuinely want to be a better human being and try to love the other, but they will always fail again and again. And so the foundation is finding the kingdom of heaven that is within you.

And then as a consequence of that, you will love the other as yourself. In other words, it'll change your relationship with other human beings. There will be a goodwill, a benevolence coming into your interactions with other human beings.

Your interactions with other human beings will no longer be dysfunctional. The dysfunction that we see on every level, not only when we listen to the news, but in our personal lives, in every level, personal to collective, within nations and between nations. So what is this, the kingdom of heaven that is within you?

What does that mean? Well, of course they read it in the churches, have been reading it for a long time. And mostly it's been misinterpreted, although Jesus clearly said it is within you.

Christians traditionally have believed that it is somewhere else. It's going to come when you, when you die, you will enter the kingdom of heaven or it's come at the end of times. Or the kingdom of heaven and so on.

Disregarding what he said about, don't look for it here or there. You can't say, oh, there

it is, or here it's over there. That's what he said.

It is here now. So that we can relax into being, let's go of the idea that we are doing meditation here. So let's get rid of the idea of doing anything right now.

Become comfortable with being. No next moment to look forward to or to fear. No past moment that you need to think about right now.

So the now is enough for being. Awareness of being implies transcendence of thinking, compulsive thinking. And if there are spaces in yourself right now where you're not thinking, just, then it's working for you and you're not doing anything.

What's left of you when you don't remember your past and are not thinking about the future? Because the future is always something that you think about, never an actuality. So what's left of you when you don't remember the past, don't refer to a memory of the past, don't think about the future, just this.

Now what is left is the essence of who you are. But you can't call that anything really. The being, perhaps, the presence, the space, the consciousness.

You can use all kinds of pointers. They're all just pointers. The light, the light of consciousness.

Becoming comfortable with that space in which there's no conceptual knowledge, just a presence, formless presence. You can't name it. The moment you name it, you give it form.

It is who you are beyond form. And it is deeply fulfilling. There's a joy in being who you are beyond the form as which you appear.

It's the joy of being, very subtle at first. At first you may not notice it as joy, it's just a space, a spacious presence. It is being.

In India called sat, it is consciousness. In India called cit, and it is joyful. The consciousness of being is joyful, ananda.

It's the Indian description of that state of realization of who you are underneath the form is sat, cit, ananda, being, consciousness, bliss, one single realization, not three realizations, one realization. And then in the truest sense of the word, you are enjoying yourself. Not in the superficial sense when people say, go and enjoy yourself, have a good time.

This is different. You're not having a good time, you're having no time. You're in joy in yourself, regardless of your life circumstances right now.

It's not your life situation, it has nothing to do with it. It's life itself. Something that may

prevent you from dwelling in this beautiful realization and being consciously rooted in being is the compulsion to think, even when it's not needed at all.

When life would be more clear, more free, more enjoyable, more life without the interference of useless thinking. Thinking. Now in this world, in our culture, very few people as yet know about the possibility of not having to think all the time.

When they speak of not thinking or no mind, the word is used mindless, it means you're falling below thinking, becoming unconscious. And here we are going beyond thinking or rising above thinking. A few thousand people in different parts of the planet at this moment, transcending compulsive thinking.

In a few thousand human beings at this moment, a new consciousness is arising. Transcendence of thinking, presence, which is awareness of being, awareness of awareness, self-realization. And it's happening at this moment.

Nothing to do really with the person, the different persons that are here on the planet or this person or that person. The person has made room for this to arise. The person has become transparent.

The person being complete identification with thinking, an illusory identity, a form identity, short-lived form identity, me, the person. My personal past and my personal future makes me have to think about that. And here the person subsides, loses its density because spaces are rising in between thoughts.

In that space the person is transcended and something else flows through this form. The form becomes an opening for that. A little analogy, let's say you are an actor on a cinema screen involved in the usual personal dilemma, various dilemmas that are part of being a person who is unaware of the transcendent dimension.

If you're only a person unaware of the transcendent dimension then your entire life is a dilemma. The dilemma takes on different forms but it's always problematic, conflict-ridden. So let's say you're an actor on a film screen acting out preconditioned roles according to the script in your mind, which is the conditioning of your mind.

Of course the only reality an actor or any figure or anything that happens on a cinema screen is the light that is shining through the film in the camera. And what is perceived as persons running around the screen getting anxious about this and that are really various ways in which the light is being obscured that's behind the film in the camera. So let's stick for a moment to this analogy.

The various forms that you see on the screen are ways in which the light is being obscured. It's being obscured in different ways and so they are doing whatever they do. The only reality is the light.

That is what gives it life, animates it. Now we're coming to the end of the analogy but you're not quite there yet. Now the end of the analogy is say one or several of the figures on the screen are becoming aware of that light that makes up the essence of who they are in the midst perhaps of acting out the drama or the short-lived happinesses followed by unhappiness in the midst of all that they're becoming aware that in essence they are that light and the awareness is not a thought it's a realization.

And the very realization comes because there's a moment of not thought when they've stripped the learned script the conditioning of their mind a moment has made it parted and spacious awareness is there which is the light and suddenly they're no longer totally identified with the role they're playing. They're in touch with something that transcends the limitations of their role and their person and they feel that light that they are the light of consciousness in the background of their being as a spacious stillness or awareness and then they go about doing what they do perhaps for a while nothing much changes the conditioned script still being acted out but then they notice little changes happening even the script isn't is changing because space is there in between the lines and then the next line suddenly there's something new in it suddenly they say something that they themselves didn't know before something new fresh alive it doesn't conform to the script the conditioning of their mind and then perhaps where before they would have reacted to another character in the usual pre-conditioned way suddenly instead of the reaction there's a there's a space a non-reaction and something totally different happens so as the as they're becoming aware of their essential nature even the way in which they deal with the world of form in the way in which they are here as persons changes it's the end of our cinema analogy so this is very much what's happening here awareness of the transcendent dimension without that it's a little bit pointless to go on with just the limited conditioned actor or actress just again same thing being acted out the same reactions the same opinions and viewpoints and identification with mental positions and me and now of course the secret is to sustain that spacious awareness as much as possible in everyday life which means even when you do things here we are not doing anything we're just going into being now what happens when you start doing again doing includes thinking that's the primordial doing when you start doing again is there still an awareness of the background awareness so to speak of spaciousness presence you're doing here but not completely lost in it there's a while you're doing there's an awareness of being what is that awareness of being you're aware of yourself the fullness is consciousness aware of awareness you may be going through an awakening spiritually and when the ego comes in through the back door you begin to feel very superior to ordinary people who are not awakening on a collective level then as humans awaken there will no longer be completely pointless conflict between nations but it must begin with the absence of pointless conflict on an individual level the way in which you experience life is a kind of mirroring back to you your predominant state of consciousness so if you're engaged in continuous conflict and unpleasantness year after year with people if you're engaged maybe in countless court cases with all these nasty

people who want something from you who are all if you find that when you talk about people you may find that the strange thing is that those people that you talk about they are always wrong and you are always right isn't that strange that's an if that is still the case with you you might have to it's very unlikely because you're here but you might just be when you talk to others to third people about others this this is what he said this is what she said and then he did this and then i said and then and he never did he should have but he didn't and if you find the strange phenomenon that you are always right and others are always wrong that's an important realization how is it possible i must be super human and in the eyes of the ego of course that's kind of the case because the ego which is that which is perhaps the major obstacle towards the realization of that deeper dimension in the the ego strives incessantly for some kind of superiority and so this is what you are condemned to when you have not yet awakened even to at least to some extent to the deeper essence of who you are the awareness the presence the stillness then you are in the prison of your own personality and it's not a pleasant place to be i sometimes watch people and they are so burdened with their personality so in the grip of that thing what is personality it's the sum total of their mental emotional conditioning from the past mental emotional conditioning mental conditioning means certain thought forms mind structures that become repetitive certain narratives concerning your life my life says the ego a certain narrative concerning my other people in my life what i did what they did to me my victories my defeats many things form the the egoic conditioned self and one important aspect of the egoic conditioned self is it it talks about my life all the time in the head and out aloud and my life is what concerns me obviously it's my life and what is my life it's a story in my head but they don't know that they think it's the reality but it's a story in my head it's a narrative it's the predominant narrative in my mind and it's a narrative through which i interpret everything that coming that i come into contact with it becomes a screen through which i interpret other people situations places events i don't know that because i am so identified with that mental emotional conditioning that it has become me it has become me and my life it's i don't know anything else that's the fate still of the majority of humans on the planet although they the minority that is awakening is growing it is still a minority most humans are still totally in the grip of their egoic self and probably most of you are moving still in and out of your egoic self this is usually how the awakening process happens sometimes you're drawn back completely into it and it it talks and and there's the search for superiority and you compare yourself to others and you need to be right right in any argument being right is more important than the truth and you're always right that's a good sign that there's ego so the egoic entity i'll just say a few more words about it because it can be very deceptive it can use you come back in sometimes through the back door but that i mean you may be going through an awakening spiritually and when the ego comes in through the back door you begin to feel very superior to ordinary people who are not awakening and now what does that mean it means and this is always ego there is a conceptual sense of self and you derive your identity you derive your sense of who you are from a conceptual mind-made self um if for example let's take myself in the the

world tells me now you are a great spiritual teacher now 25 30 years ago so he didn't tell me that the world basically was saying who are you nobody nothing has changed if i walked around with an image of myself this is requires a lot of awareness because what i'm describing now has happened to some spiritual teachers the spirituality is only one example if i had a mental image of myself as a great spiritual teacher i would be lost again lost in ego and so anything that you do let's cut stick with spiritual detail some of you i know some of you are already spiritual teachers in whatever capacity perhaps you're your therapist perhaps you are working with people in some capacity and many others of you are destined to become spiritual teachers it's either directly or indirectly either formally or non-formally of course you're destined because the world desperately needs awakening and awakened humans and so a danger no matter where you are but right now we're just talking about becoming a spiritual teacher or being a spiritual teacher in whatever way anything that becomes a conceptual sense of self means the ego is coming back in through coming in through the back door and so is it not true then that at this moment i am a spiritual teacher yes but only in the sense that it's a function and while this function is happening right here now one i could say i'm a spiritual teacher but when i walk off this stage and out the door if i then carried a mental image of myself as a great spiritual teacher i would be walking like that and of course everybody else would be inferior in my mind and i without knowing it i would be walking around with a huge ego and sooner or later the ego would contaminate or obstruct my ability to teach it could contaminate the teaching with egoic falsehood or it could completely block the intuitive teaching that happens when you which means the ego when you get out of the way when you get out of the way something that transcends the limited you i call that sometimes the surface eye that gets out of the way and then the deep eye emerges as the unconditioned consciousness and it can use your mind and that's the way to ultimately use your intelligence in a way that no longer puts the intelligence in the service of madness so spirits being a spiritual teacher is a function when i when i go away from here i need to immediately relinquish the mental image a narrative in my mind that tells me who i am that is a conceptual sense of self but of course this not only applies to spiritual teachers it applies to anybody in any situation where do you derive your sense of self from what is it that gives you your sense of self i know of course it on a on a purely surface level spiritual teacher works it so can solve problems when you can tell a person who says what do you do you could say this and that usually i don't say spiritual teachers if i go to a foreign country and sometimes at the border or at the airport a custom thing what do you do why are you here and usually i say i'm a writer i'm an author okay that solves the problem i don't go into i don't advise you to do it either saying i have no conceptual identity they probably won't let you in we don't want people who have no conceptual identity all morning i've been looking for something that i lost i wonder if you know what it is i don't know if i found it or not i've been suggesting various ways of becoming present stepping out of the mind for the first part of our questions i'd like to invite you to address specifically what we've been talking about and that is your practice your ability to step out of thought into awareness into presence or your inability

or whatever what obstacles you encounter or whatever your experience is of practicing of being present rather than involved in thinking so this faculty one could say there is a dormant faculty in everyone that is just waiting to come to life in you it has already awakened this faculty and that is the faculty of being aware being present it's like it's been waiting inside humans for thousands of years like an egg incubating inside the collective human consciousness and that's the potential for the next leap forward i'm talking almost like mouths i don't but this is the that was a pseudo leap forward it didn't quite work the great leap this is a now humans are ready not all humans but we are beginning to be ready for for this faculty to come out of its dormant state and actually begin to grow and blossom so for the first part of our questions and answers uh i'd like you to specifically address questions that are to do with stepping out of thought how you what is your experience with that good or bad maybe if it's not a question i'd also like to invite anybody who wants to just simply briefly not don't need no need to go on for 10-15 minutes but briefly just share your your experience of are you one question that i'd like to i'm wondering how how it is for you whether you're already able to by choice step out of thought and simply take your attention out of to the word we could use is reclaim the reclaim your attention your consciousness from where it has been for a long long time in always in thought reclaim it and so that you suddenly have the consciousness in its undiluted unconditioned no form that the formless unconditioned undiluted consciousness so the impractical terms it's the ability to simply relinquish when you're when you wish to to really relinquish thought and that is the ultimate renunciation all the other renunciations are really substitute for that now i'm going to renounce coffee well that's fine but there's some more important more fundamental this is lemon and honey and hot water by the way can't get it at starbucks the renunciation of thought is also the renunciation of ego because without thought ego immediately dissolves so it is a big renunciation it is not just the renunciation of thought because it wasn't just thought there was an entire mind-made entity involved in thought the self so it is not just a renunciation of thought it is a renunciation of the entire false self that for not throughout your entire lifetime but many lifetimes has claimed to be you

[Speaker 7] (2:03:55 - 2:03:55)

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[Speaker 1] (2:03:58 - 2:16:16)

and so no matter what you renounce if you're a spiritual person they may practice different kinds of renunciation and very often you just exchange one thought-based entity for a slightly different one so if you indulge in alcohol and sex and orgies for a few years and suddenly you get tired of it and you say i'm now going to be a spiritual person i'm done with all that and then you you live a very pure life no more substances uh celibacy no more wild parties and you get up at 4 30 every morning for three hour meditation and you begin to feel very good about yourself and but it's very very cunning

this little this egoic entity because without knowing it you may have exchanged one egoic entity for a more subtle one and the more subtle one is um your sense of self has now become a spiritual one me the one who has become pure me the one who has renounced as opposed to all these others who are still drinking coffee and then you can walk starbucks and feel very superior let alone bars and nightclubs so again you have an a mind-based entity the me the self because you haven't renounced it's kept going by identification with ideas in your head about who you are and you can get together with other spiritual people and then you can strengthen that idea you can mutually strengthen the idea of who you are and then you get a group egoic group identity um it was very comforting you feel really oh now i know where i belong and it's i'm not saying don't go to any spiritual group there's just a danger in that that you then partake in the collective egoic entity which is usually becomes revealed because it starts to reject others oppose others to define its own collective identity more clearly so you find many spiritual groups actually believe they are the only ones who really have got it they are the only ones who are really in possession of the truth and all the others are not in some more extreme forms of that you are the only ones who are actually going to be saved the rest of humanity is going you are we've all seen these these are collective egos that develop when you join a group it may not be that every group falls into that trap but most of them do and why again because they derive their sense of identity and now it has shifted from a personal sense of identity to a collective sense of identity at first when you look at the individual that makes up the collective it looks as if the individual had become free of ego because he's totally free of the personal sense of ego he has totally identified with the collective ego and of course as i might have said before if there's one thing that's more insane than the personal ego it's the collective one political parties it's not just spiritual groups religions little groups within churches within religions they are that disregarding others of the same religion as evil they're the same religion and you might even want to kill them that's what happens on a daily basis if you're listening to the news within the same religion it's a different this group they call themselves this because they have some different beliefs of what once happened hundreds of years ago others don't quite agree with those beliefs of these things that happened a few hundred years ago they believe in somebody else all insane it's more my stuff it's all just thoughts so they haven't renounced anything they could have the most pure lifestyle they haven't renounced the most basic renunciation which is identification with thinking so and the collective ego it's just unbelievably can be unbelievably insane it can also cause the individuals that make up the collective to do things that as individuals they would not be capable of doing in the service of the collective they can go out and kill people it's happened even i mean nations do it look at 20th century history of the 20th century one nation is a it becomes a huge ego just so you can see how vital it is to renounce but foundation the the true renunciation is thought that's that is the true shift without that you can play around for many lifetimes am i spacious to even ask the question can immediately bring about that opening of the moment of cessation of thinking because to check within your attention goes am i spacious well it's almost inevitable that after

asking the question you are spacious because after the question mark there is an inquiry non-conceptual there is a looking there is a field of attention that arises and you go am i spacious yes now probably before you ask the question you were not so you remembered to ask the question because something was going on you were upset about this or that or stressed or anxious or many of the so-called normal states and so then suddenly you are spacious it's so easy a little space opens up and then you remember no matter how important the things of the world or your world pretend to be nothing is more important than being spacious another version of this question refers to relationships whether it's an intimate relationship or whether it is just a short or superficial relating is there space in this relationship is there space in the relationship between yourself and your partner or family member or whoever it may be a friend so again all related without the space it gets taken over by stuff without the space your life gets taken over by stuff

[Speaker 2] (2:17:24 - 2:18:00)

so another good practice is when after you just do something anything whether it's even getting into your car once you get in instead of getting in and turning on that engine right away and putting it in drive and go just get in and just take a break just a moment just one moment and become still so the practice is keep coming back in keep coming back inward to draw your attention inward okay

[Speaker 1] (2:18:22 - 2:35:14)

we're talking about identity which is the most fundamental thing just where where do you get your sense of self from this is the most fundamental thing in your life because if you derive your sense of self from a fiction in your mind which ultimately is what the ego is your whole life will reflect back to you that this is a fiction and it will color all your experiences it will create a neediness it will create all kinds of emotions that are completely unnecessary that are manufactured by your mind and the identity in the mind that we call the ego the almost like a little entity that doesn't want to go away it wants to i want to suffer a bit more i need my enemies i need to complain what can i complain about now well why does he talk so much he's been going on talking for so long i can't stand it anymore so the words are pointing to something in you if you then of course you cannot undo your personal history of course you remember your personal history and you there's your life situation everybody has a life situation you have relationships you have a work situation probably or you or you have lost your job then you don't have a work situation but that's similar you have a living situation you have a health situation you have a relationship situation a huge source of suffering and occasional happiness those things make up your your life you have those situations but is that all there is to who you are so you need to to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation the essence your essential being is the aliveness of presence consciousness and you can only get that in the gap between two

thoughts this is why stillness is an important point pointer to it stillness does not mean you fall asleep it could mean you fall asleep because humans the habitual level where humans exist is thinking then the only time when you are free of thinking is when you fall asleep if you haven't awakened yet when you move towards sleep thinking gradually slows down when you get very sleepy there's very little thought going on in your head and you go and you might even like that because suddenly you can't remember what your problems are anymore and you feel the pull of sleep which is so delicious what we call tiredness it's it's so normal we accept it but if you really look at what tiredness is something absolutely delicious is pulling you to come this way you must come this way it's so delicious and at some point even if you're trying not to go there the attraction attraction of that place becomes so overwhelming that you have to go there and in the last moment when you still have some consciousness you feel ah even if you were out in the cold and know if i fall asleep i'm going to die in the last moment you would still feel the deliciousness of going ah it would the rest wouldn't matter anymore you're moving towards the source you're moving to to regenerate you're moving but you don't know it anymore you're moving below thought towards sleep another way of moving below thought is having a few drinks and that can free you for some people it frees you it frees them of their unhappiness and they become jolly suddenly suddenly they can enjoy life because they're not thinking much anymore they're just it's a way of being present too in some way and then you think i need another one because if i feel jolly now i'll be even more jolly with the next one but that's not the case because the more you drink the more you move towards unconsciousness so you're falling again you're falling below thought until finally you fall off the chair so we are not going there below thought yes that can free you also but as we awaken spiritually as consciousness awakens in us universal consciousness awakens in us we become conscious of being conscious and the moment you are conscious of being conscious you have risen above thought and you are still you have transcended thought which means you're able to think but you're no longer trapped by it or in it you're no longer at the mercy of your thoughts you can use them they can still operate but you can also by choice and this possibility is coming to many of you already and to many more of you i would say after this evening to realize it is possible for you and even desirable in many many instances to transcend thought and simply be aware that is by the way the state of that is the entire teaching of zen is contained in this it then teaches you that you can rise above thought become free of thought and just be aware this is why the zen master often looks so fierce because he's in that fierce awareness and he goes in the old drawings of zen masters or they might one zen master when asked please explain zen he would the only thing he would ever do was raise his finger and look at you that was his teaching and became famous famous teacher some people got it others didn't if they didn't get it they said please explain zen to me and he would go and some people went wow and others didn't get it they said did you hear my question there's in zen for those of you who are interested in zen or might even have spent a decade in a zen monastery there is nothing to understand in zen you cannot understand zen because there is nothing to understand zen is about transcending

thinking not falling below thinking but rising above thinking this is why that is then oh oh now many of you especially after this evening will discover in yourself the ability to step beyond thought when you don't want thought not perhaps always sometimes the challenge is maybe too much and you fall back into thought for a while it's fine but from time to time and you can actually invite it into your life in many many situations that are relatively neutral step out of thought and lose the illusion that in order to hold your life together you need to think all the time about you and your life and if you stop thinking about you and your life it's all going to fall apart it's not going to it's going to fall apart if you overthink which most people do overthinking is a disease overthinking means you are completely identified with thinking you are in fact addicted to thinking a lot of which is not only completely unnecessary but actually harmful to your health to your well-being and to other people it's harmful to you also because you're making yourself unhappy through it and if you are making yourself unhappy the chances are that you're making other people unhappy too so overthinking identification with thinking that is all part of the unconsciousness the old or the old consciousness as i call it now there a certain percentage of humans has reached a point of readiness where they are able to transcend thinking become aware of themselves as awareness as presence as consciousness and that becomes their sense of identity or sense of self their presence it doesn't need there's no longer any superiority or inferiority in it there is in it a recognition when you now look not just the dog it's easier with a dog or the baby but when you look at another human being and you can you're not trapped in the conceptualizing judgmental mind you are looking at another human being and you can sense the the background to your perception of this other human being the sense perception you may be looking and may be listening the background to your sense perception is the space of awareness you're looking as a conscious presence and not as a person at this human being because for a moment your mind is still while you're looking and listening or just looking at another you into the eyes of another human being you either somebody close to you or somebody you only meet casually in a shop or whatever but for a moment you're looking and there is a recognition at that moment when you know yourself as consciousness the wonderful thing is you recognize that essence in every other human being or any other living thing and that recognition you recognize that there is something of the same essence that is in you also in the other and you are able to so to speak look through the personality which is there which manifests through their words whatever they are saying the conditioned personality which is their mind their egoic mind that of course will be there but you're able if you are still and present you can look at them and and then for a moment you sense their essential beingness or consciousness because you know your own consciousness and that's the one the recognition of oneness and it is only there out of that state of consciousness that that which frees you from eternal conflict with other humans which is ego condemns you to it is only that that can free you from the eternal conflict and out of that emanates that which makes you truly human or more than human almost empathy a loving kindness towards another arises this mind-made sense of self is also much more

focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation i don't know if anybody still experiences that he awake you wake up at two or three in the morning and you're thinking and it's not pleasant it's about my problems and if you then suddenly you discover the futility of it and then you also have a choice at that moment you have a choice and then you can say i choose to place my attention on the inner energy field of the body and from one moment from one minute to the next you're suddenly you enjoy being awake at night and feel the intense aliveness in every cell of the body that's one simple way it's a kind of meditation practice it's one simple way of taking attention away from thinking when it you realize it is not only futile it's also destructive so that's a and that needs to be then practiced in a day if you have a meditation period that's wonderful of course daily meditation period but in addition i always recommend mini mini meditations throughout the day which could be a simple thing as taking two or three conscious breaths while you're waiting for the elevator or do something consciously with full attention that usually you do unconsciously something anything that is usually a means to an end make it into an end in itself washing your hands be totally present you're getting out of your mind walking down a few steps be totally present rather than needing to get to the bottom be there in every step so little mini meditations gradually help you to disidentify from the movement of thought so that's i would this is what i would recommend to our questioner and to anybody else who is still burdened by their minds or tortured

[Speaker 5] (2:35:14 - 2:36:34)

by their minds so for those of you who like formulas here's one stop okay it's an acronym s stands for stop t stands for take three deep breaths as Eckhart just told us to and while you're taking those three deep breaths smile everywhere in your body from head to toe o stands for observe observe your body as you said and p stands for proceed with love and kindness we break the break the response okay so it's it's nine o'clock and our live stream is ending so i want to bring wayne we don't want to lose this opportunity at least um so you know i've known wayne now for 25 years we've grown up together he just looks a little older but we are brothers

[Speaker 1] (2:36:58 - 4:11:46)

what else is absolutely essential that you don't learn at school well it is also connected with awareness and that is awareness of your thoughts if you do not learn that you can be aware of your thoughts then you are trapped in your thoughts and by your thoughts and that is the fate still of many millions of humans on the planet they are so identified with their thoughts that that's all they know of the world and of who they are so there is a dimension of consciousness in every human that is beyond the thinking mind and why don't they teach that at school it's so basic and simple so you can think a lot of the time you think many humans think almost without interruption they have a voice in their head that never stops talking in other words thinking and yet there's the possibility of realizing

another dimension of consciousness that's one could say it's behind all your thoughts or it's a canvas for your thoughts or can say it's the space in which your thoughts arise and into which your thoughts subside whatever you call it it's the dimension of awareness or presence and we live in a civilization that has been one could almost say being completely taken over by thought by mental concepts and there's been a loss of a tragic loss of that deeper dimension that is in every human being in that sense it you do not need to achieve it you only need to discover it there's a big difference between achieving and discovering to achieve something you need time obviously but to discover some discovery is of something that is already here so you discover that dimension of consciousness in you that is awareness in between two thoughts for example at this moment when i stopped speaking and then i speak again so there was a gap and that gap was you were just aware and it's happening again in that gap if you are alert you are not thinking in these these gaps you notice you're conscious but you're not there's no conceptualization and again now and this is so natural and so but so vitally important to have to be in touch with the dimension to be rooted in that dimension uh it's amazing that it it is not common knowledge that that this is the most vital thing that there is in any human life the great teachers pointed to it it's the the emptiness of the buddha the kingdom of heaven of jesus that is within you here now different words and it can happen naturally it's perhaps more likely to happen when you look at something natural again a tree the sky in the first moment of looking at the sky in the first moment of looking at a landscape or at a tree or at a flower you may find in the first moment of looking you're not conceptualizing it there's two or three seconds when there's just sense perception and an awareness of the sense perception look at the sky two three seconds then usually the mind comes in and says something about it it conceptualizes it that's fine but kept if you can catch so to speak always the first moment when something arises in your in your sensory field sensory perception catch the first moment and then you will notice for brief two three seconds there's no conceptualization you're just there's a perception but what is behind the perception awareness the light of consciousness without which there would be no perception so you know whenever you look at something new or you begin or there's a sound that suddenly arises and you may not know what it is so you have to listen carefully a sound is arising the mind may want to interpret it but in order to first you need to be alert and listen and there's a sound and for the first two or three seconds the mind is not saying anything about it because there's only the perception of it then comes the interpretation uh now if you are completely trapped in the conceptualizing mind these these moments are so short when you're just perceiving you're hardly aware of it and whatever you're almost immediately labeling it or you're not even aware of it or just peripherally aware of it because all your attention is absorbed by the voice in the head by the by mind activity so the there's a consciousness you are this consciousness the consciousness gives rise to thought in the same way that the ocean gives rise to a wave and that's fine it's been it's an incredible thing that conceptualization happened in human beings it was a an evolutionary step forward but there's great danger associated with it and the danger is that you lose

yourself in it there's a power that came with focused thinking is a great power being able to memorize and anticipate and all these things are amazing we could make amazing things then science developed just as an extension of the of the human mind the focused application of human mind and that created new incredible things but then the something dangerous happened we we got increasingly we got taken over by that which ultimately is only an instrument and we got taken over by it completely so that many humans are basically in present in present in their minds which is the conditioned mind which is all the content of your consciousness conditioned of course by the past and most humans are still completely in present in that so you derive your identity from the movement of thought so you don't know who you are beyond the move whatever thought is telling you about yourself whatever the story of you is telling you about yourself that's where you derive your sense of self from and that's normal in this world but it's extremely limiting and then it happens that quite often certain thoughts invade your mind can easily happen so you your mind becomes colonized by certain thoughts that take over sometimes almost the totality of your mind and obsessive thoughts it can happen to individuals where your one obsessive thought suddenly takes over and then you perceive the whole world through the veil of one obsessive thought which has all the answers but it can also happen to collectives it can happen to a collective civilization that collectively certain thoughts arise in the collective and they invade every individual's mind and take over the way in which you perceive they perceive the world that can that happens for example with totalitarian regimes when wonderfully described in the writer who took it to an extreme or well described in 1984 where you get completely taken over you have a thought police you're only allowed to think certain things it's a collectively the collective mind becomes completely possessed by certain thoughts now thoughts are it's perhaps helpful to look at thought as they are little beings they are energy forms everything like you are and everything is an energy form and thoughts that arise are energy forms so imagine them as little little entities you can't see them they have a relationship with your physical brain but you can't see thought they're little entities that arise and there they come and one entity can act like a virus acts on a physical level which can invade the body and take over the body and live there as a parasite can even kill the body even you can also have a mental virus that enters your mind and then begins to proliferate and create thoughts that are in alignment with those with one central thought which may be a total delusion but you have one central thought attracts other related thoughts and you have suddenly a gross this you have a viral infection on a mental level now this can happen to individuals in one case and when it reaches a certain point this infection of a mental virus can be recognized as clearly disease a disease a insult insanity when it's but until it reaches this point in an individual we may not even recognize it as a mental illness a met complete mental dysfunction then it reaches a certain point and you can suddenly when you listen to this person saying let's for example in the case of paranoia then everything is interpreted as enemies are everywhere they're following me they're listening to me they're listening devices and they're going into my mind and the entire world is conspiring to to destroy

me and follow all these it starts with one thought and then so your mind gets totally infected by thought this can happen to an individual it can also happen to a collective when the minds of millions of people or whatever number it may be become taken over by certain thoughts viewpoints or opinions and sometimes they can be very much divorced from anything that's real any reality but once you've taken being taken over you don't even know it you cannot nobody can question it because you have you are not really there anymore only the conditioned mind is there pretending to be you and so you cannot question it nobody it's if you believe if somebody came to me with a delusion and said they are what's what's a common delusion i am i am napoleon so their mind has been taken over by a delusion i wouldn't it is not wise to tell this person this is a delusion you're not napoleon or it's better to just to be present and to listen to that person not to say yes or no just listen that's how you experience the world and it may be possible to connect with that person so that a little bit of awareness comes in then that there's a possibility of healing and a little bit of awareness comes in but if you deny a delusion then there's there's immediately a disconnection so i don't talk about things that i perceive in this contemporary world as collective delusions there's no point the most important thing is to bring about the discovery of the dimension of awareness in humans and then that is how they become immune to the viral infection on a mental level so the only way you can become immune to being infected by all kinds of strange thoughts that come at you in these days through the devices that you have the media mainstream media social media and all these kinds of things or we are being flooded with thought forms continuously if you're not careful i highly suggest you reduce the amount of time you spend there and look at a plant instead or at the sky so the immune the the immunity the only immunity you have is awareness so that you're not taken over by thoughts and the otherwise the the ability to think even although you're still thinking but the ability to think rationally and it diminishes the more you get taken over by by dysfunctional mind patterns you can no longer deal with situations rationally and so you're on a downward slope so the important thing then is the realization that apart from thinking there's something a more vital in you and that is the dimension of awareness or presence from that dimension you can know what your mind is doing and the likelihood that you that you get taken over by certain thoughts decreases the more aware you become you still have thoughts of course you still have opinions which are thoughts you still have viewpoints political viewpoints whatever viewpoints you still have viewpoints but this but they do not give you your sense of identity anymore there are viewpoints and you may believe that this is the truth when the other viewpoint is not true but your identity is not no longer invested in it your sense of self because your sense of self has shifted to awareness you are consciousness and then you know the other the other human who holds a different viewpoint is no longer your enemy because your identity is not derived from your viewpoint your opinion your thoughts if your if your thoughts give you your identity then the others who hold opposite thoughts or very different thoughts become your enemy it's it's mad but that's how it is it's the basic human dysfunction which operates on a personal level and on a collective level so the most vital thing that

to learn which again should be the very foundation of all of everything that is done at school is that there there is this dimension of consciousness in you that you can access and discover you can access it by becoming alert and observing your thoughts become aware of frequent thoughts that frequently go through your mind but most importantly becoming aware of yourself as conscious presence rather than as a mind-made entity so very often the practice to be engaged in is to realize that a lot of thinking that happens in your mind is not only unnecessary some of it is necessary and great but a lot of it is not only unnecessary but is actually destructive to your health your well-being your happiness a lot of thought is destructive of happiness of well-being of the ability to feel alive the ability to feel joy your ability to be creative a lot of mind activity is destructive so whenever you you're engaged in worrying worrying worrying is completely purposeless nobody has ever found a solution to a problem by worrying about it worrying means that you don't even want a solution you want to worry but when i say you at that moment you are your mind the mind has its momentum and the momentum wants to carry on the worrying thoughts don't want to cease they don't want to die they want to continue to be worrying thoughts so or other destructive thoughts when you have very you're deeply negative let's say you are trapped in deeply negative thought patterns and every therapist knows that often in therapy you reach a point where human being there's a possibility of going beyond and then the enormous resistance arises they don't want to go beyond because there's the thought patterns are they don't they don't want to die they don't they want to stay so worrying destructive thoughts useless thoughts it's what they take you come always out of the present moment that make it impossible for you to even appreciate beauty and aliveness around you that's always there so you you need to have some minimum of awareness to realize that this is what's happening to you oh in the middle of the night you wake up three o'clock in the morning anxiety rises why does it arise are you confronted with the problem you're in bed a relatively warm bed anxiety rises not being confronted with a problem but the mind is creating it the mind is creating the anxiety and so when you realize that you can then learn to let go of thought that is recognized as not only unnecessary but actually bad for you and everybody else around you you don't want it you don't need it but it but it has a momentum so how do you break the momentum of the thought it doesn't seem to want to get go away once you recognize it that you it has no useful function except to make you miserable so you've recognized that this thought pattern has no useful function but it's making me all the function it has it's pretending to be useful worry always pretends to be necessary but worry is not necessary it's unhelpful focused thinking you become still then you begin to think what is the situation what can i do about it this and this and this okay if i do that focused thinking that's great worrying is something very different completely unhelpful and self-destructive once you've recognized it you become free by first by recognizing its dysfunctional nature then direct your attention elsewhere it's a conscious choice and that's that's possible and it's not that difficult so you withdraw energy from the thoughts and energy in this case is consciousness you you withdraw the lifeblood of the thoughts which is consciousness and you direct consciousness somewhere else for example sense

perceptions especially things of nature or breathing you become aware of breathing and breathing makes you aware of the inner body the that the the alive presence that that pervades your body but the moment you become aware of your breathing you've taken the lifeblood from thought and placed the attention the conscious attention into the inner body so you connect with the aliveness within and immediately thought begins to subside it cannot survive if you take away attention consciousness from it it then will try many times it will try to get consciousness back and so it will come up again the moment you you you you lose connectedness with the inner body or your breath it will try to start up again and then you have to catch it again so you and then you learn to keep thought at bay but not by suppressing it simply by being so alert and directing your attention elsewhere that it begins to subside so vital practice is to keep thought at bay when you don't you real you recognize it is unnecessary dysfunctional and creating that it creates a lot of unhappiness so that's a wonderful practice just take your attention into your breath you breathe into the body even down to the abdomen and out and breath awareness means you're no longer trapped in your mind you have taken attention away from the mind simple practice of breath awareness and breath awareness can take you into body awareness and the two can go together your awareness of your aware of your breathing and you're aware of that your body is alive and that becomes a single thing the breathing and awareness of the inner body and so and this when you discover that you have that power that that year you are more powerful than your mind it's a wonderful liberation to the discovery that that is not actually that difficult but you just have to know that you have that power to become free of dysfunctional thinking just breathe be feel it feel the aliveness that's who you are not the narrative in your mind that's consciousness the consciousness the end the intelligence that pervades your body that is consciousness that keeps the molecules of the body together for a while that's the consciousness that is a totality of who you are that's who you are not the story in your mind it doesn't matter on the level of the story that becomes secondary you can try to improve your story that's fine make your life a bit better on the surface of things that's a good that has its place too but not to do ultimately to look for your ultimate identity on that level of this better story that doesn't work your ultimate identity is here and now when you step out of the thinking mind but you don't become unconscious you become more conscious of the essence of who you are and become one with the essence of who you are wow and so the the power of awareness grows in you it's so to speak you become more aware of it the power of awareness of presence grows in you and then the you can still your thinking then becomes more constructive more focused and it's no longer the important thing i sometimes put it like this the mind loses its ability to make you unhappy the mind loses its ability to make you unhappy because then you realize a lot of your unhappiness did not come from the circumstances of your life but from the way in which your mind the story your mind told you about the circumstances of your life a great deal of unhappiness comes from the narrative in your mind and not from the circumstances and so that's enormous liberation if you've been whenever you're unhappy right where does the unhappiness arrive where does it come from is it actually

the actual situation or is it the story that i'm telling myself about it and in most cases you'll find it's the story the unobserved mind creates the unhappiness the unobserved mind creates the unhappiness the unobserved mind also creates what we can call evil in this world because the unobserved mind is the mind of very unconscious people unconscious means the unobserved mind and the evil in this world is perpetrated by deeply unconscious people complete lack of awareness and so our our step now is to go beyond the dysfunctional state of humanity and so that we begin to awaken to that higher or deeper level of consciousness and the possibility is here now the possibility is here now because the if we don't awaken things will get worse and worse we have reached a critical point and humans only evolve when they reach a critical point when there's no way forward in the old state of consciousness so change happens when it actually absolutely needs to happen and it needs to happen now and that's why it's happening well it's true that the most important things that a human being needs to know to lead a life that is conscious and does not create unnecessary suffering those things are generally speaking not taught at school or university there are some exceptions there are certain alternative schools where some of these things i believe are being introduced or are being taught and there are individual teachers also who bring in these important teachings into their classroom although they're not part of the official curriculum but on the whole i believe it is true that all those essential things for a human being to know how to live skillfully and consciously these things are not yet being taught on a large scale so what's with what's lacking is wisdom in our contemporary world and wisdom of course should not be confused with intelligence or information or even education you can be highly educated and completely lacking in wisdom or you may have little education but be connected to that inner realm where wisdom arises which is the dimension of awareness or presence so the most vital thing to learn is to be in touch with this inner dimension of presence or awareness and that certain things you can teach that are purely conceptual you can teach mathematics or historical information facts those things you can teach easily all it is required is that the teacher has sufficient knowledge to be able to teach these facts then there's another type of teaching which would apply to subjects such as music or dance or anything creative even even cooking those things require more than conceptual knowledge so there's something that you need to absorb that goes beyond conceptual knowledge and so you wouldn't go to a teacher to taking music lessons and the teacher doesn't know how to play music might only have conceptual information about music so that would not be a good music teacher the teacher needs to have absorbed the practice of playing music on a deep level before he or she can teach it and that applies to other subjects even as I said even cooking you wouldn't want to take a cooking lesson somebody who has only read 500 recipe books but never done any cooking themselves so a teacher in order to teach awareness to students the teacher needs to have some access at least within to that dimension to even know what what he or she is talking about and so that's it's vitally important then to realize that this is not an academic subject that is added to the other subjects that you learn in school but it's something that should underlie all teaching at

school something of a foundation for everything that is taught and done at school should be that everything arises out of that so it's not an added on not it's not even it's not a separate subject that can be taught but something more vital and so that also then applies to adults who are beginning to learn what really matters in life or already practicing it so the question being asked was to perhaps isolate three areas that are of vital importance that we don't learn at school that but that every human being needs to know and practice and I would like to start with the fact that many humans alive nowadays seem to be disconnected from nature and this is especially important for children who live in big cities inner cities it is a huge handicap for children not to be in touch with the natural world and that of course not only applies to children but also applies to every every human being so the I'd like to talk for a while about the importance of connecting with the natural world of bringing awareness to the to the way in which you experience the world of nature and how important it is to make that connection how nature can keep you not only keep you sane in this almost increasingly insane world how going back into nature periodically and connecting with nature can keep you sane and can help you to stay present so I would recommend as a not as a spiritual practice but as a normal way of being to as much as you can to go out into nature and whether it is a city park whether it is actual nature outside of the city the seashore the forest the open fields the desert whatever it may be whatever may be closest to you go out there and spend time as much as you can regularly in the natural world and if you might even just be your backyard if you can't get out there may be something in your the little garden that you have if you have one um it doesn't matter if you can't get out into wide open nature nature is everywhere around you important thing to realize is when you look at the world around you it can easily be this fact can easily be overlooked you can it's divided into the things that humans have made that surrounds you and then another part of reality is the things that humans have not made that came into being and all that is nature and even where you are sitting where I'm sitting or you are sitting there is part of what surrounds you is human made and another part of what surrounds you unless it's night time you might not but wherever you are is the natural world for example where I'm sitting here I'm sitting in a room and I see the furniture in the room and whatever is here and then I'm looking outside and there's the sky and there are trees very fundamental two different other different realities the human made world and the natural world and whenever you go outside of your house immediately you go into you realize this on the one hand you have this there's the street it's paved probably or unless you live in the country and then there you have cars and you have buildings and but then also there's trees perhaps there's a tree and then there's always the sky and you can always look up the sky even if there's no particular nature around you you can look at the sky there's nature the ever-changing sky is incredible just awareness of the weather I'm always I love weather I loved different kinds of weather no matter what it is and that changes well sometimes it doesn't change for several days here in the winter it rains a lot not today but but that's fine too I love the rain I love the sunshine I love the sky it's just it's a whenever you look at the sky it's a it's

a it's a new painting every every day sometimes every hour there's a new painting that appears it's all this is a non-human made world should you become more aware of all those things that have not been made by humans but the natural things and so the so even just that little awareness that whenever you're outside even in a city there will be things all in a city the majority most of the things that you see in the city will be human made but there's always the sky and there may be some trees or some patches of grass so there's always this there's always something there that is not human made and then of course you may be able to get out of the city or go into a city park where the you have more we become aware of more things that are natural than those that are human made so you become aware of those and now you are out in nature whether it's a park let's say you're in a park or in out in actual nature then the question arises are you actually there or it's only your body there and your mind is still somewhere else because you're thinking about your problems or some mental dialogue or monologue is going on in your head and you're peripherally aware of nature you say oh how nice and then again you go and you and you're walking on and you're not you're not you're not present in nature so you're not really there so that doesn't help you that much it might be give you a little bit of relief but you're not really connecting with nature there's another thing that people do and there's nothing wrong with that they go into nature with a specific purpose they have a specific purpose in mind and the purpose might be they go jogging in the on the forest trail or out in the fields or on the beach they go jogging and so they have that they have their watch on and then they go yes that's great there's nothing wrong with jogging it's good for the body you're breathing but are you really there connecting with nature no because the purpose that what you're doing is more important than connecting with with the ocean if you go let's say on the on the beach you're jogging your main thing is the timing and the jogging that can be exhilarating there's nothing wrong with that there is a place for that but but there's something else to if it's not jogging it could be you go into nature in order to achieve some some other purpose you go with a specific purpose you go bird watching or something and then you can identify birds into that's there's nothing wrong with that either but these so you can this is all you can you can bring doing into nature and there's nothing wrong with it there's a place for it climb a mountain fine but so that there's a doing element that you can bring in and modern humans are more obsessed with doing they are obsessed with doing and not connected with the being dimension they've lost the being dimension because they're always doing and they bring that into nature they're always doing something then so then they're doing nature the important thing then to more deeply connect with nature is to bring in the being dimension you could call it if you like yin and yang so if you go into in a yang state into nature you're there's something there's a doing element or in you bring in the being which is the simple fact of awareness now you can be aware even while you're walking perhaps you can even be aware of even while you're jogging but i would recommend that that you bring in this element of quiet perception of nature so that sometimes you walk you walk slowly or you stand or you sit and then an alertness arises in you an alertness and this alertness is the rising of presence and then you begin to see

whatever it is that surrounds you that is there and so this alertness then becomes the background to your sense perceptions and this is a different way of being in nature this is the beginning of connecting with nature at a deeper level so you bring in that element of could call it awareness so you begin to look at something and you see a tree sometimes you see you you may find that your attention focuses on a single object that you see in nature occasionally you look at one tree or you look at a branch or even the leaf of one tree or you look at a fern in the forest here i go for walks lots of ferns they thrive even in the winter because the winters are not very terribly cold here so the ferns continue to survive the ferns have been here very early plants have been here for a hundred million years they've been the same and they're still there they're there and they're beaut their quiet beauty so you and you look at sometimes you look at single things in nature and sometimes you look at the totality of whatever it is the forest you take in the totality but you become still you become present and then you're fully there and then you and then you connect with that there is a field in nature there is a field of aliveness or presence that underlies whatever it is you perceive with your senses and at the moment i'm only talking about the visual sense but there's also the other senses can come in and should come in when you're out in nature there's the auditory the perceptions what is it what are the sounds of nature and so there may be occasional birds there may be the the wind in the trees you hear or you can go there might be a brook or water trickling water is an amazing sound the sound of water if you pay attention to the whether it's rain or a brook or river or the ocean the sound of water in any form if you give it attention it's a wonderful way of just connecting there's something incredibly soothing and and and healing just by directing your attention to the sound of water and i'm just taking water as one example it could also be the sound of birds it could be the sound of the wind uh whatever it may be so you can be aware simultaneously of what you see and what you hear and then there may be of course you're breathing there may be certain smells of nature so it's the ocean the ocean has a particular smell or here the forest going to the forest it has a you feel the the moisture and the aliveness of the of the soil where there's decaying matter but out of the decaying matter new life continuously arises and you can smell it's all vitally it's so alive everything is alive and but when you're not really there when you're in your mind you don't you have no idea you don't know you don't know you're not there so when you're there you can sense this this this aliveness of what surrounds you and so nature whatever it could even if it's a city park you might still hear noises of traffic and so on and yet there you are there's grass there's trees there's the sky uh that's beautiful for i lived for many years in london for example and so the the great redeeming feature about london which otherwise can i mean as great city can really grind you down having to go to work on the in the underground the subway the tube and every day and or can really ground you down but london has these open spaces the parks reed and spark hyde park and a little bit in the north my favorite hamstead he's would go out there almost every day and immediately stillness descends and you know ah and then there's a the appreciation of nature then grows in you and this is not connected with knowledge

about nature that has its place too you don't need particular knowledge of what these trees are what how they grow and what they do that's another way of but there's a deeper this is a knowing that is not conceptual you know nature in this is unitive knowing that's you know nature but not conceptually you have a deep relationship with nature and nature can help you to not get lost in your mind but you you have to take the initial steps always the initial steps is your choice to be present to direct your attention to your sense perceptions in nature what that's how you could begin to connect with it and then you may sense an underlying energy field that it goes beyond that which you perceive with your senses and people have used different words to describe what that is but this is there is a sacredness that's the the most appropriate words that occurs to me there's a sacred a sacred presence there and i'm not romanticizing nature by saying that i know very well that nature can kill you less like everything else the water is a wonderful thing what you physically you are like 75 percent water but water can kill you too the heat of the sun is is the same heat that's in your body but of course the heat of the sun can also kill you that's the there's enormously powerful energy there it's not a romantic view it goes beyond that and if you cannot go out you might be just at home and maybe you have a plant at home a potted plant i have quite a few and even that it's how but how after you've had plant do you do you really give it attention by the way there have been books written i don't want to go into that but if you give attention to a plant it thrives more than another plant that is not given attention and this actually is a fact because the attention that you give is an outflow of energy towards the plant but not only that something comes back at you to it there's a connection there here i have one for example that's a jade plant in a pot and i have several jade plants now again you look at a plant you're not only looking you have to give it attention and become still and then you can sense its aliveness you can sense it's kind of one could almost say it's surrounded by a field of stillness and sometimes i like to touch it you touch the leaves are firm and very alive and they're shiny that means the plant is happy when the leaves are shiny the plant is happy i have lived with jade plants for many years and observed them very closely not only as potted plants here in california they grow outside in the garden here they would not survive in the winter just it's love and in the garden they grow quite tall taller than me some of the jade plants with trunks that are like massive trunks like a little like bonsai tree trunks some jade plants grow in the sun they're exposed to several hours of sunlight and the leaves are very small and light green those who are exposed to a lot of sun other jade plants out in the open california they grow under the oak trees and the leaves are much bigger and dark green but they adjust the any climate they adjust to and therefore i mean any temperature except when it gets too low but these are this is just what i've observed so that each plant is uh is like an individual being the important thing is to connect without labeling it or i'm talking about it now but these are just pointers i want to point to the possibility of connecting without mental labels so just look and give it attention the fullness the aliveness of it and it is still there's no doubt about it that everything is every plant is very very still very it's rooted i say it's rooted in being and the more attention you give it the more rooted in being you

become it teaches you one could say the plant teaches you to be more rooted in being and teaches you to be free of unnecessary conceptualization and here i have the forest and i often sit here and just look at the forest this is a we've got that some transparent blind here because otherwise the light doesn't work but um and that's a wonderful meditation just to just to sit and every day i spend a period of time looking at the trees it sounds um it's deeply peaceful and so again if you go out into nature bring in other senses it's not just the visual there's also the auditory and there's also the what is the word olfactory olfactory smelling and there is the you can your skin you can sense the air on your skin when you this might be a slight breeze so you come you're you're in your you become you come to your senses and this is a spiritual practice then to go into any natural environment and direct your awareness to your sense perceptions of nature and if it's as i said if it's only the sky that's wonderful give attention to this to look at the sky don't think about it you just you just look and it's like a people going to art galleries to look at paintings if you look at the sky it's a painting every and it changes constantly it's an it's an incredible artist seems to be doing it it's the abstract paintings every time you look in sky it's a new abstract painting now the most important thing about this is the realization that you do not live in a world that is dead but vitally alive humans are so disconnected from nature that nature is not perceived as intensely alive let alone sacred because humans are trapped in the conceptualized mind and this deadens everything you cannot even sense your own aliveness because you have a mental concept of who you are and that gives you your sense of identity that's a terrible disconnection the disconnection from nature is cannot be separate from the disconnection with with your own deeper nature so humans are disconnected from nature because they're disconnected from their own nature the the who they are who or what they are in their essence they come together so to give more attention to nature can also help you to awaken the connectedness with your own nature with because everything is the pervaded with as i see it pervaded with spirit there's only the one the one the one consciousness that's manifesting this world manifesting as life forms in this world and so especially at the present time it's vitally important for you to connect with nature and deepen your connectedness with nature and use use these little practices if you want to call it that until these practices become second nature to you so to speak these are no longer practiced they're a natural way of being in nature you do not need your conceptualizing mind when you are in nature let go of that use this opportunity to be present and uh then nature will can heal you on every level even if you have an animal in your home that's also nature and we know that how healing it is to have an animal presence in your home a dog or a cat and even mainstream science have figured out that it's not only soothing and healing to have an animal it's even good for you physically it helps people it's they've they've done studies that people who have an animal have a have better health and live longer you can you can but that well it's not was no surprise to me yes an animal is nature didn't when you and you have to again give it give attention to give attention to the animal look into the eyes of the animal and realize what the animal that you love what you ultimately love in the animal is invisible

everything else is lovely to touch yes to look at but there is a presence there and that present in the cat in the dog there is a presence and that presence is what you love and there's also a presence in the tree and in the flower that is you cannot see but you can sense that presence and that presence is the sacredness of every life form it's the essence of every life form and it's inseparable from the essence of who you are so vitally important go as much as possible into nature and let's say if you are in prison well there are some people who are virtually in prison these days if you are in prison and some are actually in prison if you are in prison and you can hardly see the sky you cannot even see the sky in extreme case you still have your body your own body and you become aware of the aliveness in your body and that's also nature so that is always there and again the that's a vital thing that on the spiritual path is to sense the aliveness within which is the in that is the beginning of the invisible presence that you are that is inseparable from who you are look how still the trees are i'm getting i should be getting out of the way and just let the trees speak and there's the sky too ah wonderful and again something vital that children should learn at school is how to recognize their emotions because children have very strong emotions and without the ability to recognize your emotions the emotions take you over completely what that means is the emotions when emotional influx comes it takes you over it controls what you say it controls what you do it controls what you think then the emotion is in charge of you and what is an emotion and again like a thought is an energy entity in emotion too is an entity that is an energy form you cannot see it but you can only see how it manifests in the external world but an emotion is an energy form that lives in you it's a little entity and if you recognize it then there's an awareness there without awareness often you can easily be run by your emotions and that means the emotion whether it be let's say it could be anger it could be sadness could be anxiety whatever it may be deep regret jealousy envy whatever whatever it is the the emotion the this energy invades which at first you might feel in the body it then rises up into your mind and then it controls your thinking so when you feel deeply negative then or angry then the emotion rides into your mind and every thought reflects the emotion that you feel because the emotion is sinking through you and the emotion is feeding on your thoughts so the loop happens the vicious circle the emotion creates thought and the thought amplifies the emotion so in the case of anger you get more and more angry the more you think about it the more angry you get until finally you lash out completely lost and of course if it's a child also experiences that sometimes very some children have temper tantrums and or they may other very violent emotions uh some children have learned that the only way they can get attention from their parents is by displaying violent emotions because otherwise parents don't give them attention so a child would say as you know if you're probably aware of the time i use pain body pain body is the time i use for an accumulation of old emotion that still lives in you it's unrecognized as emotion it lives in you as an entity it's an accumulation of of negative emotion or often goes back to early childhood an accumulation of negative emotion that hasn't left you that dwells in your body somewhere and i call it the pain body and i it's helpful to look at it as a little entity

almost an entity that lives in your gremlin that lives in you and sometimes it's dormant for periods of time but it cannot stay dormant forever it has to occasionally rise up into your mind and then suddenly you get taken over by this old emotion sometimes it's triggered by an event uh and you do usually know it's the pain body when the reaction to a triggering event is out of proportion to the triggering event the reaction is far greater than would be warranted by the triggering event and that usually means it has triggered old latent emotion in you the pain body it's come to life and then it takes over your mind and you are no longer you then you are the pain body you are the old emotion that lives through you if you have a partner the partner if it the partner doesn't know you well yet you've only just moved in together or got married and then the partner is suddenly surprised that you that you're no longer you you're some weird awful jerk that's what is this uh you may not know it's the pain body because you just think you made a terrible mistake but your partner's pain body may awaken yours and then you have a wonderful drama that and the pain body loves not only negative thinking because every negative thought feeds it thought is energy it feeds the emotion and the emotion gets even stronger then you have another thought and feeds this is the loop and so if you're it is also when you feel very bad about your life you're very unhappy about your life what you call your life these are it's a narrative what you call your life is a narrative it's it's a sequence of thoughts in your mind that are repetitive a repetitive sequence of thoughts is what you call your life and for many people this this thing that they call my life is a huge a burdensome dreadful thing that they carry around that is a very unhappy thing my life whenever i start thinking about my life i get more and more unhappy i'm not i'm not talking about me i'm just whenever i think about my life i get more and more unhappy and uh and the more unhappy i get the more i want to think about it it's it's i call it the it's what arises here is the addiction to unhappiness it's it's actually addictive no more why is it addictive because the emotion wants more of it the it's more of itself it wants to be fed by the thinking that reflects the same energy with it's the vibrational frequency so to speak of the emotion so every negative thought feeds the negative emotion a positive thought cannot feed the negative emotion a thought that oh what a beautiful sky isn't that this gives the emotion doesn't want that that doesn't feed it or my life is so wonderful no it's not the emotion loves the thoughts but it's not only the thoughts what it loves even more is to get the same emotion from others and this is how the pain body operates it then goes to whoever is around you at the time your partner or at work or family member and the emotion will then speak through you and say something negative in order to provoke a similar emotion in the other person it's all unconscious it's crazy but it's normal and so the and again here we have it's the the unobserved mind lack of awareness the unobserved mind gets taken over it gets taken over by toxic thoughts it gets taken over by emotions that arise they could be we could be your old emotions from the past the pain body that come up periodically and then subside once if you're once you've had a drama in your relationship lasting for an hour or two or the whole day then the pain body subsides and the next day you wake up you're a bit more conscious again and the emotion has subsided your mind is not is not quite as

crazy as yesterday it's still not very not conscious but not quite as crazy as yesterday and you wake up and then oh you can't even remember what it was all about the drama that you had with your whoever it was you think what was how did it all start it didn't matter how it started the pain body needed it wanted it so the again lack of awareness through lack of awareness you are at the mercy of your emotional fields so the the moment awareness comes in the emotion may still be there but you're no longer totally possessed by it or trapped in it it's still there but at least there's an observing presence there and that's an enormous step forward so whenever you feel emotion arising that is of a very negative kind let's come back to mom for a moment to what i said about telling yourself how unhappy you are or how awful your life is or how awful other people are whatever this narrative may be then recognize that uh there is this very strong energy in you the emotional mental energy they you know they've come together and suddenly be the observer say oh for the past hour i've been thinking bad things about my life but is it really that bad because i'm sitting here breathing looking at the plant and the sky and feeling the aliveness in the body you're beginning to get out of your narrative and into the present moment the only way where there's free the only place where there's freedom from the past from the conditioned mind conditioned by the past is the present moment so it's always to become aware is inseparable from present moment the power of the present moment arises the moment you become aware and where is you but you're the observer of your inner states and then you're no longer at the mercy of your inner states freedom arises and so the emotion for example cannot renew itself anymore through using your mind because then you say there's no i don't want that you recognize a dysfunctional way in which the emotion is linking up into your mind and you come into the present moment and again breathing and deep breathing deep into the abdomen a few times and your attention follows the breath that's the important part and then you feel the aliveness that pervades the entire body and there may still be an emotion in there it may not have gone away immediately there's still whatever it is the anxiety the fear the heaviness or the anger you can still feel it somewhere in you but you're not consumed by it anymore it's it's still there and not it's you can it's you can live with it it's not that bad because you are the awareness that's all that's around it and and as the and as the awareness deepens it begins to the way i put it transmute the energy that was trapped in the emotion it was energy that got trapped in early childhood very often and through the awareness it gets because the awareness also means that you you allow it to be there in this moment it's not renewing itself in through your mind but in this moment this is what you feel awareness allows is space gives it space is the space for it that is i feel this can can still feel the anxiety but because you're aware the anxiety does not rise up into your mind and controls your thinking anymore that's an important difference and so you you feel it and then it it gradually diminishes it doesn't renew itself anymore but you allow it while it's there you say well that is and you may be able to feel other parts of the body that are actually fine anxiety might be here in your chest area and but in your hands are fine you feel the energy in your hands and your feet and your arms and a lot of the rest of your body you feel that aliveness let's see how you begin to

be free of the pain body or any no longer at the mercy of emotional energies and that again children could learn that easily at school by the game playing for example and children parents can teach their children if children have ang bouts of anger for example sometimes some children do it's not uncommon this this could be already the young the the pain body in the child after it's happened talk to the child and say what was it what did what what happened yesterday when you started screaming and throwing things what was that what what did you feel what what can you paint it what would it look like if you make a picture of it what color is it does it have a name that thing that comes into you from time to time and makes you throw things what does it have a name what if it had a name what name would it have and by asking these questions the the awareness in the child grows awareness of it could be done as game even as playing it out in games at school and so on so that the fostering the awareness in children as the most important subject in school the founder foundational subject at school of course should be awareness i mean is that so difficult to understand the most consciousness is the primordial subject that underlies all other subjects it's at school and then it's so that's how it it starts so now we we most of us do it as adults we do we but what could have perhaps been done in a more enlightened civilization at school we do it as and that's fine at least it's happening now and eventually um it may even reach politicians and media people eventually even they may be destined to become conscious so in the meantime i recommend that you don't that you're very careful with linking into the collective at the present time especially be very careful when you connect with social media mainstream media whatever media it is because there is it in many ways it is toxic and very unconscious so you wouldn't voluntarily expose yourself to a virus that's that's quite dangerous you wouldn't go out and say okay well i'll go to to an environment where many people are infected with this virus and hope for the best i wouldn't do that in the same way we be very careful when you link into those forms of media because a lot of what's going on there is what is a viral infection of the collective so yes a minimum to know what's going on that's fine you want to know what's going on but beyond that you do not need to listen for one two or three hours of five people on the screen talking to each other how dreadful the situation is and you because you absorb that it don't expose yourself to unnecessary risks of catching collective mental viruses or the of course the more present you are the the more immune immunity you have but still you wouldn't even want to even if you have the immunity why expose yourself to that it's more important that if you contribute to the discourse through social media or whatever if you use any of these things whatever they're called facebook twitter instagram snapchat or whatever just make sure that everything you put out is conscious it's not a reactive thing not attacking anybody don't confuse the virus in that mental virus that people get infected by with who they essentially are so whatever you put out make sure it's something of a constructive nature that does not contribute to human unconsciousness but diminishes human unconsciousness um so it's a wonderfully challenging time we live in but that's a good thing so emotions awareness catch the emotion as it arises especially if old emotion pain body emotion uh detect it and recognize it for what it is

that's then you've already won half the battle so to speak recognizing it for what it is emotion or emotion stay present as the observer the witness so you're here to bring sanity into this world that's a good life purpose to bring consciousness one could even define this as your main life purpose to bring consciousness into this world the light of consciousness you be the light of course that reminds me of the famous saying i don't know who first said it it's attributed to various people whether it was nelson mandela or somebody else be the change that you want to see in this world so that's very true so be the light of consciousness because that's the change that we need that the world needs

[Speaker 3] (4:12:03 - 4:13:21)

now there is a new mind emerging emerging maybe a new human species and there are signs for this that would fit contrary to what we are learn or learn or being told about evolution um like darwin said nature doesn't make jump well the evolution of life proceeded in jumps it made jumps and the jumps typically happened when the earth got in stress like in an ice age life survived not because some life forms were better than others and ate everybody else no because they cooperated and you can see how now the earth is beginning to be under stress you see at the same time how the world is globalizing there is more and more support for international cooperation rather than making another war we may be at the beginning of a new leap and out of it would come a new human being it's possible yes yes and you have also written

[Speaker 1] (4:13:21 - 4:13:44)

about this yes yes that's i believe that's how it is and us talking here and us being here together is perhaps already part of that emergence the new human being will believe

[Speaker 3] (4:13:44 - 4:14:11)

in cooperation not in competition will believe in kindness and support not in in violence and war and all that yes so that's what i believe and it's in a way an optimistic yes yes but i would share that but it's it's it's not stupid it may actually be the only way you can look at how things are developing yes

[Speaker 1] (4:15:14 - 5:11:15)

i have been looking for happiness for 20 years now i've done everything correctly everything i was supposed to do but i can't find happiness or joy please help i'm glad you asked the question the answer of course is very simple you have to give up your search for happiness because it hasn't worked in 20 years so it's not going to work in the next 20 years yes the very search for happiness prevents you from finding the happiness that is available to you already because the search for happiness implies that you are not fully inhabiting with your conscious attention this moment and you cannot fully accept it because it is judged as in some way lacking the present moment is judged as something

lacking here always and the search for happiness implies you're looking for some future state you imagine yourself at some point in the future when you're going to be happy happiness as such is also a strange term i don't use it usually to really point to the state of connectedness with your essential identity in the present moment that perhaps a more suitable word for that would be joy a joyous sense of aliveness a quiet but intense sense of aliveness and joy and peace some people may call that happiness ramana mahasi the indian spiritual teacher a great teacher who lived in the 40s 50s he used the word happiness to talk about this but when he uses the word happiness he does not mean the happiness the conventional way in which this word is used so he says happiness is your true nature so you just have to find your true nature and then you find happiness and what he means is find the essence of who you are and then you have that state of joyous aliveness that some people call happiness at least peace an inner peace not a dead peace not the peace of unconsciousness or drunkenness are you peaceful yeah not that one the peace where you have risen above thought not fallen below thought to the vertical dimension again so what to do you give up your search for happiness and give more attention to the present moment and don't look for happiness in the present moment don't look for anything just be with the present moment and make it your friend you might as well since there's nothing else ever and since your entire life is experienced as the present moment you might as well have a friendly attitude towards it it is your entire life it can only be experienced in and as the present moment even memories you remember you remember something that once was the present moment and you remember it in the present moment if it hadn't been happened in the present moment when it happened it couldn't have happened and you couldn't remember it if it weren't the present moment now don't try to work that out mentally so everything is the your entire life is only ever now and so by appreciating the now becoming friendly with the now aligning yourself with the now you live your life unfolds differently and you appreciate the little things instead of thinking of the big things that would make you happy if you could only achieve them including the idea of enlightenment or whatever else it is those big things that are going to make me happy instead appreciate whatever is here in the present moment and then you may find one day that the that listening to the the leaves of a tree moved by the wind that sound suddenly makes you happy and you may find looking at the sky suddenly makes you happy to become aware that you're breathing and to feel the aliveness within the body makes you happy touching paper that has been in the sauna for a while and the soft touch of it it's everything suddenly is fine and good and if something unpleasant arises as it sometimes does of course if action is possible you take action towards changing the situation or removing yourself from the situation if that either is not possible or not possible yet then you simply practice acceptance of what is instead of generating unhappiness about what is and even if action is possible the basis is well this is what is now what can I do about it well this is what is there's still an acceptance of what is and then that acceptance of what is that before would have been judged as highly undesirable instead of making you unhappy produces more depth in you because more

acceptance means more depth a greater depth in you vertical dimension so you appreciate the good things even all the little good things they're continuously arising around you so you practice that gratitude for all that appreciation of all the little things and then happiness arises and when something not good happens or the mind says it's not good or it is actually unpleasant really unpleasant acceptance and that can take you even deeper than the little good things one big back one big bad thing can take you quickly deeper than many good things by accepting accepting means the egoic structures that create continuous resistance subside and this gap opens up and you as a person the ego lives in and through resistance in one form or another you as a person suddenly give way dissolve become transparent and then something deeper arises is there and that is what Jesus called the peace that passes all understanding because you cannot figure out the relationship in your mind between this so-called bad event and the peace you feel the reason of course being now i'm explaining to you so you can actually understand it the peace that passes all understanding is this relationship normally a good thing produces inner peace or happiness and here a bad thing produces an even greater much greater inner peace and happiness and that is because it through acceptance it causes the ego which is a mind-made self to get out of the way dissolve become they're much weaker become transparent instead of dense and and then your essence identity as consciousness itself shines through in other words the ripple which is the ripple on the ocean lives on the horizontal dimension all ripples are on the horizontal dimension but when the life becomes too unpleasant for the ripple that may force the ripple to become aware of that which is beyond the vertical dimension oh so more present moment awareness instead of looking for happiness appreciating the many beautiful things and then also gradually becoming aware of your presence which ultimately is what the now is it is the presence of consciousness the space in which everything happens and you are that of course that's the sense-perceived life there is deeper life too that is not sense-perceived but we start with the sense-perceived life and as we go deeper deeper during our retreat we will see that the sense-perceived life although beautiful is only the surface of reality but you have to start with that and it's beautiful and if you give it your fullest attention even then you already begin to go deeper than the surface because then you sense an aliveness in everything you can sense that the life in this flower i'm just making sure it's not plastic even if it were plastic there is some life in plastic too but not as intense life as in the natural flower the life that is expressive that expresses itself through this flower is the life that expresses itself through this form this body this mind and millions of other other forms and so you go around in a state of astonishment because there's so much that you had not really acknowledged before it's easier to be astonished here at the multiplicity of life perhaps than if you were in uh what's a boring place well there are many boring places i'm not going to name any it's easier but even if you're in a so-called boring place a suburb somewhere there's beauty there too you might have to look more and even if you were in a street without any vegetation there will still be beauty there too and there comes a moment when you actually see beauty in everything even in a simple pavement a

window the surface of a table how light gets reflected of objects the colors and when for i also suggest so look for be aware of the little things because that requires that brings your alertness up big things are fine that's nice to be aware of the little things and go go when you walk around here in between sessions you go a bit like a little bit like as if you as if you had just arrived on this planet in some sense you have because these surroundings here may be so unusual to you if you live somewhere very different it's almost as if you had arrived on a new planet and how would you be if you arrived on a new planet you don't you go and you don't you don't do a lot of thinking you just you're just there as an aware presence perceiving like a child before a child learns the names of things but you're not regressing you're transcending that level of conceptualization that which most that most humans are trapped in you're not regressing to the child stage you are transcending but as you transcend the conceptualization level there is there certain things that are similar to a child or that's deeper than the child perceives because you've been through that growth you have transcended conceptualization there's a deeper knowing that the child does not have but in other ways there are certain similarities with how a child perceives the world and it's not for nothing that jesus said truly i tell you if you want to enter the kingdom of heaven you must be like a little child that's a very important pointer and how is a little child before the child can name things when the child does not happen to be crying the child is going he takes everything in without naming it and there's a clarity of perception and then the naming stage comes and then the problems start another thing need to mention for to be aware of here i highly recommend that you do not switch on your television if you have one in your room and if you find that difficult it means you're addicted and so if you find yourself going to the tv or the remote and you go i can't stop myself oh that's a good way of realizing that you're addicted even more addictive these days are the little gadgets well from laptops to pads ipads and similar devices phones which are much more than phones these days which absorb many people's attention a lot of the time so much that for many humans their interaction with reality 50 or more of their interaction with reality is through a little screen that they hold in front of their eyes and they live for it they live for the next facebook post so you may find that you are addicted to some extent to that also i would recommend to keep that to a minimum the devices if you absolutely have to set aside 10 minutes 15 minutes a day when you actually do interact or you look at your emails or facebook posts just to see what other people are eating or what they're wearing and you can say oh that looks great or you may compulsively take a selfie of yourself here look where i am and then hopefully everybody will feel jealous about you we may talk about those things a little bit more at a later time but in the meantime i would recommend that you break the habitual if for many of you what is habitual interaction with these devices while you're here in order to fully benefit from being here so that your attention is not absorbed by that because that really amplifies the mind unless you have something that you're looking there that promotes presence you might see a present moment reminder uh oh i have to remember to put in a as a present moment reminder it needs to come up on the screen says put away your phone we'll have to write that down for the next one

stop looking at the screen look at the sky oh what else oh alcohol i believe you can buy alcohol here and there's nothing wrong with a glass of wine or beer occasionally but at least how i see it but but it can easily pull you out of presence into unconsciousness especially if after one glass of wine you cannot stop if you feel you need one glass wine to enjoy your meal fine fine but if you're one of those many who cannot after one they need to have a second because and then they don't they don't realize it but when they started drinking their one first glass of wine they were totally determined determined only to have one glass of wine but by the end they get by the time they get to the end of the first glass of wine they forgot that they were totally determined to only have one glass of wine say oh one might as well have another and then you're gone so if you are one of those don't don't have the first one or beer if you cannot enjoy the meal without a beer you must have your beer before the meal okay but if you if you cannot stop and you must have another one after that this is not this is would prevent you from benefiting from being here if you can avoid alcohol altogether it would be preferable while you're here so that is only there no this is not a boot camp retreat there are retreats like that where you get strict instructions no alcohol you're not watching television you're not going to talk to anybody you're not going to look at anybody and we're going to meditate for 10 hours a day okay some of you may have been on that retreat now sit and close your eyes there's a place for that kind of retreat too if it's right for you if it's right for you you've already been to it or you're going to go to it so i'm not mentioning other drugs because i don't think i need to here i don't think you will indulge in those things here there's something much better than acid or pot and that's called presence it's not a drug it's true that some of these drugs can give you a little glimpse of of what it is to perceive the world without the intrusion of the habitual mind and this is why people who take some of these drugs have an experience that goes a wow experience and you look at something you look at a simple object and suddenly see its beauty and aliveness and you go wow and wow look at that look at that glass of water i can't believe it and the truth is it is miraculous and the truth is we don't see it because of the habitual nature of the mind if you if you suspend thinking and look at this glass of water water is an amazing substance it's a miracle and what is a glass it's a solid thing and the light shines through it it's amazing it's completely solid but the light travels through it and yes you can go wow without any drug if you're real if you're present really present so and you again do this occasionally you can do it here people won't think you're mad if you do it out in the world they would think oh he must have taken something or she but if you go to really appreciate an object any object a natural object or even a man-made object pick it up give it your fullest attention feel it see it this mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation when you can sense the essence of yourself as consciousness there's a vast power in there which has nothing to do with egoic power power over somebody but sensing that is really the only thing that can free you of fear so you can know a very old illustration or example to explain it i believe it comes from india is they use they could you could use anything but

they use honey so you can know honey by examining the structure of honey and where it comes from and how it's produced by the bees and the molecular structure and the chemical composition and you can write several phds about honey and you can know everything there is to know well perhaps that's even impossible because there's always more to know but you can know a lot about honey so there you are a doctor of honey after you have successfully defended your thesis and one day somebody asked have you actually ever tasted honey no that's not part of my phd so if you taste honey you would know nothing about it necessarily you just but there's a different knowing there that is more immediate direct nothing to do with concepts but you know honey on a level that is deeper in a way than this person who only knows honey through concepts and now we can apply that first to yourself and also of course we can apply it to other people how do you know somebody else but you have to start with yourself so in addition to knowing yourself as this historical person which really is knowing about yourself you know all kinds of things about yourself and you can talk about it for a long time you can write your autobiography and perhaps some people will be interested in it or not everybody has their own autobiography in their head and it consists of things that you can talk about so an autobiography consists of stories this is what happened to me or this is what i did i let me tell you the story and this is what i experienced that's what i suffered but do i know myself at a deeper level am i able to let go to relinquish when i choose to to relinquish all conceptual knowledge about myself all narratives and stories and not live through the narratives and stories although i'm able to remember them when i need to but am i able to know a deeper essence that enables the narratives to exist to be you need to be conscious to have a narrative a story you need to be conscious to perceive things with your senses is you need to be conscious to have an emotion all these arise they are objects that arise in let's temporarily call it your consciousness but it's not yours they are all objects that arise in consciousness so your life consists on the and except on the deepest level your life what i call your life situation is the term i choose to use consists of the arising of objects in the space of consciousness or the light of consciousness so perception it's a it's an object that arises in consciousness there it is and then it disappears and then another perception replaces it a thought arises a stream of thoughts they can take over your consciousness almost completely they they gobble up they suck up if thoughts can be so overpowering if you're in the absence of awareness as a stream of thoughts can take take your whole conscious consciousness and manufacture thoughts out of it and so you're completely unaware of yourself as consciousness you're completely you're just completely identified with a thought it takes up all your consciousness and makes it into thought and emotions the my continuously manufacturing more thoughts cook i need more and you can see it when people talk to each other sometimes how they are taken over by taken over by a stream of thought and confuse it with who they are and then they have to defend that stream of thought whatever that stream of thought is saying whatever position it's whatever perspective it has it people become mortal enemies because your stream of thought does not agree with my stream of thought and groups do it because there are collectives that are

dominated by certain commonly held jointly held beliefs there are some collectives that are held together by belief systems ideologies and everybody takes it on board and then their other collective have conflicting ideologies and they become your mortal enemy and really all this happens because you don't know who you are you only know yourself as an object in consciousness so the deepest meaning of knowing yourself is knowing yourself beyond concepts not through concepts not knowing yourself as an object in consciousness but as the eternal subject which is consciousness itself and so the mind subsides and a sense of still alert presence remains i am and now you don't need to add anything to it you just know that you are the beingness of you and if that can be sustained in the background so to speak then you could have a discussion with somebody and you can put forward your point of view which are thoughts without making that person into an enemy because he or she holds opposite or conflicting points of view and you can have a conversation and while you're having a conversation you remain spacious inside but you can still clearly state your point of view without having a self-identification with your point of view this is how i see it but you don't derive your sense of identity from that mental position but you can still you don't have to give up all all mental positions you just recognize them as thoughts you happen to this is how i see reality this is how i see that but there's always something else in the background something deeper and then it is more likely that the awareness of the that which is deeper which is awareness itself may enable you to think in a different way so that you you're not just take on board what the collective that you happen to be born into tends to think you don't adopt if you're born into what a certain political system or whatever it may be you don't necessarily adopt all their beliefs and make it part of your sense of identity but you're able to and even our civilization will perhaps our western civilization is not dominated by any one particular ideology as for example communist russia wars or china wars which still is to some extent just getting mixed up with other things but even here if you you may not realize that how many of the thoughts that you think are your thoughts you have absorbed through a screen either the tv screen or the ipad screen or the samsung screen and or some people still read newspapers and you have absorbed certain viewpoints that most of the media tend to agree on with certain relation to your country or a group of countries in relation to other countries certain and you just absorb that and that becomes your viewpoint and you may not realize that perhaps it's a quite a distorted way of looking there may be other ways of looking but people think these are my thoughts they are not they're not your thoughts and it's not just with reference to the media but with everything these are thoughts that you absorb from the from the collective but if you are aware if this this awareness is in the background it is more likely that you are able to think creatively that you can look through certain forms of almost hypnosis that if you live in a collective you are hypnotized into that you become part of that particular way of looking at the world and you can see things more clearly and have creative thoughts so you can actually think better when you're able to step out of thinking and then when you think don't lose yourself completely in the thinking then you can you can see more clearly and another

strange thing that happens when you can sense the essence of who you are it's not just although the buddha called it well as it's commonly translated emptiness is not i don't think that's a good translation of certain terms he used like sunyata spaciousness i would prefer some call it nothingness but there's more to it than that when you can sense the essence of yourself as consciousness there's a there's a power in there there's a vast power in there which is nothing to do with egoic power power over somebody but sensing that is really the only thing that can free you of fear because fear means oh you're the little the little me and you feel threatened and fearful of what's going to happen to me and all these other me's around me the others but to be free of fear if you can sense that deep within you there is a silent power and perhaps that is the the deeper and original meaning of the term faith faith is to sense that power it's not an intellectual thing belief i would say is an intellectual thing because the term belief as a noun means you you believe in the uh veracity of certain things that are being told as it could be a story you believe in this particular narrative that's a belief faith is something the way i interpret the word or use the word is something deeper that is not connected with concepts faith is a deep trust that's perhaps a better a better translation of to a better pointer a deep trust in life which you cannot arrive at through telling yourself certain things i really should be trusting because the universe is going to look after you i just need to believe you're still stuck in your head and you're saying i just need to believe that the universe is going to look after i'm just going to look after okay well as maybe that is a that is a bridge or maybe that is a sign post that can take you to the actual realization of what you're saying but it's also possible that it remains a sign post and you never get to where the sign post points to i'm trying to have this trust in the universe but i still wake up in the middle of the night and in a state of panic i don't know why i keep telling myself that i need to trust the universe now even it's on my bathroom mirror and a piece of paper written stuck in there god loves you quit well is it a thought that you believe in that does not free you from fear or if it's a sign post and then it takes you to a deeper place where you realize your connectedness with the source ultimately your connectedness with the source of all life that there's not a separation that you're not an autonomous entity thrown into out you come through into thrown out of the universe or fallen from the sky so the to sense your connectedness with the source is the realization that god loves you but you can let you don't need the words anymore you there's just a trust and there's no duality anymore because you're an extension of the one an emanation of the one so faith really is trust but the trust is not something you can think yourself into ultimately you need to let go of all these concepts although when you later talk about it you may take them up again but for the experience of it you let go of concepts and you can sense in the space between two thoughts in the space of awareness you can sense the stillness the presence and you can sense it as a silent power silent that's the dao it's chinese the silent a silent power and that silent power is inseparable from who you are it's you and much infinitely vaster than you both at the same time but it's almost as if a ray of sunlight that arrives here suddenly realizes its source it is a ray of sunlight suddenly realizes its own source where it comes from and it

also realizes that it that it can never be totally separate from its source because there's the ray of sunlight somehow is still connected to the sun which in this analogy that's the source so the ray of sunlight then could say my fear has disappeared because i realize that i'm connected to something much vaster and this vastness is sustaining me it could say that it could also say and some have some rays have done that i am the sun ecstatic translated in this analogy there have been mystics in various traditions who said i am god it's not advisable to say that people don't like it so that power is something that you can then have in the sense in the background and it can it's not just a passive thing always in the background it can it emanates intelligence so to speak it uses it can use your mind and it can inspire it out this is the dimension of creativity which is this prior to form but it's where form arises out of the formless so all the great creations that humanity has been able to achieve over the centuries and millennia anything truly creative comes because the human being who created that had some connection with the silent power within perhaps only in the act of creation perhaps not in their private life but in the act of creation there was suddenly that connectedness and many many great composers and artists and even some of the great scientists who had breakthroughs say that it came to them almost full fully formed as a revelation it already arrived as if it had been already formed at a deeper level and then suddenly they just received it and some report that they are overpowered almost by the sudden influx of an amazing thing that then becomes perhaps a work of art or an amazing insight or a piece of music that comes from that place and those things that come from that deeper place are the things that remain because although most humans are not sufficiently connected to be able to to create any of these things there are quite a few who have at least have some connections or they are able to recognize the greatness in something when they see it and so the humans value for example the great classics of literature there are some books that have survived for two thousand and more years it's miraculous because a book is a very fragile thing and for cent many centuries it can only survive if there were always people who valued it enough to copy it again and then a few more copies and then they got damaged and burnt and then maybe one copy survived and then some other people saw how valuable it is they could sense the there was something something transforming transformative in it and so they copied it again so books such as the Tao Te Ching or the Bhagavad Gita they met one of my favorite books the meditations by Marcus Aurelius two thousand years old somehow they survived even the dark 80s when almost nobody could read and write except a few monks in monasteries and they kept it alive but our the main purpose is not to produce necessarily produce some great thing or have some great insight that may come as an addition the main purpose is to bring this state of consciousness into into your life and then

[Speaker 4] (5:11:15 - 5:12:50)

whatever happens through it happens it's a question about personal and romantic love if one is in the surrendered state of consciousness can they i've heard teachings from my

own experience and from just reading with romantic love there can be i need you behavioral expectations and then there's like the selfless kind of love where there are no behavioral expectations and you still love the person my question is if you're in the surrendered state of consciousness if you're if you're completely surrendered to what is do you still have that kind of selfless love for a specific person romantically or does that kind of dissolve or do is it just only the universal which is wonderful the universal love it's amazing it's wow you know but can you also have that specific kind of love for okay thank you

[Speaker 1] (5:12:52 - 6:37:56)

so the question you're basically asking would you then love everybody equally so there would not be one person singled out as special as the course in miracles calls it special relationship which of course america says of course it's of the ego to single one out as special now if you single one out as special and you what you see in the other is the form only and you're attached to the form which doesn't doesn't just mean the physical form of course that's an important part of it because there is part of the sexuality and all that which is part of the attraction but it includes also includes the psychological form of the other who you think that person is their psychological makeup how they behave and speak and act that is also form that's a psychological form and there can be strong attachment to those aspects both the physical come together with the psychological which includes also emotions there's an emotional link also there and those coming when they all come together you fall in love and aptly it's called fall because it's a fall in consciousness but but that's okay if that's what you experience and that life wants you to experience that it's part of your learning that fall in consciousness now it's not immediately of course experienced as a fall it's experienced as a high and only afterwards do you realize oh that was a fall and afterwards can be after a year it can be after three months it can be after the honeymoon it can be soon after you move in together and so and then the suffering starts what before was the love now becomes the suffering and then for a while it can happen that you fluctuate for the next year or two or three between still feeling the love and and the suffering and then usually it comes to an end after a while or you you compromise and for some other reason stay together so that's the now if you are able to feel in the other well first of all in yourself and that which is beyond form the essence the stillness the presence whatever we want to call it and by by sensing it in yourself and being it then you recognize it in another and that recognition that in this in the space of stillness is true love which doesn't need the other because the other only reflects to you who you are but even there it can happen that the form of the other because you are not just the formless temporarily you're also the form temporarily you are either a man or a woman temporarily you have this body and this form this man or this woman and this body and the emotional field may find a certain resonance with on different levels be it sexual emotional psychological levels a certain resonance with the other form and that resonance that is what in the unenlightened

romantic love makes up the entire relationship but now when you are when you know who you are in your essence all those factors are still there but they do not make up the entire relationship beyond the resonance between the sexual or emotional or physical resonance there is a deeper level present so you can go through the motions of romantic love with the transcendent level also present in yourself and recognizing it in the other so romantic love may after a while of course for the relationship to be truly deep in any relationship some transcendent element has to be there because it's never it's not going to last otherwise it doesn't mean necessarily that people need to be totally awake already totally awake knowing who they are but some element of the formless must be there eventually in the relationship for the relationship to survive and be a true relationship otherwise all you have left in the relationship is your judgments about the other and physical attraction and just mind emotional and that's ultimately it's not enough it's not enough the added element the transcendent element needs to be there and if the transcendent is there you can be quite content even without the romantic relationship you no longer say i need that and it's when it's there it's beautiful but you don't need that yeah pull so the the mind it is often in relationships the mind prevents the deeper level the transcendent level from arising in the relationship so the mind destroys the relationship identification with the story in the mind which you is about yourself and the other obscures love it might even say love well it's no such thing as love i read a lovely in a novel last year by a british writer it does mack ewan he's a well-known contemporary writer ian mccune and he wrote this book about it's called on chesil beach it's about two young people falling in love in england in the 50s and these two young people they feel this the pole towards each other and they begin to fall in love and but sexually they are completely repressed and very fearful about they haven't it's in the 50s so the sixth revolution hasn't happened yet about sex so they're but they're both extremely fearful about that and then they they get married and their first night they stay in a bed and breakfast on on near chesil beach in the south of england and they're they're trying to have sex for the first time and it's a disaster dread dreadful disaster and and she she is so shocked she runs out of the room to the beach oh they don't realize it's actually quite funny i don't explain what disaster you can probably imagine it the so she runs out and the next day so they don't see each other that night that's their honeymoon their their wedding night and the next day he tries he goes to the beach chesil beach and she sees she's walking on the beach they start talking to each other and both feel still the pole is still there but both their minds are bringing up stories why it's no longer why it's not possible it's dreadful they are projecting things onto the other what she's and so the the pull is there but they're all they both create stories in their minds that cuts them off from the other and they separate and then they spend the rest of their lives doing other things the rest of their lives in the no risk is compressed to five or six pages and that shows how how destructive the mind can be of true relationship how the mind imposes interpretations on the other total fictions but there's so much as don miguel ruiz would say there's so much faith in these fictions that they there's it's an impossibility for the human being to see what the mind is creating is

a fictitious judgment on that that creates a barrier between yourself and the other this writer is not spiritual at all he just observed human nature and he presented it and and that is the ultimate lesson is spiritual thank you very much the good practice is not always to feel you have to fill up the present moment with something but in actually enjoy a present moment that is not filled up with anything by filling up i mean external activity or internal activity so both are kind of filling up the present moment and on the external as we mentioned before of course you have all the devices that humans have invented to help you fill up the present moment to make it easier not to have any space whatsoever uh so whether it's your television or radio or cell phone or text messages or emails or facebook or twitter or the old-fashioned magazine that you consume weekly magazine gossip or maybe a little bit more elevated and you can there's a when you do it you can sense the addictive nature of needing to fill up your inner space it's an automatic thing and people are actually afraid of the to have a moment they're afraid of having this a moment that's not filled up then they feel there's something very wrong and they might interpret this as some people even feel anxiety i should be doing something or thinking something or something wrong or they may feel unbearable boredom even after two minutes not doing anything or they have something in the head a mind form that says you should be doing something how dare you just sit there oh there's so much to do come on do something somebody beating you up in the head you lazy so-and-so but you're missing out on something very precious and very vital and that is experience the depths of life rather than the continuous horizontal extension of life and you don't have to overdo it just become make it a habit from time to time to enjoy the spaciousness of the present moment and everything at this moment just is the way it is and you come to an acceptance and then the compulsive need to fill it up with something may subside for a moment and then there comes perhaps for some people a moment of unfamiliarity with having the space now then you accept that then it's actually quite pleasant this moment you might occasional thoughts may come in but they're no longer occupying your entire space and then you this is the first step of appreciating what's around you which is a manifestation of life also and if you're in the mind you would call it uninteresting everyday things are happening around me but if you don't interpret you might see that there's a certain aliveness and beauty in everything so the appreciation comes can only come there thankfulness is a term often used in spirituality in new age especially and of course it's important but the real thankfulness isn't through words although a word can point you to it you could say thank you for this moment and don't wait for some spectacular moment because they're not that many they'd come when you say finally thank you for this moment some people think something spectacular has to come along you have to stand on the mountaintop oh i've made it thank you for this moment but it doesn't last that you can't stay on the top for too long you have to come down and then you have to look for another one some people look for a wedding or something like that it's a great thing but that doesn't last that long either preparations can go on for months and months and it's all exciting and building up towards it and finally it happens and if you're lucky it doesn't get spoiled by something

by relatives getting drunk or pouring pouring with rain or whatever could happen but then it's over and then ordinary life starts with one ordinary moment after another and if you then become dissatisfied because you can't appreciate the ordinary moment and why can't you appreciate the ordinary moment because you're not going deep enough into it you're not allowing yourself to settle into it a danger when you come to the moment of settling into the present moment and you're not used to it in order to stay there and it doesn't matter how long one two minutes of being feeling comfortable in the now is fine it's a good start one minute or you can start with half a minute of just ah if your mind comes in and says something it's not necessarily true and says you can't afford to just sit here and do nothing well i think anybody can afford to sit for one or two minutes and do nothing if the mind tells you you can't it's not true there might be an emergency situation that's a different matter but i often tell people when you get into your car why immediately go into automatic mode but give it use the opportunity when you shut the door to have 30 seconds or so and you don't have to count the seconds because then you're filling up the present moment again 30 seconds or so of just spacious being and you look out of the window whatever you see there feel yourself breathing and you for a moment you break the momentum of the mind that otherwise pulls you along so you shut the door and you go 30 seconds unless there's a real emergency 30 seconds don't really make much difference although if you believe the mind you will believe that you can't afford 30 seconds it's too much to do there's a dimension in you a dimension of consciousness one could say where ultimately these artificial divisions of reality that we call minutes and hours and days weeks months and years well these things don't really matter anymore there's a dimension where that's not relevant including how old you are and unless you find that dimension which we could call the inner spaciousness stillness presence awareness whatever term or pointer works best for you of course as you know the word isn't it unless you find that dimension and it's there in your daily life consciously then the new year just be another one more thing same thing as before basically more of the same happy one day unhappy the next if you're lucky or even more unhappy than happy for some people mostly unhappy except when they're getting too tired to be unhappy or i've taken a few drinks now some people especially spiritual seekers believe that at some point they are going to realize that dimension sometimes this is called self-realization or awakening or enlightenment they think they can at some point hopefully come to that self-realization and there are many spiritual seekers who have been seekers for a long time who are getting quite frustrated because they haven't found it yet despite the search and there are some people listening to this watching this who may be getting quite frustrated and saying so when do we start meditating and they have missed the most essential dimension here which is a space of stillness in between and underneath the words that's the dimension where the year or how old you are or what your life situation is doesn't matter anymore not relevant and the moment you notice that here in addition to what you see and hear the words and the image on the screen there's also dimension of stillness the moment you realize that there it is inside of you you can't realize that notice let's say notice an even

simpler word realize still sounds a little bit complex but notice can you notice that they are the words and what you hear and see there's something that you don't hear and see that's even more vital this is why we call this a meditation because as i speak to you that dimension is there the words come out of that stillness that is one could say is in me but the moment you notice that it's also arising in you because if it were not arising in you you wouldn't be able to notice it because only the stillness in you can notice that same dimension in another or around you so instead of waiting for one day when you're going to be self-realized or enlightened why not notice pay attention to that dimension and this is a good opportunity here and now but it's always there in your daily life it's easier here to notice it but you're just training here in this protected space but wherever you are you can notice that in addition to whatever your life consists of which comes down always no matter what what's going on in your life it always comes down to sense perceptions thoughts and emotions and the mixture of how these things arise vary from person to person so every person has his or her life situation sometimes good sometimes not so good but there's always another dimension there but most humans overlook it continuously this is why we're here to realize that the immediacy of self-realization how close it is to you and you don't have to wait for some day when you're going to be realized that's an idea in the mind that is a huge obstacle notice whatever is going on in your life what i call your life situation whatever it is it's sense perceptions thoughts and emotions but there's always something else and you overlook it as i said you overlook it because sense perceptions thoughts and emotions have cast a hypnotic spell upon you one spiritual teacher called dole goldsmith had the expression for that the universal hypnotism i think he called it and so that is the most powerful for contemporary humans the most powerful hypnotic spell out of these three sense perceptions thoughts emotions i would say is thoughts and you could even reduce those three that i just mentioned sense perceptions thoughts emotions to one because ultimately what are sense perceptions thoughts and emotions other than forms that arise in your consciousness it all arises in your consciousness or in consciousness in that vast space or that the light of consciousness that is formless you can't say there it is or i have it so when you notice the stillness in between and underneath the words that you're listening to now then you are listening to the words and noticing at the same time a stillness that is the transcendent dimension and that is self-realization but really we only we it doesn't mean that you are i wouldn't say that you are self-realized to say a person is self-realized would imply that he or she lives continuously knowing that dimension in every situation but it always starts it's here and now this is the where the possibility opens up not at some future point and this dimension is what in the buddhists i if i remember correctly sometimes call it the other shore the other shore like a river you're crossing the river to the other shore and there's the scripture i believe i remember correctly it says gatte gatte paragate gone gone to the farthest shore or to the other shore describing the inner shift from being identified continuously with all the forms that continuously arise in consciousness hypnotized by them hypnotized by every thought that arises and follow it wherever it takes you and then another thought comes and look at me i'm so important

this you need to think about more from this now oh oh this is hypnotized so most humans are hypnotized by their own minds or by the ultimately it's the human mind the collective mind sleepwalking another word dreaming another word all describes the same state whatever you want to call it sleepwalking hypnotized dreaming because nobody has told them that that there is another dimension there and all they have to do is pay attention and notice it isn't it strange that that basically is still unknown despite this old scriptures that point to it in various um traditions but it's not that unknown anymore because more and more people are beginning to realize the truth of it in their own lives in themselves please i've been looking for so long i only have a few more years to live still haven't found it and i say the looking is it asking is the ability to ask is wonderful um please thank you the um because if they if you're truly asking there is as you there's a space of openness if you're truly asking you you voluntarily enter the state of not knowing so and this is a wonderful ability to ask whatever it is so that you become a space you can ask a person something you can ask the universe something and but there needs to be the receptivity if you can ask any kinds of questions but the question needs to be the question needs to come out of the spaciousness of which is there when you truly ask there are many people who ask questions and there's not the openness to receive the answer and that is not true asking but to put yourself in this basically it's connected with the state of not knowing so that you can and that's the part of the state of awareness is that you're an aspect of it is that you're in that state of not knowing conceptually so there is a there's nothing more beautiful than asking a question and if it's directed to other human beings then people love to be asked true questions and they can feel whether there is an openness there or whether you have certain expectations as far as the answer is concerned so that in itself is a spiritual great spiritual practice to ask of course there are certain questions that do not require an answer not all answers are necessarily conceptual answers they may when there's this the non-conceptual space the answer may come as an intuition as a realization that you may not yet before be able to formulate conceptually you just suddenly know but you can't explain what it is that you know and that certainly applies to your sense of who you are which is you suddenly there's a deep knowing inside yourself perhaps because you asked yourself the question who am i and that's a beautiful question it creates the openness and the and then you start to investigate your attention arises who have we talked about that before but this is here relevant in this context you ask who am i question mark and there is a kind of looking but it's not looking visually there is a kind of searching there is the attention arises right now the attention arises who am i and it's looking and suddenly it realizes what you're looking for is in the looking or in other words you are what you're looking for the very looking the very question which becomes a non-conceptual question is the answer so when you ask who am i there's just a silent presence which is that you're looking for the answer and then suddenly you realize that presence that arises the alertness that is there looking is it so the search and the object of the search become a one so if you're looking for yourself the looking is yourself that's wonderful so that is the ultimate secret i'm glad i got a chance to say it before the end of the retreat and that is

just it's miraculous thank you so people sometimes come to me please help me find god or please help me find myself or please help me find the place where i and god merge please find help me find my place where i know myself as the source as an expression of the i'm looking for god and i've had some people have been looking desperately for 30 40 years looking please help me they say please i've been looking for so long i only have a few more years to live still haven't found it and i say the looking is it haha it's always been there in the in the consciousness that you called looking you are it oh some got it some didn't get it and they're still looking not knowing that they already found it a positive thought is much less likely to become obsessive some that you can't get rid of than a negative thought well the first thing i think that would anybody would probably say it's more pleasant to have nice thoughts than negative thoughts it feels better certainly the body likes it more too because negative thoughts you use the negative to influence the body in some way obstructing the energy flow you can test it out for yourself when you feel stressed or got into repetitive negative thoughts then your body doesn't like it it reacts even mainstream medicine is discovering there is a link between well some still say no but there is a link between your predominant state of mind or consciousness and the physical functioning not that now you may also find that negative thoughts proliferate and multiply much more readily than positive thoughts the negative thought wants to proliferate and it wants and it wants to produce more negative thoughts so and then you may find a positive thought is quite happy to stand alone there isn't the the pull towards proliferation of more more of itself a positive thought is much less likely to become obsessive some that you can't get rid of than a negative thought so when you are trapped in the mind it's very rare if ever happens that you are trapped in obsessive good thoughts you are usually trapped in obsessive negative thoughts because that is what negative thoughts love to do it love they love to take you over they want to for some reason they're like certain insects that suddenly reproduce and become from one you get they give birth to 50 and the 50 give birth to another 50 and suddenly you have millions and billions of them and so the difference a fundamental difference then is a negative thought is actually first makes you feel better is easier to experience that which follows the thought because often after negative thought you just experience the reality of what the thought just pointed to life is beautiful the person here mentions as an example of a of a positive thought life is beautiful what's wrong with that thought because after that thought you're actually going to have a certain experience of life being beautiful so the thought was no more than a pointer a sign post and that's perfectly fine you use thought as a pointer it does not absorb all your attention as a thought it's quite happy to be just a pointer life is beautiful and then perhaps for the next few minutes you appreciate everything that is around you and it becomes a true experience so as a pointer it can work beautifully and the negative one is just one and after another after another it becomes obsessive so but even if you change all your thinking from negative to positive if the most vital thing is to realize that which is beyond all thought positive thought in itself is not yet liberating it doesn't liberate you can be nice but it doesn't liberate you only to find the place that is beyond all thought liberates

you now does that free you from negative thoughts yes after a while your the negative thoughts need your identification which means your unconsciousness in order to proliferate continuously in your life it's only if you identified with them you give them your total attention in fact it's not only that you become them they come out of your mouth when you speak they're in your thoughts they take you over they possess you you become them and that's how they continue to grow and grow and take over your life and it can happen some thoughts or thought patterns have the same function in the human mind in many cases as a virus has in the body a virus can proliferate and takes over the body and so there are many mental viruses that people get taken over by and can't get rid of sometimes you have that virus the whole lifetime persistent deep-seated negative thoughts that occupy either your entire mind or a particular section of your mind and sometimes the virus that can take over can take over collectively an entire collective entity of human beings be it a nation or a tribe or a religion or a section within a religion it can be a political movement that suddenly has all the answers and knows who where the enemies are it happened when national socialism in germany was an infection of a collective mental virus soviet communism which started of course with good intentions but of course no that had been absolutely no change in consciousness so good intentions are not enough unless there's a shift in consciousness good intentions will lead you to more suffering if there's no shift in consciousness soviet communism became an awful thing and it took over as again a collective mental virus china under Mao Zedong a collective mental virus millions and millions died in china in the soviet commission obviously nazi germany millions and millions in under Mao Zedong children would denounce their parents if they child was unhappy with their parents they would go to somebody at school and say my parents are saying this and that the next day they would be taken away to a labor camp and never be seen again total insanity so a collective flowers were declared illegal they had to tear out all the flowers bourgeois infection we don't want flowers and many just countless things being taken over by a mental an entire nation being taken over by a mental obsessed with certain mind forms and then it passes it doesn't it it lasted can last a couple of decades in soviet communism lasted fairly long national socialism the 1000 year rise lasted i can't don't know 15 years or something so it it runs its course and then like a virus infection after a while the virus disappears it's and a semblance of sanity returns certainly sanity compared to what was there before there's still there's still the normal insanity that's part of the normal state of consciousness but not the extreme unconsciousness that can take over when thought form becomes a virus and of course it happens to individuals they have then they interpret the world through their mental virus you might have certain ideas if you go on the internet too much and you you might see things that suddenly put the trans the the virus infection can happen by looking up certain things on the internet and you suddenly believe totally in what this it could be a total fantasy but it looks so convincing that it it becomes a thought form in your mind and then from there it grows and after that you only have contact with those people who are also infected by that thought form and you think that becomes a new reality that is the case with many

conspiracy theories now i'm not saying that one out of 10 20 or 50 conspiracy theories may not be correct it could it'll be but many of them are fictitious constructs but of course the world is pretty insane so it's probably more insane than you realize and that includes particularly politicians and political power play and so on so i'm not denying all that absolutely there is no conspiracy there are quite mad things happening that we don't know about and yet i wouldn't go that way even if it's true don't get drawn into that your job is to be present your job is to embody a different state of consciousness you cannot fight unconsciousness on its own level you have to rise above unconsciousness so good thoughts yes good thoughts are preferable to bad thoughts but then go beyond thought also then negative thoughts will lessen in your life even if you've been around for a long time as more presence arises good thoughts can arise naturally and a lot of your consciousness is no longer dependent on what thoughts you have there's just more presence and you appreciate life through presence rather than trying to convince yourself that you should appreciate life you appreciate life directly gratefulness is another important thing gratitude is of course wonderful a very transformative gratitude implies a deep appreciation of what you are perceiving around you whether or not you have the thought in your mind that accompanies that that says thank you it's secondary and after a while you don't need thank you anymore but when you first practice gratitude thankful can be helpful when you say some beautiful thank you for things that otherwise you wouldn't even acknowledge thank you for how this the light reflects off this table thank you for this shiny clock i know it's not real gold but it shines beautifully thank you for this amazing substance that we call water got these little like tiny bubbles in it and here it is i can look at it drink it it's alive it's an amazing thing and you can appreciate it it's it's it's filled with light life giving substance why not appreciate it so and whether or not you say thank you it's up to you it's thank you is not the main the main thing is the the act of giving it attention that again is perceiving it through presence and then everything is something to be valued that's around you so you go and that's wonderful spiritual practice and of course for a while it's a spiritual practice then it becomes second nature that it's how you live so there is some association with certain thoughts yes expressing gratitude but it's not the main thing the thoughts are more like pointers towards that which is beyond thought but in many people's lives the beginning of spiritual practice and realization is that they suddenly realize how much they've been trapped in negative thinking over past years and they suddenly wake up to their own thought processes whereas before they were trapped in their own thought processes that's the beginning of spiritual awakening if you realize what kind of thought processes have been predominant in your life over the past few years on every day through which you interpret other people the world yourself your life and so on and that's an amazing jump because it implies suddenly awareness or presence has emerged my emotions and thoughts are mostly occupied with worry and guilt about my daughter's marriage and children i feel the need to often tell her and her husband how to do things better and bring up their kids better it feels that this destroys my life i mentioned that kind of thing briefly in new earth i believe that to be a parent is

a function an important function for many people it's not only a function they identify with the function of being a parent then it becomes a role that you grow into that it gets hold of you and then you remain a parent because that's become part of your ego function it becomes a role that you cannot get out of and even when your children are already adults might be 30 years old you still are forced to act out the role of parent and that does usually does not have a good effect on the relationship and it is quite possible that you know better or it is possible that you just think that you know better but in either case perhaps yes you have more life experience you've seen more things so why aren't they listening to you because they want to be free so to give to let children go to let go of your identity of parent after you have fulfilled the function of parent and you have to start doing that as when your children reach adolescence gradually you have to let go you have to allow them to make mistakes advice yes up to a certain age you still can impose your will but not for too long but then they reach 16 17 18 if you're still trying to impose your will when they're 18 19 things get problematic so you can still guide diplomatically gently but then realize they will go their own way and they will and must make mistakes yes so that's that can be a significant letting go which requires a certain amount of consciousness if you have been identified with a role of being a parent because that's become part of your the ego identity has a certain inertia to it it does not want to let go of whatever its identity is every psychotherapist knows that patients come to him or clients whatever they're called and there's always a point is reached when the in many cases the patient or client sees the possibility of going beyond certain types of dysfunctional behavior or misery but they are attached to their unhappiness because it's become part of their sense of self and that is often a critical point in therapy and often clients or patients disappear just as they reach the point that there's a possibility of transcending these limitations because the ego feels i need to hang i'm going to lose myself so what you need here is presence so and especially self-observation rather than focusing all your attention on what your children are doing with their children and so on and how what they can do better put at least as much or more attention into the workings of your mind and see how it is associated with not being able to let go of the role of parent so you know and here you say your emotions and thoughts are mostly occupied with worry and guilt about my daughter's marriage and children so it's all even when you're not seeing them you're thinking about it now this is just another example of the uncontrolled use of mind which is not a use of mind you are being used by the egoic mind is there enough awareness in you you have to ask yourself and verify it in your own experience is there enough awareness in you when this happens again you start thinking about her worrying about her they're making mistakes at that moment are you able to know what's that this is what your mind is doing and perhaps in the past that wasn't possible perhaps after this retreat your awareness has grown so the awareness can be there when the mind does its usual thing and then you recognize that actually it serves no useful purpose to worry about this except to keep this identity alive in you you're not helping them by boring and you're probably not helping them by giving them advice that they don't want so to recognize the futility of what the mind is doing this this is so futile

isn't it that's still a thought but it comes from the awareness that's a true thought the rest are unconscious thoughts you can have true thoughts that arise out of awareness and often those true thoughts have something to say about the unconscious thoughts say this is so crazy do i want to do this for the rest of my life i'd rather not think these thoughts anymore and therefore i will put my attention on the fact that i'm breathing and i'll put my attention on looking at the sky and be in the present moment and then a few minutes later you you will find the thoughts trying to creep in again and they want your attention one little thought comes come this way and you watch that okay i'm not going there again sorry i've had it for years it's had solved no purpose just made me unhappy made my relationship with my daughter unpleasant i don't want it anymore that's thanks but you've been very kind thank you and then you choose to put your attention on something else your inner body the aliveness and preferably present moment and preferably not annihilate yourself by having a few drinks i mean those kind of drinks that annihilate you that doesn't work you don't need that and another way of annihilating your own thoughts is by turning on the tv now you may notice interesting thing when you turn on the tv you're not thinking anymore so one could think that occasional thoughts may come in but you could actually sit there in a trance like state for a whole hour watching whatever is there and even changing channels and you would still be in a trance like state and you can't even get out you know there's nothing because there's always the next channel might have something interesting and even if it's every channel is totally uninteresting there's always what about the next one and you're in a trance like state in which actually you might think oh isn't that good my i'm not thinking anymore but you have fallen below thought and if you if you're actually watching a program a sitcom or whatever it is then you are linking into the thoughts on the screen that people are talking there's drama on the screen you're linking into you're not free of thought you're free of personalized thought but you exchange personalized thought for that kind of thought so that's not the way to go to become free of dysfunctional thinking because that's just another way of falling below thinking so you need to rise above thinking it could be other things that plague you on a daily basis certain types of thoughts that recur that if you look at them clearly fulfill no purpose except to make you unhappy and to strengthen your fictitious sense of identity so yes your psychological function you're not a mother anymore not as it's not your identity but biologically yes you are the mother for this daughter but but your your identity is not being a mother anymore you have to transcend that limited identity you may go to a workshop a new age workshop and say where they teach you i'm happy i'm happy and then you can you can kind of you go i'm really enjoying this but you're not so can you can you at least can you accept i've been a model for 10 years somewhere deep inside i kept hoping for a big break it never came or has yet to come is it time to move on to another job if this job is not making me money it's time to move to another job if this job is not enjoyable anymore if you're unable to enjoy what you're doing then it's time to move to another job but you have to look to see whether your inability to enjoy the job you're doing now has something to do with the particular job you're doing or has more to

do with your inability to enjoy the present moment in which case the next job that you find you will also not enjoy so if you can't enjoy your job either one of these is true either there is something for you to change there's something inherently not right anymore with this particular job does no longer corresponds to what to who you are or your state of consciousness or you cannot enjoy your job because you haven't learned yet to be present enough to enjoy what you're doing now and you always think oh the next one is going to be much better and if you don't know which one it is of those two you may have to get another job and then see if you can enjoy that one many jobs that the mind tells you cannot be enjoyed actually can be enjoyed also the mind telling you if you enjoy this job that you do you really don't want this job to be permanent and if the mind tells you no if i enjoy this job i'll be stuck with it for the rest of my life and i don't want to be stuck with it let's say you you got a you got a job working working in a diner as a waiter or waitress but you really want to get your job as an actress or you really want to be a writer you really want to be whatever you want to be a senator successor of donald trump whatever your mind says and so the mind says like i'm not going to enjoy this job because i really want to be somewhere else and if i enjoy it then i'll really be stuck but you may find that the opposite is the case if you it it is freeing to enjoy what you are doing even if it's not something that you would want to do for the rest of your life all you have to do is enjoy the present moment your energy field then shifts and when this energy field energy field shifts you become open to life only if you no longer resist life you cannot be open to life the greater consciousness coming through you if you resist life and you resist life if you resist or resent the present moment that's where life is so the shift happens you need to be in the state of alignment with the present moment no matter what activity you are doing in the present moment and if you absolutely cannot be in alignment with the present moment you need to walk out so if i got a job as a bartender in a disco i would i would walk out i could surrender if they shut me in there and it's impossible for me to leave the building i would still surrender but since there is still a door that is i can open i would walk out because although i know how to surrender i wouldn't want to surrender there if i can help it so when we use the expression to enjoy what you do we get this little word joy here again enjoy to enjoy what is the english language to enjoy what you do so when you enjoy what you do joy arises from within and i would say it's not the doing it looks as if what you do perhaps gave you joy but it's really your presence in the doing that allows the joy to to come from within you and then it flows into what you do so rather than the doing giving you joy because you are present in the doing the joy arises from within and it flows into what you do and so you can say i enjoy this work i enjoy doing this now if you cannot enjoy it try first just to accept it then this is what you're doing in this moment let's say you start off with you're working at dennis or you're not from the united states um dennis is a chain of diners throughout the states not bad okay often there's nothing else if you're driving along you work at let's say you'd work and you absolutely are resistance you don't really want to be there but you have to earn money you are a graduate let's imagine you're a graduate you look you've applied for jobs but because of the recession you can't get any jobs and you've

had 50 rejections and you're getting frustrated and here you are stuck in this menial job what did i study for all those those years all for nothing all these thoughts go through your head while you're serving people okay and then you come into contact with the spiritual teaching or this teaching that points to the possibility of enjoying what you do and you say i i can't enjoy that okay then try something else can you at least accept that right now this is what you do don't try to get yourself to enjoy it it might become unnatural you might you might play a role to yourself you may go to a workshop a new age workshop and say where they teach you i'm happy i'm happy and then you can you can kind of you go i'm really enjoying this but you're not so can you can you at least can you accept that this is what you're doing right now not for the rest of your life not even perhaps for the whole year who knows but just right now this is all there is right now so i might as well accept that this is what i'm doing right now can you accept it you can't enjoy it okay i can try that feels already better feels much better and sometimes from there before you know it there is no clear dividing line between acceptance and enjoyment somewhere they merge so if you begin with acceptance you may find suddenly there's even some enjoyment there acceptance just means there is an absence of resistance you're just well that's what is and that can sometimes take you suddenly before you know it there's an enjoyment that arises oh so if you think you can't enjoy don't force yourself to enjoy that doesn't work except that's all first this is what is right now i talked about that in the new earth where i had three modalities it's just come back to you i haven't read the book in a long time three modalities of doing you can have acceptance you can have enjoyment or the most intense is then this is usually when there's a creative process happening through you i call it enthusiasm enthusiasm is an intense intense energy stream that flows is part of creativity and so if you are in order to live consciously and sanely you have to be in either one of these three modalities if you're neither in acceptance nor enjoyment nor enthusiasm you are somewhere in dysfunction and you're creating unhappiness and suffering for yourself and that usually implies you're also creating suffering for others because unhappy humans make others unhappy too so if you cannot accept enjoy or be in enthusiasm remove yourself remove yourself and then try again somewhere else but acceptance in a way is the most accessible of course to just try that

[Speaker 6] (6:38:23 - 6:39:28)

just one one comment uh uh for the benefit of everybody is that uh in the indian custom today is the day of the full moon and and on that day consciousness is enlivened the most and a lot of knowledge and energy and bliss comes from the guru so you're our guru today so we want to thank you for sharing that enlivened consciousness with us so that's one comment and i had one question and that is that uh uh in order to maintain the unity and the diversity all the time uh would it be advisable to cut down activity and make your life a lot more simple with less belongings because according to nisargadatta one of the things he comments is that you should give up pretty much everything in life

and maintain as little as possible and your sole purpose in life should be just enlivenment of your own self and consciousness okay thank you thank you

[Speaker 1] (6:39:32 - 7:58:25)

of course it's true that many people have many superfluous things they're not only concerned with innumerable things that are ultimately superfluous they also try to accumulate more and more things that are ultimately superfluous but the liberation does not lie in whether or not you have things but it's more important what is your inner relationship to what you have talking for a moment about things that you possess or acquire another aspect of your question of course is things that you do activities that you are engaged in we have the two aspects of as far as activities are concerned many people in this our civilization are hyperactive they are continuously active they are stressed almost continuously they're pursuing one thing after another and then they never arrive there's always the next thing to do and the next thing and then the hurry with everything that's the stress disease of our civilization and that's a form of madness that has to be relinquished because it's an insane way to live now people might say well i'm going to lose my job if i'm not if i'm not stressed and or if i don't do what i'm supposed to do and i cannot do what i'm supposed to do without stress because there's always deadlines one deadline after another another aspect of living in our civilization is that you get continuous deadlines for obscure reasons publishers say the book has to be out by such and such a date what why does it have to be out by such and such a day can't you wait until the book is mature and complete no no we have all the things i don't know what the justifications are but they always say it has to be out you need to hurry it's insane and so many things that our civilization produces are rushed rushed jobs one could say very rushed they're not fully matured decisions are taken before they even know fully whether that is all the facts that involve the decision they did on tv executives they put on a show and then they look at the what are the audience number the numbers and if it's not kind of no take it off take it off if they'd given it a chance it might have developed into something great or employees companies not doing well okay we have to sack a thousand people do it now but no there's no no spaciousness at all there's only rushed decision making all insane so to bring not to be part of that is essential your state of consciousness you need to it's not easy living in this world to say i'm not going to live in this way i will do what is required of me but i won't be part of the madness i'll do what i can i'll do it as well as i can but i'm not going to live the rest of my life in a state of stress you just give attention to whatever it is you're doing now and see if you can do it well not looking to the fruit of the action do it now reducing unnecessary activities but more important than that is reducing the unnecessary mind activity because really that's where the whole thing originates because the mind is becoming more and more active what is being projected is external activity so a hyperactive mind produces a hyperactive life what's the next thought what's the next thing really what's the next thought about what i have to do and the next thought and so you're rushing

after one thought after another trying to capture this and this and this so it goes back to the mind so it needs to be tackled on the inner level primarily rather than the outer if you do not come to grips with or bring awareness to your hyperactive mind there isn't that much you can do on the outer level because you will continuously be driven by the hyperactive mind into all kinds of activities many of them quite useless even useless even even people who have jobs hyper they're still doing many things that are quite unnecessary superfluous just hyperactive can't stop doing you have to stop doing you inability to just be so reducing the hyperactive mind slowing that down is of the essence that's the most important part of it and then that will then manifest in your active life so that they will the hyperactivity will not be there you will be actually more effective in what you do but you do fewer things but you do them better than countless things half done because you're always not not enough time to really do it well of course that's all mind mind and that's the dilemma is our whole civilization is in that dysfunctional state so to take yourself out of the dysfunctional state so to speak not not physically but internally is not easy it's a sort it's a challenge because you're surrounded by a certain state of consciousness the collective consciousness that you move in so it's your job to be awake enough so that you gain don't get drawn into that state of consciousness which really should be called state of unconsciousness the collective so that some sanity comes into this world through you and so that's the reduction of activity begins with the reduction of thought in your hyperactive mind and then automatically then that will flow into reduction of activity now we come to the second part that's to do with things or acquiring things as some people recommend you should get rid of as many things as possible in your life now i'm speaking as somebody who has relatively few things although i have more things now than i ever had before in my life and that's strange because usually it goes the other way when as you get older you gradually let go but life has so strange that now i have more material possessions although not vast amount but more than before i don't feel particularly attached to any one thing in other words if it disappeared it would be okay that's fine so it's not and i believe not everybody it's not for everybody to let go of things on the physical level it's not even necessary you need to examine what your inner relationship to the things that surround you is whether there is an identification with possessions or whether you simply appreciate something beautiful that is in your life without the attachment to it or the it giving you as an enhanced sense of self as it often is the case and you need to see whether you are whether there's some kind of acquisitive tendency in you that propels you to buy or acquire more and more and more or whether you're simply just happy with what is already there and simply appreciate what's there or do you compulsively go to the shopping malls every weekend and look for something to buy to fill up this emptiness you feel inside and just the action of buying something confirms that you are somebody to the ego it feels there's nothing wrong with buying you can buy something beautiful but not as an addictive thing as a compulsive thing so it's finding a right relationship with the external world not an addictive relationship but a free relationship the appreciation of nice things is it is not not something that is non-spiritual it's actually spiritual to

appreciate nice things whether you call the nice things mine or whether it's not yours for me sometimes it's enough well not anymore when i lived in london i would sometimes walk around the streets and look in shop windows and love in regent street or bond street and look at the nice things in the windows and wow that's beautiful i neither had the money nor the desire to buy these things but i loved i loved it now if i had had the money i might have bought an occasional thing so it would be nice to have that at home and look at it and feel its presence perhaps it was made with attention and care why not appreciate beautiful things the attachment is what keeps you unconscious so i happen to know your home and i know that you are surrounded by beautiful things so uh and i also believe that although you are surrounded by beautiful things you're you you don't have a enormous attachment to those things i can sense that there's a certain spaciousness there between you and that there's a simple appreciation of it and that is fine now if the time comes in your life where you feel from within the urge comes to leave even that behind although you may not be attached but you at some point in your life it is possible that you may feel now i want to live in totally simple surroundings i just want to not have things anymore at all that's if it comes that's fine and then you will take action you might remove yourself or you might give away all the beautiful things that fill up your house and just be in the empty relatively empty space who knows if that comes to you at some point that's fine too but primarily really is what your inner relationship is to the outer and so i'm right now i'm using certain concepts as signposts towards presence but you may notice especially if and many of you are already going through this awakening process you may notice in a way that you cannot explain as i mentioned these words there is a kind of recognition in you of what i'm talking about but you would not be able to perhaps explain it because as i talk about presence as a state of consciousness as i talk about it there's not only the words which are signposts that are pointing towards it but there's also underlying the words and in between the words there is already that state of presence and this is then the hidden dimension of our gathering here the hidden dimension of this gathering is deeper than words and this is why sometimes i slow down a bit it just happens so that you don't attach excessive importance or give excessive attention to the words they are helpful but don't be like somebody who collects signposts and has a wonderful collection let's say the signposts say rome or mecca and they point that way and say oh this is a beautiful signpost i'm going to keep this and talk about it then after a while you confuse the signpost with the destination so you don't become a collector of signposts because then you become intellectually very knowledgeable perhaps about spirituality but you're like the proverbial person who writes a phd about honey without ever having tasted honey so there is a there is a knowing the possibility in you of accessing and knowing that is non-conceptual and this is completely overlooked in our civilization almost completely because our civilization encourages the ability even already in young children to conceptualize and to to analyze and to think and be the teacher asked a question and the best students according to the educational system are those that immediately go huh i know that's that's it and then you begin to mistake names for the deeper reality of things it starts with something like when the child learns

language and the child asks the parent what's that the child is looking at a big something doesn't know yet what it is what's that and the dad or mom says that's an oak tree oh oak tree okay thanks dad and from then on whenever the child looks at that kind of tree he says oh that's an oak tree and you confuse the naming with what it is in many many cases when when you think you know it's only the illusion of knowledge because you've attached labels to things and the moment the mind attaches a label to a thing the mind says oh now i know dad how do birds find their way when they migrate every year from here to south america and how do they find their way back to their nesting grounds the following year how is that possible dad please tell me and the dad says oh that's easy instinct oh okay you've attached a label now you think you know how it works oh it's by instinct they find then the exam comes and right by instinct that birds find oh great we give it an a plus so part of this awakening of consciousness is to realize that there is a whole hidden until now or until recently there is a whole dimension of consciousness in you that you had been unaware of that you had always overlooked the whole dimension that actually our whole civilization is continuously encouraging you to overlook just don't look there and there are many ways in which we can approach talking about it but more importantly of course we are here to deepen our experience of that dimension and that dimension of consciousness which in spiritual traditions all the ancient teachers have pointed to it using different kinds of signposts which of course the collectors of signposts say no this signpost is totally different from that one look they're totally different writing on it and let's analyze it even more not realizing they point exactly the same way so the ancient teachings and teachers have spoken about it in various ways whether they talk about liberation awakening salvation or the buddha in negative terms the the end of suffering or another term the buddha used is emptiness which is not very inspiring as you might have noticed but it's very deep if the buddha says emptiness he's giving you a signpost that is very hard to to take and say i believe in this signpost because it's a negative term but he's pointing to a certain state of consciousness is pointing to a certain realization and he calls it emptiness very wise because this discourages people from worshiping the signpost you can worship the kingdom of heaven it's the term that jesus used by the way they talk about exactly the same thing as you'll see in about two minutes they talk about exactly the same thing but the buddha's one of the key terms in buddhism is sunyata which means empty translated as emptiness that's an interesting choice of signposts because you cannot worship or make an idol out of emptiness but you can make an idol out of the kingdom of heaven because then you can say or where is it it is somewhere probably up there and when am i going to get there so you create space and time and then the kingdom of heaven a certain location and you can you can even be becomes part of your your thought structure and you begin to worship the kingdom of heaven not realizing that it's a signpost so emptiness the buddhist term emptiness is closely related to the kingdom of heaven of jesus in churches you they won't explain it to you of course it's it's closely related my translation of emptiness is spaciousness and my translation of the kingdom of heaven is kingdom in modern terminology is dimension heaven is the vastness of the sky

this vastness of the sky the sky stands for spaciousness the dimension of spaciousness is the kingdom of heaven which is buddha's emptiness or spaciousness same same thing or the same no thing and what is this thing what is this dimension of spaciousness it is a dimension within you it is a dimension of consciousness that is possible for humans to access although in most humans it only exists in seed form as a potential not that many humans have actually even began to realize that that dimension exists in them except you and that's why you're here but that is the look that also you can practice it is the look that where you're not a person you're just a presence i've been looking at this folder it has questions in it people submit lots of questions so i will answer perhaps a few and from tomorrow we are open or i am open to receiving questions from you that arise spontaneously or that you've kept at the back of your mind for a long time wanting to ask and it still hasn't dissolved it's beautiful by the way if a question dissolves that you've had which means well you could still ask it but it's no longer of vital importance sometime in the 1930s a british writer went to india i believe his name was paul brunton he went to india to visit the living masters and interview them and then write a book about them and he did and one of the masters he visited was ramana maharshi at the time not known in the west at all and to limit only to a limited extent in india and so when he went in to see ramana maharshi with his list a long list of questions for his book and ramana maharshi just looked at him there are some photos around with ramana maharshi looking at you especially one that's very beautiful and so he just looks you can feel when he looks even on that photo he's not thinking whatsoever there's no thought whatsoever in his mind there's just spaciousness but but it's not not a look of a zombie it's it's presence spacious presence well you can have that now please just there's nobody there looking there's just consciousness nobody in particular just consciousness so it's not not a person looking and that's uh that's the energy transmission also happens in the way it cannot happen when a person is looking at you because that means the looking happens through the veil of conditioning that is the person mental emotional conditioning but here the looking is come straight from the depths of consciousness unconditioned consciousness so it's just the light looking so paul brunton came to see me into ramana maharshi's room and he just ramana hashi just looked at him and suddenly paul brunton had no no longer any desire to ask his questions and they sat in silence together for 20 minutes or 30 minutes i don't remember and then paul brunton thanked him and left the room that was the interview this happened again a few years later the famous british author somerset maugham visited india and he had probably read paul brunton's book that in the meantime had been published where he wrote very favorably about ramana maharshi who was the one teacher that impressed him most so somerset maugham came to experience the presence of this master probably to write about him because whatever somerset maugham did and whoever he met he would write about them later he continuously was collecting notes about making notes about people and just before ramana maharshi came into his room it was so hot there he fainted and they not sorry not ramana hashi somerset maugham fainted they carried him into a room to put him on a bed there to regain consciousness and then they told

ramana mahashi there's a famous british author who came to see you but he fainted and ramana mahashi said okay i'll go to where he is and when somerset maugham opened his eyes there was ramana mahashi sitting looking at him uh and again or no words were spoken except i remember correctly they looked at each other and then ramana mahashi said something like silence is the best speech and that was about it that was the meeting of the famous british author with the spiritual master and of course yes he did write a book and ramana mahashi appears as a character in that book and although he doesn't of course under a different name as a master and if you're interested the book is called the razor's edge the novel but that is the look that also you can practice it is the look that where you're not a person you're just a presence and when you look at a tree or the sky or a flower or another person if that's not too difficult if you look at them and there's no mind activity just just an underlying presence as the backdrop so to speak to your sense perception then at that moment you're not a person looking at the world you are consciousness looking ultimately at itself its own creations because everything is an is consciousness that has taken a particular form a temporary form there's only the one underlying all forms and in that looking there's not only the absence of the person there is also the presence of presence and that means whatever you are looking at you sense something that is deeper than the surface appearance of that thing that you are looking at in the case of a plant or a flower yes there is the surface beauty of the flower or the plant but there is also something that the eye cannot see and there is a beautiful quote that is by belief from a book called I think the little prince Saint-Exupéry said the author and there's a quote it says what is essential is invisible to the eye but what is essential is invisible to the eye the eye this eye uh this does not only refer to the visual sense it also refers to all the other senses so what is essential the essence of things of human beings of yourself of a tree of a dog the essence of the thing is you cannot see or perceive with the senses so if you only perceive through the conditioned mind as the person then all you ever see or perceive with the other senses is the surface never the essence of that life form so what is essential is invisible to the eye how can you become aware of that which is beyond the sense perception that the deeper dimension of things which for many humans alive now does not exist and the majority of scientists would probably there are maybe some exceptions but Einstein was an exception but the majority of scientists would probably deny that there is such a thing as a deeper dimension for things but there eventually they will come around if not this generation when this generation is dead the next one will come around so then you look at something at a tree a flower and that presence of presence through which you're looking recognizes something of itself in that which you're looking at and that is the dimension of depths and that is where you feel connected or a better word where you feel a that sense of oneness with that which you are looking at no longer the separation when you're looking through the conditioned mind as a person there's always a sense of separateness there's whatever you're looking at is the other there's always a sense of otherness and that sense of otherness is the absence of love in the deepest sense you cannot love the other in that state of consciousness you can try or you might convince

yourself for a while that it's working but it won't last so to sense something deeper with that is within that is the essence of that life form that is that adds a depth to all your perceptions it's no longer a surface reality everything has a depth to it and that depth in traditional spirituality is called sacredness and every human suffers every life form suffers because life is hard and challenging and precarious for every life form from the moment life comes into being life is challenging and precarious for humans for animals for plants every life form encounters obstacles in its attempt to grow and expand and it continuously encounters obstacles to its expansion every human in one form or another if you come into this world very quickly you'll find obstacles seeming obstacles to your expansion and growth and well-being and flowering i think you can all if you think about your so-called life how many obstacles life seems to have put in your path towards happiness and some people perceive life as life continuously is sabotaging my attempts to find happiness why is that and then they have these strange theories that god is against me or whatever the theory is but it does seem like and this is related to the buddhist term dukkha or suffering wherever you go you will find life is sometimes helpful and then obstacles again and all and this is perceived as some people believe if you only practice positive thinking continuously you will no longer encounter obstacles but that unfortunately is not the case positive thinking is a great thing can be extremely helpful and bring about certain shifts in you but it does not free you from experiencing the obstacles that life will put on you in your path and the challenges that come so those obstacles whether they come in the form of loss or illness or relationship problems many of them arise from their own mind because your mind creates an enormous amount of problems that are quite unnecessary but the mind doesn't know that so the mind creates an enormous amount of conflict that is unnecessary in your life that's one kind of obstacle is your own mind then and again you are you need to experience the consequences of the obstacles that your own mind creates the conflicts and the unnecessary problems that your own mind because you identified with the mind creates you need to experience the suffering that you create for yourself out of that unconsciousness of unconsciousness means completely identifying with the mind the egoic mind which in many cases transforms challenges which could be solved easily into much bigger problems so you have the your mind created obstacles that you ultimately create yourself because you're not conscious enough and then you encounter suffering this is one level of suffering and this is you need to experience the suffering that comes through unconscious use of the mind in order to awaken it's only through the suffering that eventually you go can't take anymore as it happened to me when i was in bed one night and said i can't live with myself anymore and it's and then somehow i realized this myself that i couldn't live with anymore was an illusion an illusory entity and very unhappy mind created entity but before i realized that i had to go through this suffering for years and years so the suffering worked it fulfilled its purpose and then you have another level of suffering or obstacles obstacles come to you seemingly from the outside that suddenly you have an accident an illness that's a kind of outside it something seems to happen to you that you have not contributed to something happens somebody close

to you dies as an accident many things can happen but you seem i haven't created that of course in new age it's very normal to say when things go wrong in your life the typical new age person will say how did you create that you slipped on a banana skin and broke your leg why did you create that how did you create that it's an interesting question i don't want to go into this whether even those obstacles or challenges that come to you not seemingly not from your own mind but from the outside did you still create that or not let's leave that aside i don't want to convince anybody one way or another i have a much more simple recipe here which goes like this instead of telling people you better look at your life and see why you created that or how you created that i say accept each moment as if you had created it accept each moment as if you had wanted it or caused it wanted it to happen i can't remember my own writings it's always not good to go into memory don't quote just present moment so but if you live whatever happens you accept this moment as if you had chosen that's the one i wrote accept accept each moment as if you had chosen it no that's a good recipe for working because if it already is the case you might as well accept whatever is as if you have chosen it because it's already here so i'm not telling people you chose it maybe you did maybe you didn't doesn't matter it still accept it as if you had chosen it that shifts things that your whole attitude to it shifts and it dissolves more quickly than whatever the obstacle is but let's go back to the suffering the first the suffering that arises from your own mind creates conflict and all those things that create suffering and then at some point you awaken and then what remains is the suffering that comes with having a body for example because eventually the body gets older no matter how much you go to the gym every day no matter how fantastic your nutrition is no matter how many pills for the longer life you take which is all fine and good but of course every form eventually dissolves and the time comes when the body can be perceived as a burden almost the older you get the more likely it is to happen and so of course you might then say old age isn't so bad if you consider the alternative which is you die younger and then you don't have to experience the body getting fragile and old but if you get old the body can become problematic a source of suffering potentially but the those challenges if approached correctly don't have to turn into suffering accept each moment as if you had chosen it if you can go with the isness of things there's no complaining entity that says something about being a victim and complaining how dreadful things are now i wish my mother had learned that lesson when she suffered in that way because she had always identified very much with her body good looking always nicely dressed going out and liked to be looked at very normal thing for many people and then the body got older and older and then hip problems and other fractures and this and got worse and worse and their unhappiness grow and grow not so much of limited movement but the identity that's so much was in the body that those tremendous suffering i tried to free her and occasionally there were moments when she could disidentify from body but very very brief and that is the destiny of many humans but this the suffering is really that every end every life form encounters the obstacles that every life form encounters whether they come in young at a younger age older age middle age in whatever form so these things are absolutely

necessary without which there would be no human evolution whatsoever and no life form would ever evolve if the life form did not encounter obstacles so that which looks like an obstacle is actually always potentially an opening potentially it that seems to stop your progress in life always potentially can make you more conscious so you can use every obstacle that arises in your life if you can especially works especially quickly if you accept each moment as if you had chosen it and when it looks this moment is an obstacle you go with it instead of complaining or running away from it and then accept and then act if action is possible or don't act if no action is possible you identify with thinking and the identification with thinking becomes ego and there are many people in this world who are stuck with hostile life denying continuously critical and attacking entities that they carry in their head and they believe that is who they are to become free of ego means becoming free of thought identification with thought that's the end of the ego welcome to our live meditation i'm in denmark today we are only interested in one thing here for our live meditation and that is to sit together not physically together but nevertheless together in presence thinking is not important here as much as possible let go of thinking without any effort and realize that you are more fully yourself when you're not thinking and when you're not thinking you can realize what being is what it means to be and you can sense the being that you are which can be expressed as the first person singular of the verb to be i am so you sense or you are the presence prior to thinking the clear space of presence that's why we're here to be that to realize that we are that i don't think as i sit here the words just come out of the stillness there's no thinking prior to the words and as soon as a word has been uttered there's just presence or stillness so you can join me in that as i don't need to think you don't need to think right now but just be present the great teacher ramana maharshi who taught during the first half of the 20th century in india was once asked by a visitor to his ashram this question how do i know whether i'm making progress on the spiritual path and he said the degree of absence of thought is the only true criterion for your progress on the spiritual path the extent in other words to which you are free of thought in daily life you are still able to use thought whenever it's needed perfectly more efficiently than before more creatively because you have access to the unconditioned intelligence itself which is presence how long you can sit in meditation formal meditation is not a good criterion for progress on the spiritual path but to what extent presence comes into your daily life which initially may just mean little moments of presence in between all the doings of your life little moments of being awareness alertness alert stillness conscious consciously looking at something consciously listening consciously walking across the room consciously washing your hands which does not mean when you walk across the room you're thinking i am now crossing the room or when you look at something i'm now looking at that tree that you're not present yet it can be an intermediate step but the actual presence is when there's no background commentary and when there's virtually no background commentary throughout your life that is the awakened state there may still be fragments of thoughts saying this or that but basically or fundamentally free of the involuntary compulsive background commentary in your daily life that's an enormous

evolutionary leap to live like that but you don't need to have that as some aim i want to be totally free just be free of background commentary now it's easier than to say throughout my life i want to be free of that or just do it now renounce unnecessary thinking be present instead then the ego diminishes and eventually cannot survive in you when you are present people have practiced traditionally all kinds of renunciations in spiritual life in christianity and buddhism and hinduism and so on and they're still being practiced in many cultures to some extent renunciation of possessions renunciation of your name let go of your old name adopt a new spiritual name renunciation of physical comforts exposing the body to discomfort but all these can be helpful but if the most basic renunciation is not known then the most basic attachment will still be there and that's attachment to your thoughts you haven't renounced unnecessary thinking setting aside a period for being present is traditionally called meditation so you could say that that's what we are doing here although we're not really doing anything all we are doing which is not a doing is realizing our presence realizing presence right now in different parts of the planet little points of consciousness waking up where before there was only a person there's no conscious presence arising in different parts of the planet at the same time and this of course has no form and there's no time past and future become irrelevant in presence and that's an amazing realization that who you essentially are a feeling of identity of essential identity does not need the future to complete itself it is already complete it does not need the past so you don't need past to know who you are that's a delusion that's a story you don't need future to finally arrive at some more complete version of yourself because presence is already complete you are already complete in presence one could say presence is the cream and whatever happens in time and whatever happens in future to you is the skimmed milk but once you know the cream and have the cream and skimmed milk is not that important anymore so as more presence arises you lose the fear of death which of course arises because you unconsciously think you need more time to be fully yourself of course the truth is you need to get out of time to be fully yourself so we are here relaxed and alert at the same time alertness does not require tension and to be free of tension does not mean that you're going towards sleep and at this moment who are you with no reference to your story the space of presence not a person you still look like a person from the outside so with this shift the person recedes and presence arises you don't lose anything real in this and what about my personal identity i don't want to lose that if you look more deeply at the bottom of what you feel is your personal identity there's the fact that right now you are conscious that's the foundation of what you sense and call your personal identity it's consciousness is your personal identity it gives light to the story of who you are which consists of thoughts and past past is thoughts the consciousness is the light behind your story and without it there would be nothing let's close our eyes for a moment and just continue to be present without any visual perception if thoughts interfere take your attention into the inner body feel the aliveness inside the body be present with every cell of the body presence of course transcends the body but it shines through the form open your eyes look around the room wherever you are and stay

present be the awareness behind the perceptions innocent fresh perception alert perception and back at the screen as we finish our meditation you may want to sit a little longer in the stillness and when you then start moving again start doing things carry that presence as much as possible with you as i don't have my bell with me i will now simulate the bell as best i can

[Speaker 7] (7:58:32 - 7:58:54)

i think once is enough thank you

[Speaker 1] (7:59:23 - 8:06:55)

there was a man that many of you have heard of some of you read some of the teachings socrates he lived two thousand roughly two thousand five two thousand four hundred years ago in greece he never wrote anything his disciples later wrote down what they remembered and its main disciple was plato and plato then wrote the socratic dialogues uh we don't know of course whether what plato wrote was exactly what socrates taught in a way what plato wrote in plato's writing socrates is a literary character so the characteristic of platonic dialogues is that socrates asks questions his people who come to him for teaching he doesn't seem to immediately have the answer he asks questions and then the person answers and he gradually leads the person to the answer now in the dialogues which some of you may have read some of them not perhaps many people these days read plato the in the dialogues it the impression is given that socrates kind of manipulates a little bit the people who come to him and the impression is given that he already knows the answer he just pretends not to know the answer that's what comes across in the dialogues and i think that was that is the the character that plato created but i have i believe and i have evidence for this belief that that's not actually what happened i believe and i'll tell you in a minute why that plato actually started every teaching session from a place of not knowing the answer and so unlike the impression we get if you read if you read the platonic dialogues that he already knows he's just pretending not to know no how do i know this plato said i'm sorry socrates said they call me the wisest of all men and the reason why they call me the wisest of all men is that i'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing so and again when we read it retrospectively after having read the platonic dialogues we think oh he's just again some kind of affectation he's saying i i know nothing no i believe that is his genuine starting point was the ability to go into that state of not knowing rather than coming from already having accumulated knowledge just waiting to come out of his head and this is why his uh he was able to think creatively he actually taught you one could say almost he taught humanity how to think for the first time to think rationally but his thinking is creative it's fresh and new and it it was a process between him and the people who came to him there was an energy field that arose and out of this energy field the answers came sometimes they came through him sometimes they came through the people who came to him another interesting thing he said that's not reported in plato but

written by another disciple of his called xenophone and he said that socrates frequently pointed out that he received counsel from a divine voice and again that's something that the western rationalists try to ignore they to them plato is the absolutely clear rational analytical conceptual thinker and they don't see because they don't know that dimension within themselves they don't see the depths out of which his thinking actually came so he said frequently as reported by xenophone that he received guidance from a divine voice socrates is not in the sense one doesn't get the sense that some entity spoke through him but obviously he was referring to inspiration from a dimension within him that was beyond thinking beyond conceptualization beyond the rational thought so what we the impression we get of socrates is really we see half the story we see only the upper half of the iceberg well the iceberg actually is you see far less than half of it you see only a tiny fraction of him that was when we when these things are taught at universities and so on the the more important dimension is actually completely missed they only look at the upper what's he taught what's he saying but where did all that come from what was the state of consciousness out of which such a creative teaching such creative thinking could arise and so it is that most these dimensions the dimension of conceptualization of thinking is in everyone but the dimension of non-conceptual intelligence is also in everyone this mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation

[Speaker 2] (8:07:28 - 8:18:25)

you know when i was a little girl i don't know what it is is i mean i do notice this in all in in most asian people that if they're not smiling they just look sad so when i was a kid you know and if i wasn't smiling they always say why do you look so sad and i'm like i don't think i'm sad you know smile smile you got such a pretty smile smile so i learned to hi even when i'm really sad i'll go hi hi hi yeah i'm fine you know we we take on these roles because people may have said something i mean i you know i did it and then i when i take on that role i actually lose that authentic self of of me that okay i might be this person that you know just looks sad but i'm not sad i mean you know it's i was trying to please somebody else make somebody else comfortable because they told me that it wasn't nice they didn't they weren't feeling good because i looked the way that i looked which appeared to them in their mind and interpretation that i was sad so i learned to keep smiling you know it's easy to do but it can be very exhausting if you hang around with a bunch of people all the time because i think i have to be like this that's why i don't hang around with anybody no i mean wow we just got to be ourselves and you know somebody told me i i was in a a body worker in california and we often just share and we talk because we really love talking with each other and and she told me this this story this man who used to come to her he was a very old gentleman and seeing that he was old she asked him wow you've lived so many years what what great wisdom can you share with me and he said don't believe in it what anybody says so it's not only don't

believe what they say don't believe what your own mind says and don't believe the mask they wear you'll know something when it's just genuine because something in your body just melts you just feel it and when that melts because they're melted and then you melt you go oh wow this is nice it's not like this great excitement that happens it's just a nice feeling it's kind of like oh okay this is nice this is comfortable so in my uh on my retreats that i do sometimes i'll do an experiment with with the group and it's a smaller group than this so we can do a lot more experiments and stuff exercises but i will have them talk to each other just you know somebody that they don't know go up to them and just have a conversation with them right away it'll start off and that gets louder and louder and louder and louder and you just know that vibration of that energy is coming strictly from the mind that's how they're meeting each other and communicating is through the mind and then i'll go okay let's stop before you talk i want you to go into your body feel your body and then if you can access stillness access stillness go into stillness so feel your body and then speak from there so it's quiet for a moment because they feel their body and then suddenly they speak and there's a level there it doesn't rise like it's not like before you know where it was just like so loud it can get so loud and they're speaking from a different place and i love i did a retreat a couple of weeks ago at hollyhock and then i had you know the person share like well what was different from them for them and they said i just felt like as if i was raw because they were just being them there's themselves we are raw we come we're vulnerable and it was wonderful for her and at the same time it was very strange because it's unfamiliar we've forgotten that familiarity of how vulnerable and how raw and how open and how exposed we can be because we're so used to hiding ourself protecting ourselves and this has become our habit is the protection of ourself but who are we really protecting we're protecting that ego identity because what is there to protect of your soul of consciousness nothing because that soul that consciousness is that open space or that all consuming love the love that has no opposites or the peace that passes all understanding it's who we are really in reality the other thing that comes and goes the body the mind the ego that's all illusion it's all impermanent it's not who we are but when we attach ourselves to that and only live from that place you're living out of your shadow self you've covered that light that you are here because it went and this is where then you talk you act and you think you're being yourself but you're not and what i've observed most human beings are not themselves it does take an vulnerability a willingness to be vulnerable a willingness to be exposed a willingness to be raw and open just to be this but every time that you believe that you are this then it's like you become sensitive to that and think oh i might get hurt so it's easier to cover myself yeah you might get hurt yeah humans hurt each other let me just look at last half of the century i mean we hurt each other all the time all the time but when you know that you are the consciousness that's why i was saying ultimately there is no one to forgive because when you know that you are a consciousness the other is consciousness too and that is just the ego the illusion of it so that's why there's no one to forgive but most of us you're not in that place so you're not in that place you need to you kind of need to merge these two places together and have that your ego

your mind to understand that to tell the truth and when you live in that truth it does open up that space there because there is this too just because it's an illusion doesn't mean that it's not there because it is there it's like that i don't know it was some sort of uh zen story where the student would say well if all this is if our body is an illusion then you know why why bother you know with it and i don't know i can't even remember but then the master just hits him with a stick and he goes oh and he goes when the master goes well if you said your body's an illusion why does it hurt so we do feel why separate ourselves from that because when we are in the very essence of your soul and you know that the the consciousness is you are that consciousness then you're more mindful because you know how sensitive this body is how sensitive the mind is and how you know just vulnerable it can be so we just kind of hold that we hold ourselves in that without that attachment because we know that there is this body here and then we speak from a different place we don't just go right into the mind and start talking so that's your your homework during lunch is to before you speak go into your body

[Speaker 1] (8:18:49 - 9:49:45)

welcome to our christmas meditation lots of people are joining us today from all over the world let's start with a moment of silence and so we can be aware of our breathing breathing consciously in and out i was reading the other day about something that happened at christmas in the year 1914 in the middle of the first world war when the soldiers i believe it was in france or belgium the soldiers were in their trenches french german british soldiers and then on christmas eve the fighting spontaneously stopped and the soldiers could hear on the opposing trenches singing of a christmas song that everybody recognized and that song was silent night holy night and gradually they came out of their trenches and in the area between the trenches so-called no man's land they shook hands started talking to each other exchanged gifts of food and other little items and they sang together that song silent night holy night each in their respective languages they talked to each other showed each other photos of their families and that became known as the christmas truce of 1914 somebody even wrote a book about it and then the superiors the officers the command in the command centers were informed that this was happening and they said oh we must put a stop to this fighting must resume as soon as possible and of course a few hours later or the next morning the craziness the insanity continued and in a way that event that happened spontaneously the instantaneous arising of ultimately is what is only sanity between human beings that seems almost miraculous and the insanity seems almost normal so if you believe that our present political discourse not only in the united states but also in other countries in europe if you believe that's crazy then of course just think back to the first half of the 20th century and the insanity of all that so that moment and that song which triggered it that that christmas songs holy night silent night brought about a shift in consciousness it didn't last and that's an interesting song to me that song embodies something that transcends anything cultural or anything belonging to any particular religion it

transcends all that because the song silent night really embodies the essence of spirituality which is inner stillness it was composed in the early 19th century by an was the lyrics were written by an austrian priest in a village in the mountains in austria he had written these lyrics a year before and then christmas eve arrived and he had to present a piece of music in the evening service in the church so he had the lyrics and then he went to the schoolmaster of that village i believe he was and he in the last few hours before this the church service composed the music to it and then that evening they both performed it together in the church and then it's gradually over the years it spread all over the world because human beings recognized something in that that went beyond any particular culture or even religion although the words point to something specifically christian the birth of jesus the spirit that this song embodies goes beyond that it transcends all that it goes very deep and so it was actually declared by unesco uh as something i don't know what the official designation was world an intangible world heritage so in many ways christmas of course has degenerated into consumerism and so on although there's nothing wrong with buying gifts and giving gifts that's a beautiful thing but it it has degenerated into that so it's important to rediscover the essence of it in the english language christmas in english-speaking countries many people don't use about christmas anymore they call it holidays the intention behind it i suppose is to not to exclude people who are not christian and i can see the reasoning behind that but there is something there that is of great value and somehow to me the word word holiday does not although originally that word is also beautiful because it refers to a holy day but it's been used in so many other contexts that it no longer really has that cat doesn't no longer does not carry that sense anymore of holy but christmas still has the christ in it and that's a very interesting word christ in english it's pronounced when it's only in its by itself it's of course pronounced christ christ it's usually associated with jesus of course but we need to remember that jesus christ was not his name jesus or yoshua was his name christ is a title that was given to him later in the same way that buddha was not a name it was a title given to somebody and buddha means the awakened one and christ means literally the anointed one which it refers to anointing with sacred oil which a holy person you could do that to a holy person you you would pour sacred oil over them it's the anointing that is a literal meaning but i believe there is a deeper meaning behind that word and i also believe it's no coincidence that christ or christ christ and krishna the deity one could say in hinduism very important the most important figure in the hindu tradition those names are so uncannily similar christ christ comes from the latin christus which comes from the greek christos and then we have krishna christos krishna is that just a coincidence or are they etymologically related i believe they are and if it's just a coincidence it's a very interesting coincidence with the deeper meaning because what that christ refers to in its esoteric sense is a particular state of consciousness in mystical christianity that's called christ consciousness and in some traditions even the term krishna consciousness is used and a similar term in buddhism is called buddha nature it refers all these refer to a particular state of consciousness that is possible for humans to realize not to achieve to attain to acquire

but to realize why am i making that distinction because that state of conscious is not something that is not already here that consciousness which we could call the awakened consciousness christ consciousness buddha nature is a potential that's already there dormant in many humans but already there so you don't need to acquire it or go somewhere else or find it in the future it's a realization that within you there is a deeper state of consciousness than the one that you experience mostly in everyday life and that's the realization of in mystical christianity it's called the realization of the christ within in buddhism it's the realization of your own buddha nature which is your deepest sense of identity of being so you are on the one hand a person or a personality and the kind of personality that you are is determined by your past all the things that have contributed to the arising of that particular personality or person and beyond this person which consists of mainly of mental and emotional conditioning beyond that you are something deeper and jesus pointed to that in his teachings when he said to his disciples you are the light of the world and somewhere else jesus also said i am the light of the world i believe the i am the light of the world is in the gospel of john you are the light of the world is in one of the other gospels in other words the essence of who i am is also the essence of who you are the difference between us this is the implication the difference between us is only that i know i realize the essence of who i am and you have not yet realized it that's the only difference and therefore jesus also said all the things that i do and greater things you will also do so ultimately we are one the essence of who we are jesus said is the same you just have to recognize or realize that essence within you but how do you do that now i could use examples from buddhism or examples from christianity that point to the possibility of realizing that dimension within you let's let's look just at one one saying of jesus again because this is christmas our christmas meditation jesus talks about the kingdom of heaven that's perhaps the very foundation of his teaching seek and find the kingdom of heaven which is within you that's the foundation some people believe that love your neighbor as yourself is the foundation but i would suggest to you that that is not the foundation because that cannot be a starting point it is pointless to tell anybody who has not realized the essence within themselves to love their neighbor as themselves they won't be able to do it not for long because if they have not recognized their own essence they cannot recognize the essence in the other and realize that who i am in the essence of my being is one with who you are in the essence of your being and when i realize that then i love the other as myself but i cannot tell somebody you must love the other as yourself they live totally trapped in the mental emotional conditioning of their personality or their ego they may want genuinely want to be a better human being and try to love the other but they will always fail again and again so the foundation is finding the kingdom of heaven that is within you and then as a consequence of that you will love the other as yourself in other words it'll change your relationship with other human beings there will be a goodwill a benevolence coming into your interactions with other human beings your interactions with other human beings will no longer be dysfunctional the dysfunction that we see on every level not only when we listen to the news but in our personal lives in every level personal to

collective within nations and between nations so what is this the kingdom of heaven that is within you what does that mean of course they read it in the churches have been reading it for a long time and mostly it's been misinterpreted although jesus clearly said it is within you christians traditionally have believed that it is somewhere else it's going to come when you when you die you will enter the kingdom of heaven or it's come at the end of times or the kingdom of heaven and so on disregarding what he said about don't look for it here or there you can't say oh there it is or here it's over there that's what he said it is here now these are old words kingdom of heaven especially kingdom so i want to offer you a fresh translation of that so that it becomes more effective as a pointer towards that state of consciousness because it is pointing to something that is within you kingdom there are not that many kingdoms left these days it's no longer a word it's really alive within us and so what did he mean when he used the term kingdom i suggest dimension it is speaking of a particular dimension of consciousness a dimension of consciousness that is different from your usual dimension of consciousness what is heaven heaven is up there in many languages heaven and sky are the same word in in german in spanish in french heaven and sky are the same word so there in those languages jesus said the kingdom of the sky c l c l o himmel and so on so what is what what is that heaven or sky you look up what do you see now heaven or sky is not something that is a particular object it's it's all over when you look at it it's vast spaciousness so jesus used a something in the sense perceived world that was closest to that what he was talking about in the nonsense perceived world and the closest he could find was the vast spaciousness of the sky he was pointing here to an inner dimension of consciousness the inner dimension of space or spaciousness because that is the sky the sky is not something nobody can touch it nobody can even reach it if you wanted to if you go up in a rocket you will never find the sky you can never say oh here's the sky clouds yes but not sky if you go up in a rocket suddenly you find yourself in outer space and you say oh where was the sky so the sky is and isn't it exists and it doesn't exist so it's a very uh good choice for pointing to something that is totally intangible that is within you so what he was pointing to is the dimension of spaciousness the dimension of spaciousness or space that is within you now where is that now you may have noticed that your mind most of the time talks in your head not always out aloud but in the same way that a person walking in the street who is maybe mentally unbalanced talk to talk aloud to themselves all the time and you say oh this guy is crazy you need he or she they talk but almost every human being does it all the time except that they don't do it out aloud there is the voice in the head that continuously speaks and comments and complains more often than not uh has negative things to talk about internally the self talk in the head and for most people that goes on and on as long as they awake in daily life the voice never stops for many people that voice is a torture because it's it's so negative that it it makes their life miserable they don't realize that they think the situations they find themselves in and the people they interact with and whatever they are doing but don't want to be doing that all these things cause them their misery they don't realize that the greater part of their misery is caused by what their mind is saying

and the emotions that reflect what their mind is saying how bad this is how bad that is the complaining the accusing the blaming the the regret the resentments the guilt they're all connected with unconscious thinking the compulsive thinking the voice in the head so there is a lack of inner spaciousness the mind is cluttered full like a room full of furniture most of it useless the mind is a beautiful instrument if it's used in a focused and constructive way of course it's the ability to think is wonderful to use thought is a incredible thing it's an evolutionary attainment but most people don't use thought they are used by thought they are possessed by the unconscious mind activity they can't do anything about it there's a lack of spaciousness and that spaciousness is exactly that dimension of consciousness that jesus points to the inner spaciousness the dimension of spaciousness how how do you find it it's always there but it's usually covered up by the incessant noise of the mind so what we are talking about here goes back to that christmas song what we are talking about here is inner stillness for example in the gap between two thoughts for example in this moment in order to be conscious at this moment do you need to think being aware of the weather the various ways in which the weather manifests in the present moment is also a way of bringing you into the now to feel the breeze of the air on your skin for example listen to the sounds of rain or the wind in the trees and one of my favorite my favorites is watching the sky the continuously changing paintings abstract paintings that appear in the sky the air breathing in the air the sense the smells of nature and taking in the entire energy field that surrounds you now where i'm sitting there's not much nature in this room it's a little studio but that's okay if you go within you encounter your own nature your own essential nature i believe it was ralph baldo emerson the american writer spiritual writer 19th century who said something like the wick of individual life runs deep into the oil of pure being that's an interesting analogy and quite a powerful one the wick if english is not your native language and you happen not to know what wick is wick is the string that is in the candle that you light that draws up the wax so it's a string in an oil lamp and you light the wick that sticks out of the oil and you light it then as a flame the wick draws up the oil that oil is then consumed by the flame so that's the wick and in this analogy he said the wick of individual life your individual life runs deep into the oil of pure being so that means there is a great depth within you and your individual consciousness derives its sustenance from the greater universal consciousness is only a manifestation or an emanation of the greater one consciousness that you also are that you are more fundamentally than the individual the wick that's burning on the surface you are a surface phenomenon on the level of your physical body and the sense perceived all the sense perceived aspects of yourself and even your thinking although your thinking is already already exists in the realm of invisibility nobody has ever seen a thought you cannot see a thought you cannot perceive it with your senses and yet even thinking is a relatively superficial or surface phenomenon it belongs to the dimension of your individual form but there could be no thinking and there could be no sense perception if you were not connected to something deeper which is consciousness so you are an an emanation of something very profound very deep that connects you with the totality of the universe now the important

thing is to to realize the truth of this directly which means to sense that depth in you here and now so that in addition to knowing yourself as an individual person in the analogy that emerson used that's the wick in addition to knowing yourself as an individual person surrounded by many other individual persons and life forms in addition to that you are aware of a deeper dimension within yourself and when i say you are aware of it may not be totally correct because the awareness when you become aware of your own awareness when you become aware of the fact that you are conscious right now and you can only become aware of that if for a moment there's no thinking and yet you have not fallen asleep for a moment there's a cessation of thinking like now and what do you need to think about now nothing for a moment there's no thinking in that moment there's a stillness an alert stillness that is the awareness of who you are beyond your individual form that is the beginning of the the pure being that emerson speaks of it's not that difficult especially here right here and now where you're not being disturbed hopefully by all the demands that the world normally places upon you it's not that difficult here now to have these brief moments and perhaps even longer moments when you are aware of an inner alert stillness cessation of thinking what remains is consciousness prior to thought consciousness before it becomes a thought and that i sometimes describe as the deep eye as opposed to the surface i'm not talking about this eye because that's also an interesting analogy but i'm talking about the first person singular i pronoun pronoun pronoun the deep eye is that being the i am awareness of the i amness beingness the surface i that you normally identify with and that normally when you use the word i in every day usage you refer to the surface i your personality your past the person that you are the bundle of thoughts and emotions that form make up the personality that's the surface i and in the absence of thought activity the surface i subsides and if you have not fallen below thought and towards sleep but have risen above thought then there is an alert stillness not a tired stillness that is the essence of who you are that is the unconditioned consciousness and it's so close it's not that difficult to experience to realize this alive depth in you where the personality is transcended although you still have you still have or you still are for a while of course also the the surface self is still there and most likely you will again and again become completely identified with the surface surface self which is a normal human consciousness the normal unawakened consciousness the normal fairly dysfunctional consciousness and dysfunctional because it doesn't know its own depth it doesn't know the root you're in other words dysfunction because you're out of touch with yourself yourself meaning the deep i the unconditioned consciousness you cannot sense that in the background even while you are acting in this world as a person you can still this is the the aim of awakening means if you are awakened first you have glimpses of awakening but you can sense yourself as this deep i that's fine and then the glimpses are a little longer and then you may find gradually in your everyday life you can live from that deeper place that changes the way in which you think habitual thoughts are still there but a greater a deeper intelligence flows into your mind your thinking becomes creative more creative more alive less dysfunctional doesn't create suffering anymore

for yourself and others because otherwise your thinking creates an enormous amount of suffering unhappiness this is still the case for millions of humans on the planet so the deepest meaning of shakespeare's words is to your own self be true the deepest meaning of that is to be in touch with that pure being which is the unconditioned consciousness which is your true being your true self it is no longer a separate self it connects you to the totality so this frees you from the prison of your personality if you are not aware of that deeper dimension to who you are you are trapped on the surface level of who you are constantly looking for an enhanced sense of identity on the surface level where no true and ultimately satisfying sense of identity can ever be found welcome to our meditation we start with the surface of now which is whatever we perceive at this moment whatever you perceive whatever i perceive really it's the the i so you perceive this person talking you hear the voice there's the totality of the room there's the ever-present noises the ceiling and the walls all part of the totality of your visual perception so there's a totality of sensory perception that's the actually call it the surface of the now or you can call it the outside of now and then you're also aware of yourself breathing and you may be aware of the energy inside the body so we are gradually moving from the outside to the inside and if you allow the outside to be as it is although there's nothing special here in this room it is it's quite nice it has its own beauty sounds are quite nice if you allow them to be imagine it's the om sound and now comes the really important part you're aware of yourself as the perceiver of all these things you're not aware of yourself right now you're aware of the the personal self because at this moment let's use this word i hope that you are not thinking about your personal history right now or the problems you've had in the future in the past or might have in the future so when i say you're aware of yourself it's not your way of yourself in the usual way because when you usually say you're aware of yourself you're aware of the story of yourself you and your life you and your position in the world you and other people and so on no more simple now in our meditation you're aware of yourself not as a person with a history but a deeper level of self and i'm begin by calling it the perceiver of whatever it is that arises in your perception auditory visual feeling sensing so but who is it that is perceiving this not the person because the person is a story the story is not perceiving this so for a moment let's not call it anything but be aware of the simple fact that you are perceiving this but you don't know what that is that i that is perceiving but there's no doubt that that is there and even if what you are perceiving is a dream perhaps it is it certainly has a lot in common with the dream because the dream evaporates very quickly it doesn't last many philosophers have discussed whether human existence is a dream we don't need to go there can say it might be but even if it is it's all not real as some people say there is something in which the dream appears the dream is being experienced one could say there's a light in which the forms appear and you are that and there's no doubt that if it's a dream it's happening if it's all unreal at least that unreality is happening in that light of awareness because without that awareness there would be no sense perception there would be no room there would be no voice or somebody listening to the voice so that's the one thing that cannot be

doubted everything else you can doubt whether it's actually real and that awareness is formless it doesn't have a history because your entire history appears in it when you remember it in that awareness and when things happened that once happened they happened in the present moment in the light of awareness and you can only remember it as the awareness now so i'm now asking you although you continue to be aware of sense perceptions to simply acknowledge the fact that you are aware and even that is not perhaps putting it rightly to acknowledge the fact that there is awareness in other words you are aware that you are aware you are conscious of being conscious it sounds a little strange but it's an amazing thing it also sounds if there were a duality here i am conscious of being conscious the subject i but that only appears in language in fact when you are conscious of being conscious and that's a it's a it's a strange thing just and you can't you can't say much about it it just has no form and no shape it's totally elusive and yet all pervasive can you feel the fact that you are conscious or rather that you are consciousness and that's an to to sense yourself as that and still be able to perceive all this and you have long since left compulsive labeling behind when you are aware of yourself as consciousness and then perceive as consciousness labeling things mentally doesn't come in anymore there's just consciousness and forms arising and subsiding in consciousness arising they some forms stay for a while this room stays as long as you sit here this room arises in consciousness and then you leave and it subsides but the voice the words arise in consciousness and subside arise subside you could call consciousness the the eternal gap behind everything the gap in between everything the space behind everything whatever you want to call it these are just pointers and there is a an intense frequency that arises in you when you become aware of consciousness it makes the personal self fade out it burns up the karmic accumulations in you old stuff from the past pain body old mind patterns and your entire being is vibrating at a higher frequency that's the only way i can put it but the words may not be absolutely right but that's how i sense it in you and that is inherently joyful and energizing to sense this essence in yourself we are learning here not to have it as a very short-lived glimpse but to be able to stay there and every moment you stay in that the old gets burned up in you and you connect with intelligence not the iq intelligence that you measure in iq tests that's a very limited form of intelligence creative intelligence i talk about this does not mean that you or i this moment will come up with the solution to the problem that einstein couldn't solve the unified field theory or whatever it was nor does it mean that suddenly i can paint a masterpiece or compose an exquisite piece of music because i have these are not vehicles that have been prepared in this body for this by this body but this intelligence can flow into something if you there is a vehicle in your life it can flow into that transform it and make it absolutely creative and even that is no more than a bonus for some people it may be enough to walk around the planet for the rest of their life in this form as peaceful intensely alive beings that are astonished at the beauty of all things and bring that vibration of peace that comes with the awareness of pure consciousness whoever they meet it's a little whiff of that and for some humans that's enough and they fulfill their purpose here others may create some more elaborate forms

but empowered by not the ego but by the greater intelligence it creates it can flow into the human mind and body and create through the human form let's come back to the simple secret be conscious that you are conscious feel the awareness as your essence and you will notice it's very still the awareness is still still i compare it sometimes to space i call it inner space or space consciousness it has no extension it is vast but not like the outer space that you see you don't see it but that is there when you look at the sky at night the vastness of space is only a reflection in the external of who you are in the essence of your being and that's the awe-inspiring thing when you look at this starry sky at night the absolutely awe-inspiring thing that if you're really looking will really shut up your mind immediately because it's so astonishing that was my first meditation when i was in my teens i had no idea it was meditation lying on the deck of our we lived on the top floor there was a little terrace it was in the south of spain where there were beautiful skies at night there was no thought i had no idea that was going on then i just it was so deeply enjoyable the awe-inspiring thing is not the countless countless suns that you see which are stars but the vastness of it the nothingness that makes it all possible the vastness of space unimaginable infinity and there too that can put you in touch with the vastness within you just looking at that and space again is very similar the outer space is very similar to inner space because both of them don't really exist because as i mentioned earlier existence means to stand out but space is you can't say oh here's space all you can ever be aware of is things in space and again in yourself you can't say here is the essence of who i am you cannot be aware of it as an object all objects are things forms that arise in this place why can't you be aware of space because you are it you cannot separate from it and look at it as an object it is the formless i the i am that i am the most profound statement in the entire bible which is of course a mixed bag of all kinds of writings but there are some deep insights if you know how to find them when god is asked what's your name god says i am that i am that's my name see i am that immediately there's space in you when you become conscious of being conscious that is space in any situation you find yourself in a quick access to inner space spaciousness essence is to become conscious that you are conscious that's presence then yes you are still a person you can function as a person but you are not trapped in the person that's the hybrid i talked about you function as the person we are not trapped in the person and now for a little while we just see if we can stay there in that consciousness of consciousness so welcome to our saturday meditation the focus of our meditation is stillness inner stillness what happens outside doesn't really matter so much stillness is just a word a pointer to most people it means absence of noise and in that sense stillness could be called a negative pointer it points to the absence of something but it doesn't really refer to the absence of noise even the absence of inner noise although it is true that when the inner noise stops there is stillness but every pointer we use is not really it it's not quite right ever it reduces that to which it points to something we think we can understand so it's much more than the absence of something although as a pointer that works another word for stillness is presence and that's a positive pointer by implication presence points to the presence of something the presence of what all you

can say here is the presence of presence so there are two levels one could say to who you are on the one hand on one level you are the presence of certain things the existence of certain things you are the existence of the body the existence of sense perceptions the existence of emotions the existence of thoughts so we can call that the presence of something that's you as a person and here we are not concerned with that we are concerned with who you are beyond the person that deeper level and we are here together a few thousand people perhaps on in different parts of the planet going beyond the individual persons personalities to a deeper level of being and that's our meditation and i am speaking the words point to it the words of course are not it the silence the stillness the presence which cannot be perceived with the senses is what matters here so there's nothing for you to do except be who you are beyond the personality and realize there is a stillness in you that has nothing to do with the personality and its problems because a large part of your personality consists of your problems as you access the deeper level of stillness or where you just sense as i sometimes put it your own presence it's not your own but let's just put it this way where you sense your own presence or rather where you sense the presence that you are you are that presence before you become this or that a person there is a presence an aliveness there is the light of consciousness in which the person arises but the light of consciousness itself is not the person it is it transcends the person it is not separate from it the light assumes a certain form and becomes a person in the same way that when you watch a movie there's a light a projector light and the ways in which the light is obstructed by the film and those obstructions of the light not never total obstructions because then you wouldn't see anything partial obstructions of the light and that becomes the movie the characters the events and so on that's a little analogy and normal life isn't really that much different so if you only know the obstructions to the light of consciousness the light of god then you are trapped on the level of problems and drama and difficulties anxieties regrets past future me me but here we become aware of the presence not the presence of something in us that would make it into some formal thing again but more simply the presence of presence so the presence underlies the words that i speak it underlies the words that you hear and so i am inviting you to be aware of that in you that underlies the sense perceptions and the thoughts that's what we could call that the essence of who you are that transcends the person that's the most important realization in your life but it seems to be still a secret because nobody very few seem to know about it and many are not interested yet until existence as the person only becomes increasingly frustrating both for the individual and for the collective on the planet societies civilizations where the transcendent dimension is missing completely nothing no individual or civilization can remain sane for long without it there's an increasing madness if that is all you know and the presence the realization of presence frees you from bondage to the person the personality with all its little concerns that keep it busy all day long and on a larger scale the collective realize that the concerns of the collective that you hear through the media and so on may be relatively important but ultimately they are not just as your problems which sometimes are related to the

problems of the collective at for example now in times of the recession and so on your problems too are ultimately not that important they certainly won't be important in 50 60 years time to anybody and not to you because you as the person probably won't be there anymore that's quite soon i suggest you visit a graveyard from time to time and look at the gravestones with these names on them all these people thought that their problems were incredibly important and their successes were important incredibly important their failures were very important and none of this suddenly matters 50 years later all gone and another generation is there with the same beliefs totally absorbed in their life their so-called life but without connection to the transcendent dimension they're not really fully alive and they're not really enjoying life except as temporary passing sense pleasures to high followed by low

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[Speaker 1] (0:05 - 3:29:34)

And on that level only, life, so-called life, will always disappoint you, even when you achieve change that you wanted, which is fine, but it cannot give you real satisfaction for long. Only discovering the transcendent in you can do that. So real satisfaction is realizing who you are beyond that level of person, form, we could call it.

Realizing who you are sounds as if you suddenly understood something, you can't really understand it, but you can, it's a being it rather than understanding it. So you'll notice when you join me here in the state of not thinking, just being present, at that time, something other than the person with its past and future and concerns has arisen, something other than the usual person. So the person has stepped aside or receded temporarily and there's a presence which has no content as such because it's space.

All the little things, and so that means most of your life, you can actually use them in this way so that they become a help. All those things that don't require that much of your attention, they become, use that spare attention to go within and another way of putting it, become aware of that field of attention itself as the consciousness. And this is why it was so pleasant when I put away the clothes this morning, just, it wasn't the putting away, it was something deeper.

And that's, you can practice that, practice it here and in the rest of your life with all the little things that make up most of your life, whether you are a so-called VIP in the eyes of the world, a totally meaningless concept or not, it's still little things that makes, even, and you become most effective when you give your attention to little things. If there's something that absorbs more of your attention, then some attention will move more into mind and thinking and you will have less than the being awareness, so to speak, goes a little bit into the background if you have to work something out. Or write something, but it's vital that it's still there.

So there's, or you're engaged in a discussion that can very quickly pull you completely out of the being awareness. When you're getting your viewpoint, you need to defend your viewpoint now. Now, there are two ways of defending your viewpoint.

One is losing yourself in your viewpoint. And one is remaining in connection with the being awareness and then just put forward your viewpoint and why you have it. And then allow the other person to forward their viewpoint and don't make them into an enemy, which is much easier now when you have not, you're no longer seeking your identity to derive your identity from your opinions and viewpoints.

That's a dreadful state to be in because then you're surrounded by enemies or those who don't share your viewpoints or have opposite ones. They are awful. These people are

evil.

The same thing happens with collective viewpoints. You have a collective belief system. It's the same mechanism.

Our belief is the only one, obviously, that's true. All other beliefs are fallacy. They are lies spread by the devil.

They're not our beliefs. So these people are less than human who don't share our beliefs. It's insane, but normal.

And what kind of a world does that produce if millions of people are trapped in that dysfunctional belief system, egoic belief structures? And so when I talk about the little things, another Zen quote, yeah, I love these Zen people. And there was a Zen master who was asked, what's the essence of Zen?

And now there are many different kinds of answers the masters give. None of them are answers that you would expect. And he said, Zen, well, the disciple, of course, came, please explain to me again.

I've only been here for 10 years and I don't get it yet. What is it? I need a fuller explanation.

You haven't said enough. And what is Zen? And the master said, Zen is doing one thing at a time.

Is that it? Yeah. Okay, thank you.

I'm going to look for another master who gives me a better explanation. But if he had really listened, that's all you need to know. Doing one thing at a time.

Attention. So attention on what you're doing and attention on attention. Then you're no longer an egoic doer.

If you don't have attention on attention, the doing becomes egoic seeking. And it's not empowered. It comes out of the conditioning of your mind.

So attention on what you're doing and attention on attention. Then you are in touch. Again, that's another aspect of what we called yesterday, one foot in one dimension, the other foot in that dimension.

And then you are both a human and a being, a full human being. And until you are able to live like that, you're not a full human being yet, as Confucius already said over 2000 years ago. And many humans are still not, evolution has not come to an end of humanity or anything.

We are still evolving, obviously, this is not the end product. Where we are at, I don't know, not that advanced. So the most important thing to get here, get, get it, get.

The most important thing to get here is to be able to be aware of yourself as consciousness or attention on attention. This means, oh, this is another Zen story that just came to me. The disciple said, I'm going to take my leave now because I'm going to look for another monastery and another master because you actually haven't given me the full answer.

Can you just write something down so that it's just something for me to remember that is important, so some explanation. And the Zen master, he goes, give me paper, pen. He wrote, there.

And he said, attention. Okay, is that all? Yes, please add a little bit more, just another few more words.

Okay, give it to me. And then the disciple reads it, attention, attention. What does that mean?

He said, attention, attention, what does it mean? The master said, attention means attention. So the disciple was seeking to pursue Zen through mental concepts.

And the master was attempting to help him break through mental concepts because the answer to all, to who you are, the answer to the secrets of the universe, which are all in you, of course, you are a microcosm of the macrocosm, as above, so below, as the ancient philosophers already said, the answer, all the secrets of the universe are not to be found through conceptual thinking. What conceptual thinking can do is relatively little. And the human evolution, which has now reached a critical stage, does not mean that we are going to improve conceptual thinking.

It's been helpful. It's done interesting things. It's created, of course, it has a downside, lots of huge problems, especially if it's not connected with wisdom, which comes from the being.

But you cannot further develop more refined conceptual thinking. We've come to the kind of end of the road of conceptual thinking, because what else? It's just putting words together in a different way.

So we've tried so many ways of putting words together. How many words? There are a limited number of letters in the alphabet, not to mention sounds.

I talked about that already. There are a limited number of letters in the alphabet and a limited number of words that you can put together. Every book in the library, or nowadays on the computer, anything you read, any text you read, is words put together in a certain order.

And then you jumble them, and then you have another text, and you put different one. But the number of words is limited. And they're just words.

So the answer is not in further development of conceptual thinking, or another way of putting it, more information is more information, because we live in the so-called information age, and you can get all the information on the computer. It is quite amazing. Of course it is on that level, that before you had to buy the encyclopedia Britannica, and it was quickly out of date.

And now you can Google and Wikipedia and all those things, and it's all whatever, all the human knowledge is there. But human evolution does not consist in finding, getting more and more information. You don't evolve by getting more and more information.

In fact, the more you stuff, get information, the more confused you get, if you're not connected with being. So much stuff, and then stuff accumulates in the head, and all the devices, the more stuff comes into your mind, you absorb more and more stuff. And you get completely scattered.

Human attention deficit disorder, all these things, can't focus on anything for longer than 20 seconds. Dreadful state to be in. Of course, yes, you know more than Jesus did 2,000 years ago, and of course you do on the level of information.

You know 100,000 times more than the Buddha did, but that's not vital. It's knowledge, but it's not knowing. So human evolution is not to completely abandon conceptual thinking, no, to be able to use conceptual thinking without being trapped in conceptual thinking.

So it's to transcend conceptual thinking. Transcend mean you don't remove it, you go beyond it, but it's still there for you to use, but not for you to be used by. This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive.

To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. When I was writing The Power of Now, I wrote, I don't know why I wrote that, it just came to me one day, I wrote, there is a black hole at the center of every galaxy. And the editor saw it and said, you can't say that because you don't, how can you know that?

The people are going to argue with that, so it was taken out. And some years later, I read an article by a scientist and said, now scientists believe that there is a black hole at the center of every galaxy. Humanity is, this species is at a critical stage now.

There's a possibility of a shift into a deeper state or a higher state, if you want to call it that, of transcending conceptual thinking, going beyond. You can still think, but no longer trapped in thinking. This is where humanity has to go.

And as you transcend conceptual thinking, you regain what was lost eons, eons ago. You

regain your sense of connectedness with being. You feel deep down, you're connected with something vast and it's not different from who you are.

It just, when we put it into language, it sounds as if that was something different from who you are. You're connected with being, with a sense of simple beingness. Being comes from the word to be, to be, the most primordial thing.

And everything in nature is an expression of that underlying beingness, and including the physical body, this body, this body. All that we perceive in this world is existence. Exists, it exists, this body exists, this body exists.

Underlying existence is being. Being is the formless, timeless dimension within yourself. It's very much like the black hole at the center of the galaxy.

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The people are going to argue with that, so it was taken out. And some years later, I read an article by a scientist and it said, now scientists believe that there is a black hole at the center of every galaxy. And so, why did I know that?

I knew that because I could feel the black hole inside myself. The spacious, formless, one life, the origin. And I know that the human being is a microcosm.

It's just, you can understand the whole universe by understanding yourself. You are just a microscopic version of that. So that's the, we are regaining by no longer being lost in the conceptualizing mind, we regain something that was lost a long, long time ago, very much like the prodigal son in the New Testament, your origin.

Not your origin in, you can't say, it's not really your origin in time, it's not saying, okay, my origin was six billion years ago, that's where I started, when the Big Bang happened, that was the beginning of me. That's true, of course, that was the beginning, but it's not so much that the origin is in the distant past or not even in the near past, the origin is timeless. The origin of your being, it is still there, this primordial nothingness, nothingness before the Big Bang is still in you now.

Nature can help you rediscover that if you approach it not with the conceptualizing mind, but you approach nature and perceive nature in a state of alert attention, spaciousness, and that's a wonderful, wonderful, first we could call it a practice, but then it's no longer a practice, it becomes a natural way of being. First in nature and then even in the man-made world, but you need to first of all be able to, we are going into it now, do it in the forest or on the beach or in the field, wherever it is, before you can be in that state in the shopping mall where everything, it's not so being, you can't really find being that easily, you have to be rooted very deeply in yourself to find being in the shopping mall because

everything is surface phenomena. Buy me, do this, do this, eat a hamburger.

Look here, look here, and then after 20 minutes in the shopping mall, you're totally exhausted because all the energy is flowing out of your eyes into phenomena and music is in the background. Not the most profound music. And yet you could be walking in the forest for three hours and not feel exhausted, in fact feel invigorated, isn't that strange?

So the shopping mall takes it out of you and the forest or whatever, the beach or the desert puts it back, there's something there that's very, very different and, but not for everybody. There needs to be the openness and the alertness so that all the seemingly insignificant things in nature, you are alert to that, and that, for example, you're looking at, you're walking a tree, a slight movement of leaves in the breeze, perhaps a sound associated with it, your senses are alert, not strained, there's no tension, you don't go, no, just alert and in that alertness, of course, there's no thought anymore because if you were thinking, you would not be alert. Thought is not alert, it's a lower state.

Alertness is a higher state than thought, higher consciousness than thought, but good, by the good thoughts, which means creative thoughts, original thoughts, original insights can only come out of the alertness. You need to have the alertness and then sometimes thought becomes fruitful and original and creative out of that, but if you never touch the alertness, then thought is repetitive, old records, CDs, not records anymore and not CDs anymore, old iPods or whatever, same. So, nature then, you have to approach nature with that alertness, attentiveness, like a little child as if you had come there for the first time into that place.

Let's say, maybe you drive somewhere or maybe it's close to where you live, you get out of the car, out of your door, in most, for most people, even wherever you live, there will be something natural when you step out of your house somewhere. Even if you live downtown, there may be a little tree somewhere, not acknowledged by most people, almost everybody walks past it without looking because they have more important things to think about, but you, for a moment, you acknowledge that, not by saying, oh, I should be acknowledging the tree, you just acknowledge, you give it attention and in that moment, you notice little things about it that before you didn't notice, how the quivering leaves, how the light shines through the branches or the leaves, how the light interacts with the tree and you notice all these things without having to call it anything, it's just a noticing and this is a practice, you can practice that as a choice because you choose to relate to nature in a different way and when you do that, then nature gives you something back. What it gives you back is some of that energy of connectedness with the source that the tree is still in, this energy comes back to you, the tree gives you that back, it says, have some of this, I have more than enough and you get, so it helps you to feel that connectedness but you are also helping the tree, I'm saying that intuitively, the tree hasn't spoken to me like that.

Maybe some trees speak to some people but not to me, I haven't, well, Prince Charles years ago said, he talked to the plants and that's of course a wonderful thing and I think he not only, he meant he not only talked to the plants, I think he meant he gives them his full attention and ever since the newspapers have been making fun of him because they don't understand, it's just the mind doesn't want to understand that. So you're giving it attention, it's not just that the tree and I'm only using tree as an example, it could be a tree, it could be a flower, it could be an entire forest because the attention that you give, you can give to either a single natural phenomenon or being like a tree or a flower or even a blade of grass or a little plant, whatever it may be. You can also give attention to a more inclusive energy field like an entire valley that is, it has its own energy field, its own spirit almost one could say or a forest as you walk.

So there are two modalities one could say of being there in let's say it's a forest. You can notice single things like trees or plants and for a moment you give them attention, there's a looking, in alertness and then you look at something else and there's no choice really involved in not saying, okay, what can I look at? Now it happens naturally, your eyes you'd look at this and then suddenly you look at something else and then you look, you take in the totality of what's there just a general without always necessarily focusing on one thing, you take in the totality and that is, there's an expression in Zen which is translated as a choiceless awareness, an expression that also I believe Krishnamurti used, choiceless awareness of so you take in the totality of what is around you and then the nature, the entire energy field of what's around you then connects with you and you connect with it. So it gives you what some of that connectedness with a source that nature never lost, almost transmits itself to you but it's a reciprocal process, what you give nature is the awareness of itself because we need to remember that nature, it's not that you are separate from nature, you haven't been put into nature, you have come out of nature, you are nature also, you are nature that is in the process of becoming conscious of itself and so what you then give back to the tree or the flower or the forest is awareness of itself. It recognizes, because this flower, I would say it does not know it is beautiful, it just is, the flower is.

Its beauty is there, it comes from the source and now when any human perceives this flower as a true act of perception, not conceptualizing it or judging it, something responds from within, there's something is touched within, there's such beauty there but even to call it beauty, you don't need that, there's something there, something within response, almost a recognition because and when you perceive in such a way, you realize that you and it are not separate. The illusion of separation which is created by the thinking mind disappears and there's a sense of oneness when you are not calling it anything, this pure spacious perception, that immediately there's not me and the flower, there's a continuum, the flower arises within the field of consciousness, it comes out of that.

I'd like to share with you a short passage from the Bible, doesn't happen very often that I

read from the Bible as part of a teaching. This is from the New Testament and it is a parable that Jesus tells that is very profound and absolutely relevant to the present time. So here we go.

Everyone who listens to these words of mine and does them will be like a man building a house who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. The rain fell, the floods came and the wind blew and beat against the house, but it did not collapse, it had been set solidly on rock. And everyone who listens to these words of mine but does not do them will be like a fool who built his house on sand.

The rain fell, the floods came and the wind blew and beat against the house and it collapsed and was completely ruined. So let's understand the deeper meaning of this. Everyone who listens to these words and does them means obviously anybody who listens to the teaching and practices the teaching.

And of course, Jesus' teaching is, find the kingdom of heaven that is within you, not anywhere else in space or time. Find the transcendent dimension, the kingdom of heaven that is within you, which is a deeper dimension or higher dimension of consciousness, accessible to everyone. And the man that's building the house is you.

The house is you. The floods come, the rain comes, beating against the house, of course, obviously means some form of adversity you encounter as you inevitably will in your life, some form of fairly extreme adversity, whether it's on a personal level or as we're experiencing now on a collective level. Now, if you haven't gone deep enough, because remember, you are the house.

If you haven't gone deep enough, you have not found anything beyond the conceptual thinking mind, then the floods, the rain, the wind, the adversity, whatever it may be, in this case, we know what it is, will devastate you. And even if you do not fall ill or contract the virus, the fear will consume you as it's consuming millions of humans at the present time. And why do you fear?

What is fear? Fear are certain thought forms you project yourself into some future moment and you're not present. Because if you were present, you would realize that in this moment, there's nothing to fear.

Only when you leave this moment, fear arises as a thought form, which then creates an emotion. So what does it mean then to dig deep and to find the foundation on the rock? What is that rock?

The foundation for the house that you are, you are that house. And I'd like you to take into a little meditation now in order to illustrate and to enable you to experience at first hand what it means to dig deep. For a moment, just become aware that you're breathing, become aware of yourself.

Not the conceptual self, not become aware of your personal history or become aware of some imagined future moment, but become aware of yourself as the conscious presence, a field of conscious presence. And thinking does not help you there. Thinking is an obstacle.

So you go deeper than thinking and you can be completely awake and present and yet with very little mind activity. And that is the beginning of the realization of your deep identity, what I sometimes call your essence identity. And your essence identity is inseparable from the present moment.

It is the timeless, eternal present. It is a deeper dimension of consciousness than the one that you ordinarily identify with. And that is the meaning of digging deep and finding that unshakable foundation that is deep within you, within everyone.

Adversity is a wonderful opportunity because adversity forces you to go deeper. Adversity forces you to awaken to the deeper dimension of who you are. Why does adversity force you?

Because life becomes almost unbearable when you live only on the surface, the surface of sense perceptions and your conceptual mind. And then you listen to the newscasts and you read all kinds of things and everybody's in a state of fear. That is the house built on the sand that when the floods come, the wind comes, the storms come, the house collapses.

Meaning, since you are the house in this parable, you are devastated in a state of extreme anxiety, extreme suffering, although nothing actually has happened yet unless you contract a disease. And this is something we'll talk about next time, right? Is the house, your house, the house that you are, are you living on the surface?

Is your house built on sand? Or are you able to dig and find the foundation within yourself that frees you from fear? Now, when things are going well, it's unlikely that most humans can't be bothered with going deeper.

What for? If things are going okay, I'm looking forward to my next vacation, weekend is coming up, and whatever it is, a nice meal is waiting for me. Everything is, it's comfort zone.

You're in your comfort zone. I've never heard of anybody who awakens in their comfort zone. There's nothing wrong with comfort zone.

Enjoy them when they are there. They last for a while. And then some form of adversity arises, either on a personal level or on a collective level.

Minor forms of adversity, and occasionally huge forms of adversity. Potential calamities, whether it's you're suddenly confronted with the fact of mortality, some great loss,

serious illness on a personal level or on a collective level, war, civil strife, civil war, financial collapse, invasion of your country. All kinds of things can happen.

And at the present time, we are experiencing the so-called pandemic, collective adversity, not affecting just one person, now affecting millions at the same time. And this is an invitation to go deeper because if you don't, you suffer unnecessarily. Millions are in a state of fear and anxiety, but use this as an opportunity to either awaken out of the mind-identified state of consciousness that continuously project itself into the future that you have no control over.

It is never present. This mind-identified state of consciousness that's the house built on the sand avoids an opportunity to come to this realization that you are much deeper than you had known before. You are forced to go deeper because you can't stand the suffering anymore, the unhappiness or whatever you want to call it, the anxiety.

And so the most vital thing in any situation is the state of consciousness with which you meet the situation. And you should pay more attention to that than to the newscasts and whatever it is that you listen to and watch. Yes, you can do that also.

But what is your state of consciousness? That's something you can do something about. It's not very much that you can do about the external situation.

You can take precautions. You can help other people to the extent to which it is possible. All that's good.

You do all the things that you need to do. And perhaps many people are now forced to stay at home and suddenly you have to be on a private retreat at home. Now that's an opportunity too.

So use this precious time that is here because it is part of the awakening consciousness of humanity. It seems almost paradoxical to say that something that on the surface looks very negative and looks like an obstacle to the wellbeing of humanity. And yes, it's an obstacle to the wellbeing of humanity on a purely physical level, perhaps temporarily.

Yes. But something that looks like an obstacle from a conventional point of view is actually an opportunity for you to awaken to a deeper, or you could say higher level of consciousness. Humans don't awaken when they're in their comfort zone.

They awaken when they are taken out of their comfort zone. Not everybody does. It's an opportunity.

If you do not awaken when you're no longer in your comfort zone, you suffer. You're unhappy. You're anxious.

You're fearful. You haven't found the rock. Now, the difference between this parable and

actual life is in this parable, the man had already dug deep and he had already built his house on the rock and then the floods came and so on and the house was unshakable.

In real life, often it is the case that the wind, the floods, the rains, beating against the house, which means adversity arising in your life, the adversity forces you, if you haven't already gone deeper, it forces you to go deeper. And so it's not too late to start digging now in the face of adversity. Many of you are already in the process of awakening, probably most of you listening to this.

And what's happening to us now is a wonderful opportunity for you to go deeper, a deepening of that, an acceleration of the awakening. So as much as possible, especially whenever you feel yourself drifting off into a fearful state of consciousness and a fearful emotional state, whenever you realize that, realize that in this present moment, there's nothing to fear and you have to verify this for yourself, whether this is true or not. When you fear something, it's of some imagined future moment.

Am I going to catch this disease? Am I going to die? Is a loved one going to catch it?

Is a loved one, my child, are they going to die? Imagine it, it could happen. But right now it's not happening.

So whenever you feel yourself drifting off into fear, realize, okay, I have lost the present moment. And I lost myself in my mind, in the thinking mind. And I don't know.

And then the emotion reflects that mind activity. So the moment you notice it, okay, I've lost the present moment. I am lost in the mind.

Come back into the present moment. A few little things are helpful. Be aware of your breathing.

Be aware of the inner energy field in your body. The body is alive. There's this energy, this life energy that pervades the body.

You feel that. You're breathing. You feel the aliveness in the body.

You're aware of sense perceptions. You look around. You're present.

And then you become aware of that presence that is inseparable from who you are. That presence that is inseparable from who you are. That's an amazing realization.

There's more to you than the person. That presence is deeper than the person. And you needed the adversity either to find it or to deepen that, which you had already found it, but it was not yet a deep realization.

So, this is a time of great opportunity. Use it. Don't waste it.

There's a saying that goes, when the ego weeps for what it has lost, the spirit rejoices for what it has found. So, what looks bad on the surface has an essential function. I will speak to you again soon.

In the meantime, be here, be present. Don't lose yourself in the mind. Don't lose yourself in fear.

Find and be rooted in this rock that is your essence, identity. Thank you. When things go wrong, little things like last Sunday or bigger things, it's always a good test for your degree of presence.

So, it gives you a reflection of how present you are or how non-present you are when something goes wrong. Is there, so you can look back, it might be the case with you, maybe not. If you look back to last Sunday, was there a reaction of whatever kind against what is?

And what is was that Eckhart wasn't there. He didn't make it. Well, I was here, but didn't reach many of you.

So, Eckhart didn't make it to our appointed meeting. What was your mind saying? What did you verbally say, comments to people around you?

Or what did your mind comment about it? That's an interesting thing to look at. And accompanying the mental commentary, what was the emotion that went with it?

And some of you, I'm sure, were already so present that there was no sense of upset, disappointment, anger, irritation, some kind of mental complaint. And perhaps it was just, perhaps some of you just went into meditation, just became present and realized you don't need Eckhart to be present. Oh, wonderful.

But if there was a reaction, then it's very useful retrospectively. Usually I don't like, as you know, don't like to go to the past, but from time to time can be helpful to look at a past reaction in which perhaps where you lost consciousness, you lost presence. And you don't beat yourself up.

No, you just say, oh, that's interesting. There was the mind talking and there was an emotion going with it. And I was completely that.

I became that. It took me over. So whenever something goes wrong, big or small, you either react against it in one way or another.

In other words, you are against what is ultimately a dysfunctional state, which in extreme forms becomes insanity, normal insanity, I mean. So the reaction against what is or complete alignment with what is. And there you are.

That means whenever something goes wrong, you either react or you go deeper into

presence, deeper into yourself. You can notice that with little things. When little things go wrong, you go a little bit deeper to a place where you don't need the external to be this way or that way because you already sense the fullness of life at this moment.

You already sense yourself as consciousness and nothing needs to be added to that. So sometimes it's only when things go wrong, quite often, it's only then for many people who are not yet able to voluntarily enter presence, only then the possibility of going deeper opens up for them or they become reactive. So another example, you're standing at a street corner meeting somebody, waiting to meet somebody for an appointment and he or she doesn't turn up.

So you stand there 10 minutes, 15 minutes, 20 minutes what happens during that time inside you, in your mind and what is your mind saying about it? And then of course, the emotions that go usually are reflection of what the mind is saying about it. It's an interesting thing to look at.

What is it that your mind is commenting and are you totally identified with what your mind is saying or do you realize, oh, these are just judgments that are coming up and there's the possibility, the opportunity for letting go of all interpretations at that moment as you're standing there at the street corner the person isn't turning up, letting go of all interpretations and just be there as the field of presence.

So to do that, you go deeper within where whatever happens on the surface of life doesn't determine any longer your state of consciousness, your happiness or unhappiness. And it's a wonderful sense of freedom. You can be free of externals.

And then at some point you call the person and say, where are you or where were you? And then there may be a perfectly reasonable explanation why he or she couldn't come or in which case all your mental commentaries which were perhaps negative are revealed as totally invalid, totally inaccurate. It was a total misinterpretation.

That's possible. Or it could be that your mental commentaries were justified and that person says, oh, I completely forgot I was doing something else. What's the reaction then in you?

Am I of so little importance to this person that he or she forgot about our appointment? That's an interesting thought. And that thought can lead to many other thoughts.

On a purely practical level, of course, if it happens several times and this person doesn't turn up then you simply don't arrange to meet with this person anymore. And can you do this without any negativity around it? That's just what is.

A very powerful state to immediately be with what is. That's what is. Instead of mentally saying it shouldn't be or strengthen your ego by complaining about it, the same as saying it shouldn't be.

Because the more you can complain about somebody, somebody or something, the more, the stronger the inflated ego becomes. Huffing and puffing, I call that. So the more you can huff and puff about people and what they do or this person and that, of course, the ego feels bigger and bigger.

It's like a balloon. The more you huff and puff, the bigger you get. Can you live without huffing and puffing?

Any complaining about others, what they do, what they fail to do, huffing and puffing. If you make a commentary in order to point something out so that something practical can be done about it is a different matter. But huffing and puffing is not like that at all.

It has nothing to do with changing the situation. What it changes is the way in which you deal with the situation, which becomes dysfunctional. So you can tell a person's presence by observing another person.

If that person never complains about anybody, that's a good sign. Presence doesn't complain about anybody. It's still relatively rare that you meet people like that, but perhaps you're already on your way or perhaps you're already at that state where you have relinquished all that futility of complaining about other people.

It's an enormous step forward. So let's welcome the many ways in which things can go wrong. In your life.

Not wrong means, of course, with quotation marks, go wrong. Doesn't go wrong. It's the mental interpretation says it's going wrong.

But we're using that conventional label, things going wrong, to point to something very important. Expectations are not being met. You're not getting what you want.

Something happens that shouldn't be happening or something fails to happen that should be happening like last Sunday. As you know, there are always two levels to this. I'm speaking and pointing out something that is helpful in your daily life.

At the same time, there is an underlying presence here. So that's why we call it meditation. It's not a conventional meditation.

But as I speak about becoming aware of a certain type of dysfunction, at the same time, there's a presence there. So it works on two levels here. And that's also why the pause is important when there are no words.

So that next time there is a something goes wrong, little or small, little or big, there's either already such presence that the reaction doesn't even arise or there's a reaction and then there is the recognition immediately after, to a second after or a minute after, there's the recognition that there is a reaction and there's a recognition that the mind is

creating its story around the simplicity of what is. And there's the recognition that you don't need it. You're better off without it.

You're more effective in what you do when you're free of that. So there's a choice of then being present instead of reactive. And then the reaction subsides and presence takes its place, arises, the reaction goes.

And then that's an enormous thing when you suddenly realize in the very same situation, a minute ago, you were upset and reactive and then recognized it. The recognition comes, of course, from heightened presence and then you became the presence instead of the reaction. And then the reaction crumbles.

And then in the very same situation, in that minute later, you're free of upset and you feel empowered. It means externals no longer control you. So as I said, let's be grateful for all those occasions when things go wrong.

There are always an opportunity for going deeper. And if it's something big that goes wrong, something truly huge, something big crumbles in your life, then you'll have to go even deeper so the depths increases. When you just let go of a little upset, you go a little bit deeper.

But when something big happens, some big loss in your life, then you have to go even deeper. It's always miraculous to suddenly discover that you can be free of externals as far as your inner state is concerned. Occasionally you may experience low levels of physical energy and this can affect the mind too.

The important thing is first of all, when you talk about being depressed and so on, to see whether there is, what kind of thoughts are being created in your mind during that time. Ask yourself whether or examine whether the certain types of thinking create that feeling of depression. Thoughts like, oh, it's all pointless anyway.

Or what's the point of it all? I hate this world. There's no point in even struggling anymore.

I'm fed up, completely fed up with life. I can't take anymore. That type of thinking.

Are you aware, what is the relationship between the emotion that you feel and your thought processes? Are perhaps your thoughts creating that emotion or could it be that the emotion is creating the thoughts? So when you are depressed, there will be certain thoughts going through your mind and probably there will not be pleasant thoughts.

So be aware of the relationship between what you're feeling, this depressed feeling of sadness, depression. You feel dejected. And your thought processes.

And if in the moment of thinking, those types of thoughts that accompany the feeling of

depression or pointlessness, if you can be there and observe those thoughts, then again, as in the first question, answer to the first question, when you recognize those thoughts, you no longer completely believe in them. You recognize them as a conditioned movement in your mind. And then you may be able to come to an acceptance of whatever it is you're feeling at this moment without adding the baggage of thought to it.

So what remains then is this feeling of perhaps low energy or it could be an activation of your pain body to some extent. You feel emotion in you that doesn't feel good, but you're then no longer fueling it with your thinking. So if there's enough awareness in you while you're going through a period of depression, allow yourself to feel what it is you're feeling, but be careful that you don't fuel it with your thinking.

And if you feel what you feel, that's all you have to do is surrender to your experience of this moment. You accept your experience of this moment, which at this moment may be not pleasant, but that's what is inside you. So probably the greatest spiritual practice is to accept whatever it is that you're experiencing at this moment.

So if you're experiencing depression, then that's the isness of the present moment. And as much as possible, you step out of your mind and just be the awareness. Observe, it may be the case that there is an addiction in you that periodically arises, and that's the addiction to unhappiness, the addiction to negativity.

And that is usually connected with a pain body that needs to renew itself periodically. If most of you will know what I'm talking about, you've read about the pain body, old emotion that still lives in you. Sometimes it's dormant.

Sometimes it needs to feed to take in more so that it can stay alive. It's a semi-autonomous energy field in you. And so in the absence of, its favorite way to feed is on other people's reactions.

So it will create drama. It will create, push your partners or other family members, people's buttons, so to speak, so that you get a negative emotional reaction. And so it loves the drama, the emotional drama, and will provoke drama.

And that's how the pain body loves to feed. But if that's for some reason is not possible, for whatever reason, the pain body is quite happy also to feed on your thoughts. So it will periodically rise up into your mind and then you will think thoughts that feed the pain body, but the thoughts themselves already created by the pain body.

And then it's a vicious circle. The negative thoughts that you don't want at that moment, you do not want to let go of that type of thinking because there's not enough awareness in you at that moment. At that moment, when I say you don't want to let go, or when I say you are addicted to your unhappiness, when I say you, it's not really you, it's a mind pattern with which you are that moment completely identified.

And that's why I call it you. So in that moment, it is you. So there are many, many people who are addicted to their unhappy states, the unhappiness in them.

And if some people have it almost continuously, but most people have periods when this happens and then it subsides. And that's the typical way in which the pain body arises from its dormant state, feeds on several hours or even days of deep negative thinking, and then subsides for a while you're free again. So addiction to unhappiness, this is one way of speaking about it.

Be careful, see whether you can detect in yourself when in the moment of it happening, you're almost, you're indulging in this feeling of could be self-pity or condemnation of life or others or whatever it is, you love it. You love that, you love those feelings and those thoughts, and you don't want to get out. If somebody at that moment said to you to come out of it, you say, oh, shut up, I don't want to hear.

Now, some people have them so strongly that the addiction to unhappiness has become part of their conditioned personality. So they are, part of their identity is a very unhappy sense of self. And if that is a terrible place to be in, but again, the only way that you can transcend that and escape from that prison is to be aware when it happens.

So a good question therefore is, am I enjoying my unhappiness in some weird way? Do I love my unhappiness? And if I love my unhappiness, who is that I that loves unhappiness?

Must be a weird and crazy I that loves unhappiness. So maybe that's not really me. Maybe it's just an unhappy self in me that loves.

I know that I had that very strongly for many years in my 20s. So you have to be really alert and see whether you enjoy your unhappiness. And once you notice it, you say, oh, wow, I'm really enjoying this.

In the moment of noticing it, you've made it conscious. And then it's very likely that you cannot go on very much longer enjoying it because this can only continue when you're unconscious. It needs your unconsciousness, this false self.

It's an aspect of the false self that is the ego. It needs your unconsciousness to continue to survive. But when you make it conscious, then there comes a moment of surprise and says, oh, wow, I'm actually enjoying this.

I don't want to let, I love this negative thoughts, love in a perverse way almost. This is the egoic kind of love. And then you might even ask, is that who I am?

Who am I? Why do I love this? This awareness is coming, awareness is arising.

And then suddenly you step out of identification with that mind pattern, mental emotion.

And that is part of the awakening. So those things for many people are a very important part of their spiritual awakening.

The very important part of spiritual awakening is to become aware of the unconsciousness in you, the various ways in which the unconsciousness manifests in you, that's an extremely important part of awakening. In fact, you need that to provide fuel for the arising of presence. You don't have to be as slow as I am to be present.

I'm not always slow. But often. Interesting thing to find out for yourself if you've reached a stage in your spiritual evolution where you're able to choose to be free of thinking without exerting willpower to suppress thought and without stopping your breathing.

And without engaging in a life-threatening activity, which could easily stop your mind. Walking on a tight rope will certainly stop your mind for two seconds before you fall off. Now, some of you are able to do that when you're not being disturbed by anything or anybody.

Everything is fine. You're sitting quietly in your room or outside. And then you just go.

There's an intensity of awareness, but there's no willpower. You're not willing it to happen. You're not suppressing thought.

So if you're not yet there, that's fine. You can choose other ways of taking attention away from the stream of thinking by placing attention on sensory perception into your body, the inner body, or on your breathing that's happening naturally. So as the Buddha said, when they asked how to attain enlightenment, he said, just be aware that you're breathing.

Is that all they said? He said, yes. I don't know if that's in any of the scriptures, though.

But I'm sure that's what he said. He did recommend highly awareness of your breath. The rest was me adding something to it, which I do believe he did say, because every spiritual teacher is very simple.

Now, as long as you're aware that you're breathing, you can't be thinking. So he didn't say, don't think. He said, be aware of your breath.

So your attention moves away from mind and goes, you feel the inflow and outflow of the breath. You even feel every subtle movement of the breath where it enters your nose. Then it flows in and then it flows out and you follow it with your attention.

And while you're doing it, you're not breathing. You're not thinking. And then at some point you could let go of that too.

Then you're just not thinking. The important thing is you're above thinking. We're not talking about falling below thinking.

It's easy to tell the difference, but it's possible if you try to sustain the no thinking stage for too long, it's possible that without you noticing it, you're going. And then that means you're going from. It can happen very quickly.

If you go to a Buddhist monasteries where monks spent a long time meditating, you can observe how it happens to the monks. They start off and then they go after 20 minutes, half an hour, especially if it's 4.30 in the morning. And then you're able to be in that state of pure awareness or presence, even while things happen.

That's the next step, so to speak. Even while you're talking to your attorney, there's a court case coming up. Are you able to be in presence while you listen to what he has to say?

Or there's an obnoxious person in your vicinity and this is not an uncommon occurrence. Since a greater part of humans, if not are obnoxious, but periodically become obnoxious. In other words, very unconscious.

Humans move into different levels of consciousness and unconsciousness. It's not always the same person that you meet. It's a delusion.

Do you think once you have become acquainted with somebody that this is going to be the same person you're going to meet the next day? Because he or she may be in a very different state of consciousness the next day, or when an event happens to trigger that person into diminished consciousness, and then one of the sub-personalities that is associated with that diminished consciousness is suddenly there and talking to you. Who are you?

Who are you? And that's even more shocking if this happens after you've signed a contract that says you're going to live with this person for the rest of your life. And then the mind comes up with strange conclusions.

I won't trust anybody anymore. He really let me down. He's a liar.

He's just pretending to be nice. He was so nice when I, I know now I know he was just pretending. No, he was nice.

Perhaps he was at a relatively more conscious stage at that time, but now he's not nice because something that you said triggered him. And another sub-personality emerged, so to speak, or somebody mentioned the word money. You owe me.

And you can observe it in yourself that you're sometimes more conscious than at other times. You're sometimes very present, even in a challenging situation. At other times, a challenging situation or person pulls you into unconscious reactivity.

And then you wake up a few minutes or an hour later or a day. And as more

consciousness emerges through you, the time period between unconsciousness and waking up again out of an unconscious reactive episode is shorter. You don't stay in it for a week, complaining about people and what they did to you.

Your mind never stops replaying a situation in your mind, different versions of it that could have happened if you only had said the right thing. And what you're, and then you can imagine, but next time you're confronted with this person, how it's going to unfold. And you feel angry and can't sleep at night.

And you don't even know what's happening to you until something suddenly, it actually is like waking up out of a dreamlike state. What was that all about? So as far as trusting other people is concerned, can you trust people?

Yes. Trust everybody. To behave, you can trust that they will behave according to their level of consciousness at any given time.

Complete trust. No more is possible. Now to be more integrated, to be a human being that is no longer taken over by reactive episodes to such an extent that virtually another person emerges temporarily, there needs to be more awareness that there still may be remnants of these subpersonalities surviving for a certain period of time in you, but they no longer take you over, that you can still feel the energy behind it when certain things happen. But what awareness does, it integrates all that.

It's no longer one entity that takes you over completely. And of course, especially the pain body as the most powerful subpersonality. And the pain body may even have two or three aspects to it.

So it could be divided into two or three other sub, but let's treat the same one as one huge subpersonality when it comes up. To have that no longer controlling you, that requires that energy field of awareness around it, its presence around it. And then you know it's still there, but it doesn't take over anymore.

Or if it does, then immediately after, you know, oops, there it was. So eventually awareness, then you become an integrated being with still a few energy flows here and there, but not a big deal anymore. Welcome to our live meditation, wherever you are, whatever the time is, where you are, it's the present moment, there's nothing else ever.

We're here to become comfortable with something very precious that is both within and without, within you and without you, outside of you. And that is stillness. If you lose touch with that, as many millions of people in our civilization have lost, touch with that inner stillness, you lose touch with that, no matter what you achieve or attain or do, it's always going to end up in frustration and some form of unhappiness because the foundation will be missing from your life.

Stillness, of course, is only a word. We use it here as a pointer. We could use other

words, other pointers to that same reality within you that is usually overlooked, covered up.

Everybody has stillness deep inside, no matter how mad their mind may be. The French philosopher Pascal must have realized this important truth when he said, all of man's misfortunes derive from one single thing. And that is their inability to be at ease in a room.

Of course, that implies stillness, their inability to find that inner place. And so they cannot be at ease in a room, as he put it, which is at ease with themselves. They haven't touched that sense of inner being or rootedness that is the foundation of all spirituality.

So this is what we are here to realize, not to do because we are not doing anything. We are not doing a meditation. If you have the idea in your head that we are doing a meditation here, that will detract you from being.

We're not doing anything. We're not even saying, okay, now we have to become still. We don't have to become anything.

We just have to be with what is in this moment. And then find that underneath all the stream of thinking that usually gives you your sense of identity, there is something more vital that, however, cannot be defined through thinking. It is here, particularly in between the words, you encounter it as the space in between the words, which to the conceptual thinking mind is completely uninteresting and completely unimportant, completely meaningless.

So to the extent that you are completely trapped in your stream of thinking, our meditation here is meaningless to the conceptual mind. And if you are trapped in thinking, you are the conceptual thinking mind. You're unaware of any other dimension, so you are trapped on that surface level of who you are.

Or you could be aware of the gaps in between the words and just notice that there are gaps in between the words. What does that mean? What happens then when you notice, for example, now there's a gap, nothing is happening in that gap.

What is there in that gap? Is there anything in that gap between two words or between two thoughts? No, it's just a space.

And yet there must be something because there is an awareness that there is just a space. In this gap, there's still an awareness, an awareness that there's a gap, but there's nothing happening in that awareness. It's just a spacious awareness, an awareness of no thing, nothing.

And what happens inside you when you're aware of the gap? Suddenly you've become still or you've realized that dimension of stillness that's always there. In you, no thought.

For a moment, you're aware of the gap between two thoughts or in this case, a brief gap between sentences or words or even in between words. So in that gap, something arises within you that before was covered up by thinking or emotions that go with thinking. We could call that stillness, we could call that being, a sense of being or beingness, a deep sense of I am-ness, I am being, of course, the same as be, the first person singular of the verb to be.

The realization that you are, I am, that you are without any definition of who or what you are. In that space, there is an awareness you are that essentially. It is a very foundation for everything else.

When a thought comes, it can only come because there is an awareness in which the thought appears. When a sense perception comes, it can only be there because there is an awareness in which the sense perception appears. What you see, what you hear, what you touch, feel, taste, smell.

There is an awareness in which the world appears, a light in which it appears, you could say, a consciousness in which it appears, a field, a space. Whatever. The words don't matter.

The realization matters, that the foundation of who you are is that space or that light of consciousness. It has no form. You have no form on that level.

Everything else is form, thought forms, emotional forms, and sense perceptions of the physical forms around you. It's all form. Now, to most people, that's all there is.

Their life consists of absorption in forms, thought forms, sense perceptions, emotional forms. That's their life. They pursue form.

What's the next form that can be more fulfilling than this one because this one isn't fulfilling enough? It never is, never for long. No form can be fulfilling for that long.

It cannot serve as a foundation for your life. It's ephemeral, fleeting, short-lived, impermanent, comes and goes. But what is it that enables it to be?

You, the entire world arises where you are. An entire world, an entire universe arises at that focal point. But you are essentially not what arises.

You are the space. You are not the form. That's a temporary aspect of who you are.

So the most vital thing in your life on this planet here is the realization of who you are in essence and that essence has no form. It's just spacious consciousness. And that word is only a pointer, stillness.

Just a sense of being with no particular content. Now, does it have to be lost? Let's say you have glimpses of it here or perhaps more than glimpses.

Connectedness with who you are on the level of the formless and that you are the formless, the timeless. It goes together. Now, does this have to be confined to brief moments like this?

Or can that be active, an active realization in your daily life? When the world of form makes continuous demands on you, the demands made by the thinking mind, give me attention, says every thought, so that I can become bigger and so that I can give rise to lots of little children which are other thoughts. Give me attention.

I am so important, says every thought, and pulls your consciousness into it and your consciousness becomes form, the thought form, and more thought and more thought. And every emotion says, give me attention. I want to grow.

You can observe it even with anger, how the anger takes you over and wants to grow and use your mind, add more thought to it. I matter, give me attention. And in the outside world, every event, every situation says, it's so important.

It may be important relatively, but it's not important in absolute terms because whatever the problem is now won't be the problem in a few years or tomorrow or in 100 years. Everything changes. The people that lived on the planet 100 years ago, everybody had their life problems and dilemmas and difficulties and things they had to worry about and think about continuously, even at night.

Where are all their problems now? Gone with them. The forms have dissolved.

And everything was so important, so important, my life. But it was only a tiny aspect of what, this wasn't truly my life, their life. They thought it was, most of them, and perhaps very few realized the deeper dimension where the problems and the preoccupations and whatever makes demands upon you on the level of form is secondary, is not of absolute importance.

As Jesus puts it, only one thing matters. He says to Mary, while Martha, her sister, is preoccupied with lots of things and busy. Only one thing matters, and you have chosen that one thing.

Many parables in Jesus is about the one thing, the one, he finds the one valuable coin and sells everything else. It's the one thing that truly matters. Everything else will be added, is an addition.

But there's a one thing, but of course the one thing is not a thing. We have to call it thing because words reflect things. The words in themselves things, but that one thing that matters absolutely is not a thing, it has no form.

It's not subject to decay. It's nothing to do with time. It's inseparable from who you are.

Welcome to another live meditation. We are not doing a meditation. It's not a doing, but we're becoming aware of the being behind all doing.

That's the presence. You are that. I'm not asking you to become still, but simply to discover that underneath all the thinking, you're already still.

So we could call this also a kind of retreat, a stepping back. Retreat, I suppose, means something like stepping back. Stepping back from the stream of thinking.

And there's then the essence of who you are, the presence, which has no form, the presence that is prior to thinking, to thought, but without which there couldn't be any thought. And so we are here to allow thinking to subside and then find out what's left when thinking subsides. And of course, you can't put a name really to what's left when thinking subsides, but you haven't gone to sleep.

Normally, when thinking subsides for people who are not yet awakened or awakening, when thinking subsides, that means they go to sleep. Or they are completely spaced out because they've taken some kind of substance. But here it's different.

The most wonderful discovery is you don't have to think all the time. And there's a power that's greater than thinking. And that's the presence.

So on the one hand, there is you as the person that consists of thinking, plus the emotions that go with thinking, feelings, emotions, sense perceptions, interpreted through thinking. That's you as the person. That's the person.

That's most people's only reality. And here you discover, well, most of you already have discovered it or it becomes obscured periodically. You discover there is another dimension to who you are.

That is deeper than thinking and sense perceptions and emotions. And that is called liberation. It liberates you from bondage to sensory perception, to thinking, and to the emotional ups and downs.

I say bondage because that really is how it is when you are identified with form, which is what it is, sense perceptions, forms that arise, sensory formations, sounds, images, so on. Thinking, identified with every thought that arises. Emotions, identified with every emotion that comes.

That's bondage. You are in the grip of all these things that come and go. And then you discover that there is another dimension that doesn't come and go, although your awareness of it may come and go.

And that is the presence. We could also call it, I sometimes call it the space around the things that come and go. The space behind, the space around.

And that is essentially who you are, the timeless being, the consciousness. So there is a kind of detachment that comes with that awareness. Detachment means you're not attached anymore.

So you contemplate the world, and the things that come into your field of consciousness that arise visually and all the other senses. And you're not attached, and you don't compulsively judge it anymore as it arises. That's really what creates the attachment.

And that's why in Shakespeare, in one of his plays, it says, there's neither good or bad, but thinking makes it so. And that's the attachment to whatever arises every moment. Sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions.

And as you become aware of yourself as the underlying presence, a kind of spaciousness is suddenly there inside you. Not only when you sit like now, it's easier to sense, to feel that as we are here, but also when you start talking to someone. You say what you have to say, and then it becomes second nature to you that you are then, in addition to what you have to say, what's the thoughts, the words that come out of your mouth, there's still an awareness of that space around all the things.

It's very hard to put this into words because it has no form. So then you are both the speaker and the thinker, and more fundamentally, you are also the space out of which the thinking arises, and the words. So that's why I sometimes say there's a space around everything suddenly, and you are, that gives you a sense of, ah, it's, life is, you're no longer in the grip of everything that comes and goes.

There's a, this is detachment, one could say. There's a sense of spaciousness around everything that arises in your life. Without that, you are trapped, and you're in the grip of all your old conditioning which runs your mind, the old conditioning that determines your emotional, mental reactions.

And of course, basically, you're asleep, and thinking you're awake. It's a dream, often not a very pleasant dream, or the pleasant moments are few and far between. So another way of putting this is that you, you know there's something called lucid dreaming, which is when you're having a dream at night, you're in bed, and in the middle of the dream, you suddenly become aware that you're dreaming.

That's quite a lovely thing to realize. Oh, this is a dream, and then you look around, and you experience in a totally different way with detachment, and you're still interested. You say, wow, this is amazing.

It's a dream. So it's called lucid dreaming. Sometimes happens to people just accidentally, and others, some people actually try to cultivate that, which you can do before going to sleep.

You can bring awareness, say, I'm going to be conscious in my dreams. But much more

important than that is to have lucid living, because without lucid living, everyday living is a kind of dream. So it is similar then, this lucid living is similar to lucid dreaming, because there comes an awareness into your life that wasn't there before, or was obscured.

And from there, your experience of life, your life experience becomes much more pleasant and interesting, just like in a dream, when you become aware, oh, this is a dream, and suddenly, whatever happens in that dream is not that frightening anymore, because you know it's a dream. You could actually look at something that scared you before, because you know it's a dream, and you look, whoa, that monster doesn't look that bad. It's actually quite interesting.

And of course, in a dream, if you look at a monster in a dream that before frightened you that you couldn't bear to look at, very often it becomes transformed into a benign presence. And that's even a mythological motive. If you give it your attention, a transformation happens.

It's only if you try not to look, you don't give it your attention, it is threatening. So that happens in a dream. If you give it your attention, which you can now do, because you know it's a dream, and then you can look at whatever is there in the dream, and in the act of looking, it's not just a passive thing.

That's the amazing, the looking at the dream images is not just a passive thing. The act of looking, giving conscious attention, transforms that which you are looking at. And really, and ultimately, that also applies to lucid living.

It's not just that internally you, there's a transformation in the way in which you perceive the world and in the way in which thinking happens, transformation because of that added dimension of spaciousness or depth. It's also, your life experience also changes. It's not just how you perceive it changes.

For example, when you interact with another human being on whatever level, whatever kind of relationship it is, if you're there not only as the person saying what you have to say, your opinions, what needs to be done, your viewpoints, there's not only that, there's also the space, you as the person and you as the space. And when you bring in that dimension of spaciousness, presence, depth, that is there in the background or around whatever it is that you say, you feel, so how does it look in practice? You're talking to somebody, whatever you need to talk about, discuss, and at the same time, you can still feel, let's put it like this, you can still feel a presence or spaciousness in the background as yourself, a space around what it is that you're saying.

There's still an awareness of awareness around the thoughts and the words. A moment of spaciousness. No thinking is required at this moment.

We wouldn't add anything. Do it and be aware of yourself and what's around you. So the consciousness that you are makes this possible.

The light of consciousness. If you cannot yet in your daily life step from thinking into awareness, freedom from thinking for a moment, then you just use one of the portals, inner body, breath awareness, acute attention to sensory perception. And after a while, you can just step out of thinking when it's not needed or reduce thinking to just a trickle.

And then presence arises and you sense it with your entire energy field. And gradually, this power grows in you. The power itself doesn't grow, but its manifestation in you grows.

Presence, power grows in you. At first, it seems nothing remarkable. Even uninteresting.

But first you notice it frees you from a lot of turmoil, mind generated. And then it deepens you because it is the deeper I, the deep I that emerges, the deep self, the deep I. Don't wait for emergency situations to become present.

Don't wait for life to knock you, give you a jolt, a shock. Choose it in ordinary moments. Then it grows in you.

And when life does something to you, it can only intensify the presence instead of taking you out of presence into reactivity. You respond, but don't react. Reaction is on the conditioned mind.

Responding is out of presence. As I said before, with reaction, you are at the mercy of events and people. Your inner state is at the mercy of other people, their behavior towards you or in general.

And you're at the mercy of what's going on around you. Always like somebody's nice and somebody's not nice. That's reactive.

Responses comes out of, you can't predict. Reactions you can predict in people. If you have lived with somebody for a while, you know exactly how they are going to react when you say this or when that happens.

You learn how they react. You know it beforehand. You can push their buttons if you wanted to, and you know exactly how they're going to react.

Totally predictable because they are programmed to react in certain ways. That's their conditioned mind. But when they become present, you can't predict anymore how they're going to respond because they won't be reacting.

Maybe they'll just be there. Who knows? And you can't predict what you, how you will respond to certain situations.

People sometimes ask, what would you do if this happened to you? I don't know. The new possession, nice and shiny, whatever it is, and there you look at it.

Got it now. It's mine. And after a few days or a week or two, it wears off.

You can actually enjoy all manifestations of life from the tree to the store display at Tiffany's, if you want. It's just life. You don't necessarily need to, you don't, at that stage, you don't need to have anything because you're already enjoying all that.

And that is a wonderful feeling of abundance already, but you have to be in the background. There needs to be the connectedness. So there is a certain powerful field of stillness as you walk around Fifth Avenue, looking at everything.

You need to have a stronger connection on Fifth Avenue than you need in the middle of the forest. But it's not that you can't be in that place on Fifth Avenue. You can.

So if you're walking out in the middle of a big city, of course you get all kinds of, your attention is pulled this way and that. And the staying rooted in that field so that you're not dependent on your environment to feel peaceful. If you're dependent on your environment to feel peaceful, then, oh, I can't be peaceful here.

I need to go out somewhere else. Yes, I'm often mentioned, of course, that nature is helpful. It is wonderful to go out to nature.

But if you are dependent on nature to become still and peaceful, then your life becomes restricted. And there is a lack of depth still. You're dependent on a certain environment.

Fine, you love nature, that's beautiful. You love being in nature, that's wonderful. But you are then dependent on that and you cannot take that state of aliveness into the city.

So it requires greater depth and intensity, aliveness, so that you can enjoy the aliveness everywhere, wherever you are. In all manifestations of life, see them as temporary play, the temporary play of forms, because that's what it is. There's nothing permanent here, nothing permanent.

If you take a movie picture of Fifth Avenue, let's just stay with Fifth Avenue. That stands for all cities and all streets. If you took a movie camera to Fifth Avenue and film all the people running around the street, and then a few years later, let's say 50 years, you watch the film, then most of the people running around Fifth Avenue will have disappeared already, not only from Fifth Avenue, but from the planet.

So you watch ultimately insubstantial life forms going about their business or their play. They call it business, but it is play. And to them, it's serious, but it's not.

It's a play of life, includes Wall Street. If you know it's play, it's fine, but you can only know it's play through being connected to that which is deeper than the forms in

yourself, then you recognize the forms as the play of form. But if you are not connected with the depths of being in yourself, you don't recognize the movement of form as the play of forms, because to you then, that's all there is.

And then there comes a neediness. I need these forms to make me happy. And there comes a concern and seriousness about forms because that's all you seem to have.

So you get unduly anxious about the forms of life. And everything is very serious. So most people in big cities are serious, going about their business.

And there's fear underlying the seriousness. They're serious because they are ultimately in a state of concealed to themselves fear. And they're trying to get somewhere.

They never get there, but they're always on the way somewhere, very important to get this done. They never get it done because they do this and then there's something else. Lack of, that's not abundance.

There can be no true feeling of abundance if you don't recognize the playful nature of the world. If you are dependent for your sense of fullness on the forms, there's no abundance. You're just seeking more forms to fill your life up with.

So here we have then fundamental, at the most fundamental level, abundance is being in touch with a source of life within yourself and recognizing it as the essence of who you are, of course. And then look around and experience the sensory world. And then you can participate in the play without completely losing yourself in it and enjoy the play of form.

And then you experience, as you do that, you experience another level of abundance. That is the abundance of experiences, of experiencing life in various ways through where you go, what you do, relationships, sensory experience even, and even there, you don't get lost in it. You can even enjoy food.

Tastes good. Without the addictive enjoyment that is very different, that goes, I need more of this. And then there's come, you want to, you need to take it in to, more, more, more.

More, more, more. Drink, another one, another one. Sex, need more.

And it draws you out of, yes, you, where's the next, the next sex object? And it, of course, it draws you out of, out there. You can enjoy sensory experience without becoming addicted to sensory experience.

And that is to being able to enjoy sensory experience and whatever you do is also abundance. It's a part of the fullness of life. And then it's possible that also things come into your life and then you can enjoy things also for what they are without getting

worked up about owning them or fear of loss.

Enjoy something beautiful, why not? But not obsessively accumulating one thing after another pointlessly, but to honor the world of things also is part of being here. So as things come to you, so you're not really, you don't need to seek abundance for the sake of abundance.

You have to go to the place of abundance. From there, different levels of abundance manifest in your life. They may include the outermost level things coming to you.

All being said already in the New Testament by Jesus, seek only that connectedness with the source within yourself, which he called the kingdom of heaven. And all the other things that you thought you needed for your happiness will be added unto you. You thought you need it, you don't need them anymore for your happiness, but they will be added.

So to appreciate beautiful things is also part of abundance. And you don't always need to own what you appreciate. You can appreciate beautiful things for a while that you see that somebody else has.

You can say, oh, that's a beautiful thing you have without the compulsion to say, I need to have that too. Appreciate it. You can look.

When I lived in London, I would sometimes enjoy walking along Regent Street and Bond Street where the expensive shops are and look in the windows. I couldn't afford a single item that I saw in these windows, but I didn't really want it. Just enjoying some of the beautiful things.

And two minutes is enough, okay, I've enjoyed it now. I couldn't have bought it, but I didn't really need it. Even if I'd had the money, I don't believe I would have bought it.

Maybe one or two things I might have bought, but not more. So you can visit somebody's home and say, oh, this is so beautiful without mentally saying, oh, his thing is much more expensive than mine. It used to be the custom in Spain, it's probably no longer the custom because the country has become modernized.

When you visited somebody's home and you said, oh, isn't this beautiful? The host would immediately say, take it, it's yours. It's yours.

Of course, you are not supposed to take it. You would have been shocked. Some foreigners did make that mistake.

So to go about wanting to manifest material abundance in your life is perhaps not the right way to go about it. Because you're concentrating on the outermost layer of abundance. And even if you manage to manifest abundance on the outer level, it's not

going to give you the true feeling of abundance.

It's not, in other words, it's not going to make you happy. It's not going to fulfill you except for a few days. The new possession, nice and shiny, whatever it is, and there you look at it, got it now, it's mine.

And after a few days or a week or two, or give it a month, it wears off. It's no longer that fulfilling to be driving the Ferrari or whatever it is. There's nothing wrong with the Ferrari, but if you're looking to the Ferrari for happiness and fulfillment, and to give you the feeling of, it's not going to work for that long.

If you're just driving it because you enjoy that experience, that's a different matter. There's a very, there is a difference here. So don't condemn the world of things.

This has been done traditionally by many religious people. They were afraid of it. And so don't go there.

You must not have any possessions in many religious orders and so on, not just Christian, but also other religions, monks, nuns. No, you must not have any possessions. In some traditions, Buddhist monks are not allowed to touch money.

Of course, I can see the reason behind it, but it would be even greater, of course, if you could touch money and you're free of attachment to the money that you touch. I'm not attached to it, and then you can touch it. It's fine.

Rather than being a, ooh. And of course, you're not allowed to touch a woman. Oh, ooh.

Ooh. It's dangerous because, of course, the reasoning behind it is it will take you into complete unconsciousness. The sexual urge will arise up in you and will make you totally unconscious.

Maybe that's the reason why in some cultures, women are covered, scared. It could be chaos. And yet, if you are connected with a source, then all that is not a problem.

So manifesting abundance is not really the right way. Go to the source and allow from the source for abundance if it wishes to manifest in your life. You start with the source.

Then you go into enjoying all the forms of life, next level of abundance. Then you enjoy relating with the forms of life, the play of whatever you do in life. You enjoy that, and then that is how, and out of that enjoyment of what you do, that energy most likely also brings things into your life, forms that before you thought you needed desperately to feel abundance.

So they come as an icing on the cake, and you might give them away again if they come. You have them for a while, just, oh, I've had this for long enough. Now you have it.

And so the flow is there beautifully. As you give things away, new things come. And if they're all taken away from you, it's fine too.

You're quite happy with that. So manifest abundance from the inside out, not from the outside as hoping that you go find some inner state through external things. That is a dilemma of many people who practice manifesting, which of course manifesting is something that you can use, and it works if it's done rightly.

But the dilemma or the fallacy is the belief that whatever you manifest is going to make you happy. It's to seek the fullness of life through what you manifest, through things. And that doesn't really work.

So when people manifest something in that way in their lives, a material thing, initially they're quite elated. I've got it now, I've got the house or whatever it is that I wanted to manifest. And then that manifestation wears off and after a while brings about its own problems and a new level of problems.

And the feeling of fullness does not stay. It doesn't stay with them. Nothing can give it to you, can give you the true feeling of abundance.

And that's the amazing thing, which implies nothing that you achieve in the future can get you there. You have to start with that. And you don't need to ask for things to be different in your life.

You start here now where you are. And here now you go within and see if you can find that place within where life is born. Continuously, but which itself, in itself is unborn, timeless, consciousness itself.

As promised, I checked the news this morning. So that you don't have to do it. And I didn't find anything extraordinary.

But as I was reading, I got inspired to share with you the first, although it's not extraordinary, to share with you the first news item today as a spiritual practice. And for this reason, I brought this device. The good thing about it, it saves trees, which otherwise would be used for newsprint.

So what I'll share with you is a very brief news item, which was at the top. If I read it to you in the normal way, it would take 30 seconds to read, but I'll read it to you in a different way so that it can become a spiritual practice. Listening to it can become a spiritual practice.

And that is with lots of spaces between the words and the spaces between the words and sentences, while they happen, I'd ask you as part of your spiritual practice to pay attention to the silence in this room, because the silence in this room is ultimately, one could say, what makes the sounds possible. If there were not silence in this room, there

could be no sounds. And as you know, I mentioned yesterday, and you probably know it already, both conceptually and from your own experience, that when you pay attention to external silence, immediately there's inner stillness.

So that's one way of accessing inner stillness is to notice when it's there, to notice external silence around you. Once you are able to connect with inner stillness, you no longer need silent conditions around you, although you might welcome them when you encounter them. It's lovely, but you could be still in the midst of traffic and a shopping mall and a noisy restaurant, because most restaurants these days are noisy.

I don't know if it's the same here. It's hard to find a restaurant without loud music. Because people who are identified with the mental noise actually become very uncomfortable with silence.

Ooh. And so you have in some places in North America, elevators, some of them even have music playing, and some elevators not only have music, they have a TV screen too. So while you're ascending or descending, you're not condemned to having to suffer this dreadful silence for a few seconds.

You can continue to clutter your mind by watching the screen and continue in your state of habitual hypnosis. So to be able to listen to something and then be aware of that dimension, the underlying dimension, ultimately, of course, it's consciousness, the formless dimension, so that you don't get totally drawn into, hypnotized by the world, the mind. And that, by doing that, you bring sanity into this world.

Now, the news item I'm going to read is, it could be regarded as funny, it could be regarded as potentially terribly, terribly serious, it's a mixture. But no matter what perspective you have on it, whether it's funny or potentially terribly, terribly serious, it is important that you connect with the transcendent dimension. Otherwise you contribute to the lostness, if that's a word, the lostness of the world.

The world is lost. Humans are lost, lost in their minds, lost in crazy, compulsive, habitual mind patterns, collective mind patterns. So even if it's serious, it's very important to be aware of the transcendent dimension.

And even if it affected you, it's particularly important to be connected with that. And then you no longer, you become free of fear by being connected to the stillness within, which is more than that. We just, it's one of the words we can use to talk about it.

So be as interested in the words that I read, be as interested in the silence, noticing, listening to, being aware of the silence in this room, which ultimately is the stillness within you, because only with the stillness within you can you be aware of outer silence. So be as interested in, so to speak. It's not the right word because silence is not interesting.

It's deeper than interesting. Only things that you can dissect and think about are interesting. So the news item may be interesting.

The underlying silence is not interesting. There's a vast depth to it, but it's as uninteresting as the most spectacular sunrise or sunset. You go, wow.

But nobody says, oh, that's such an interesting sunset. Let's think about it. What can be so interesting, this sunset, isn't it?

No, you don't, because when you respond to beauty, some vast beauty out in nature, you don't approach it with a thinking mind, because the moment when you really are overwhelmed by some grand spectacle in nature, your mind stops and awareness remains. And you go, allow the mind to subside, which means thinking right now is not important. Something else is important.

Meditation begins when thinking is recognized as not all important. And you begin to sense there's something in you that's deeper than thinking. And becoming aware of that dimension beyond thinking, that's meditation, not below thinking, in which case you would go into sleep, but above thinking, so to speak.

So right here and now, how do you become aware of that dimension? Simply by becoming aware of yourself, not the historical self, person, but a more fundamental sense of beingness or presence that is always there, but most people don't know it's there. And so for them, it is as if it didn't exist.

So meditation is becoming aware of yourself as a sense of presence. And that sense of presence could also be called stillness and could be called many other things. And realizing that dimension within yourself is the most important thing for you in this life.

In this lifetime, it's a kind of foundation for all that is good in your life. And if you're not aware of that dimension that transcends the person, it means that continuously you derive your sense of who you are from the movement of your mind. Which is thought.

And nothing is going to give you lasting fulfillment if you haven't found that dimension. In other words, life becomes frustrating, frequently upsetting, consisting seemingly of a succession of problems and conflict situations, things going wrong, continuously demanding your attention. With an unspoken promise, which is an underlying assumption, unconscious, that at some point your life is going to work out and will be fulfilling and become free of your problems.

Perhaps a better relationship, better place to live, better work situation, improved health situation. And then when you come into the new situation, it seems at first, yeah, this is better. And then the old patterns reemerge in the new situation.

In other words, it's no longer fulfilling. So nothing in this world can be fulfilling for long if

you haven't transcended the person and the historical sense of self. To be, this is the being dimension, to become aware of the simple fact that you are.

I am, when you make that statement, you say, I am. And you can sense the meaning behind the fact that you are the words. You can sense the meaning, but you cannot understand it.

I'm using the word understand as conceptual knowledge, conceptual realization. You cannot understand conceptually what I am means or points to, you have to give up wanting to understand, which means you have to give up thinking. And although I am is still a thought, a word, but behind the word is the thought.

It takes you to the edge. And what it points to is beyond thinking. What it points to is that you can become aware of being conscious right now.

So you're becoming aware of yourself as a space of consciousness. And that's who you are. That's the very foundation for your sense of identity.

I am. So, when you become aware of that, there's no dualities to the dualities there when I speak about it, because of the way a sentence is constructed, subject and object. So I am aware of consciousness.

I'm aware of awareness. Sounds like duality. It sounds as if there's the I that is conscious of consciousness.

But the I and consciousness are synonymous. They're one and the same. So you cannot be aware of awareness.

Ultimately, although when we speak about it, it sounds like it. What it really means is you become self-aware. Consciousness, which is you, becomes self-aware.

That's meditation. If you need a technique to get you there, use it. Don't get attached to it.

Ultimately, it's not the technique. And it's not a doing. If you're thinking, I'm doing a meditation, you can't do meditation.

And even to say, I meditate, is misleading. And can become an obstacle, the idea that I am meditating or I have to meditate. Because it implies that you're doing something.

Doing takes time. Meditation is the realization of the timeless dimension of consciousness. So it can't be a doing.

It's only when doing is relinquished, you become aware of doing. Being. Like now.

So there's the timeless dimension, which is inseparable from who you are in your

essence, which at the same, is also the timeless dimension of the universe. So the ability to be still, or to realize the stillness that's already there within yourself, and not believing that you need to still your mind, which becomes almost a battle, becomes a doing. But to realize, even if your mind is in turmoil, underneath it, there's a stillness, like the deep waters, the depths of the ocean.

And you realize that just by becoming aware of yourself, not the historical self, but the I presence. So in itself, of course, it's neutral. The technology is neutral.

It's not either bad or good. It depends how it's used. It is, at the moment, it is to a large extent, a reflection of the unconscious mind.

So if you want to learn about human unconsciousness, if you want to learn about the human ego, just go there and read what people post. Look at the reactivity of people on social media, and so on, the comments they leave. You can learn a lot about unconsciousness and identification with mental positions.

So the first thing, of course, is be careful with what you put out there, what kind of thing you post. If you post things online, is it reactive? Give yourself a moment when you read something before you type in an answer or a comment.

Give yourself a moment and go within, and avoid making people wrong. You can talk about issues, but don't make people wrong and amplify your ego by making others wrong, even though their position, political or otherwise, you may regard as completely misguided or erroneous. There's still a human being behind that.

So you can put forward arguments against somebody's perspective or viewpoint without making another human being wrong. So what you put out is very important. Is your communication conscious or not?

Or is it reactive? And then it can be used for other purposes. I'm there too sometimes.

There are certain places where I appear on, could go to YouTube or whatever, and then suddenly there's a spiritual teacher talking. So do you professionally work with, what exactly do you do in your work that involves the media or?

[Speaker 2] (3:29:34 - 3:29:48)

Pretty much involves the creation, the ideas around the digital products and services. So creating the product that people actually use and designing the interfaces that people actually use on their phones and on their computers.

[Speaker 1] (3:29:48 - 6:01:17)

Right. There are some meditation sites on all these things. So there's a great potential for raising consciousness there.

Somebody recommended to me several apps for meditation, which I now have on my phone. I haven't tried them yet. I've been there for a while, but I have four or five that are there.

I want to try them out. So that's the very thing that otherwise would clutter your mind can actually also be used to bring about space or spaciousness in your mind. So it doesn't necessarily mean that when you have your phone or the 99% of cases when people look there, their mind is being cluttered, but maybe they're on a meditation app.

Maybe they're looking at a beautiful, spacious picture and all listening to some sound or something, take a conscious breath, have a little reminder every two hours to take a conscious breath and bring spaciousness. Oh yes, spaciousness. So the very same thing that otherwise clutters your mind can now unclutter your mind.

It's possible. So I believe that it's also going to grow now and it has to because otherwise that technology could potentially drive humans completely insane, to remove their ability to focus on anything for more than a few seconds. People create young people who are totally uncentered, have no spaciousness within.

Don't even communicate with humans anymore because they prefer to communicate digitally. So these things are important, but what you put out is important. So always take into consideration whether this brings people to presence or whether it clutters somebody's mind.

And perhaps you can combine, of course, what you do needs to be also commercially viable. So, but I believe you can combine the two. It's not necessarily a question of either it's commercially viable and it clutters people's minds or it's presence and we are going to go out of business.

Doesn't have to be like that. It's up to you to be creative. Use, the more still you are, the more creative insights you will have into, and you might get some amazing ideas of what is possible.

I can't tell you what is possible. I don't know enough about it. I know very little about it.

So, but you're in a wonderful position. So allow yourself to go deep enough within, because then it is then the creative ideas seem to come. And if you find a thing that is not only brings people to presence, but also helps your company to grow, then that then becomes a conscious business, which is wonderful.

It's challenging. Of course, it's challenging. So don't let all your attention be absorbed by that kind of activity.

Take still, you still need to connect with nature, take it off as much as possible away from there, connect with nature and then bring it back. Another thing that's just in

connection with this, not perhaps directly related to your question, but related to this, what tends to happen is that these devices, people are never, they're still in bed and they're still doing stuff on it. And that takes you over there at dinner and they're doing stuff on it.

It breaks the relation with other people. You're at dinner with, I can see, I see people in restaurants, the couple sitting at having dinner together and both are on their phones. Now that's probably means they have known each other for a while.

If it happens on the first date, that's the first date will probably be the last one. But if happens after they've known each other for two years, then it's almost a normal thing that they're not present with each other. Or then they exchange a few words and then she looks at the phone again and then he stares into space and then she's still on her phone.

I've actually observed it. She's still on her phone and he's staring into space. And then finally he gets out his phone too because he doesn't want to be staring into space.

And then I wonder, are they texting each other? Right? Two good things that I learned that in some huge companies, I believe it might be VW in Germany.

Well, they've had enough problems, but now they tell their employees after 6 p.m., they're not allowed to use the company phones anymore, not to deal with emails or anything. They need to get off. And that's a very wise thing because the more people's attention gets absorbed by this, the more confused and non-creative they become, the more cluttered their minds become, the more ineffective they're even at their work.

Not to mention as human beings, their quality of life decreases enormously. So don't give yourself spaces. Don't allow these things to take over your life.

That's vitally important. So it's wonderful that some big companies like that have this policy now, no emails or anything after 6 p.m. Well, that's wonderful. I talked a couple of years ago to Arianna Huffington, who has a famous news website and has also written some books.

And she describes in her latest book how her life deteriorated more and more, although she was making a lot of money. And finally she collapsed and hit her head on her desk and it was complete breakdown. And now she has, for example, in her private life, and that's a good thing, she has this policy of no digital device in my bedroom.

So in her bedroom, she still has books. Sometimes she reads in bed, but it has to be a book, not a Kindle, not the iPad, not the iPhone, no digital device in my bedroom. And that's a good thing to have that, at least you have that space for yourself.

Welcome to our live meditation. It's all about becoming still within, which means not to

be engaged in the stream of thinking. The stream of thinking has a very strong pull for almost everybody, because for most people, their entire sense of who they are and their sense of self, sense of identity is bound up with their stream of thinking.

The stream of thinking, which includes, of course, reactions, likes, dislikes, opinions, mental positions, a story, my story. It's all in the stream of thinking, accompanied a lot by certain emotions that reflect whatever is going on at any given time in the mind, in the stream of thinking. So that is most people's, that is the basis for most people's sense of identity.

The I sense, who I am, or think I am. The most amazing discovery you can make in this lifetime is the discovery that you don't have to think to be yourself. There's another dimension in you that has nothing to do with thinking, but out of which thinking arises.

So it's perhaps not totally right to say it has nothing to do with thinking. Thinking arises out of it. It could, thinking could not exist without that dimension, but that dimension in itself is far beyond thinking, much deeper, vaster.

And as I speak to you about this here and now, I suggest that you become aware of the gaps between words because it is there that that dimension is known. You might notice the gap between words, the space between words, between sentences. That space is just that, it's space.

It has no content. The words are the content within the space. And most people are never aware of the space, but only aware of the content.

So here you'll become aware of the space within, which we can also call stillness. And you realize beyond any thoughts that there is a presence there. It is a presence.

And if you can sense yourself, feel yourself, sense yourself as the presence with no particular attributes, not that underlying sense of beingness or presence is not old or young. It's not successful or a failure. These are all mental labels that you give yourself or other people give yourself and you accept them.

Not young or old, not successful or unsuccessful, rich or poor, even man or woman. So it's nothing to do with that. It's deeper than that.

All the story, your life history, or your life situation right now, whatever your situation is in the realm of relationships, finances, work situation, living situation, health, they all make up who you are on the level of form, but they are not who you are on a deeper level. And at that deeper level, you are simply conscious presence. There must be something to do or think about or worry about.

Just to endure it and suddenly you feel alive without mental stimulus. What is boredom? Why this pervasive unsatisfactoriness that I feel everywhere, but most intensely when

I'm alone with nothing to do, pervasive unsatisfactoriness that I feel everywhere, but most intensely when I'm alone with nothing to do.

What is this? It's called boredom. That's a good way of putting it, pervasive unsatisfactoriness.

And of course there's a whole industry designed to help you not feel this pervasive unsatisfactoriness. In other words, to stop you from being bored. So you can always, as most people probably do, they always provide their mind with some kind of stimulus.

And these days that's not difficult to do. It's available everywhere. So the mind wants to be stimulated.

It's always hungry for the next thing. So when people get home from work, immediately their mind needs to go into the next thing. And once you've cooked your dinner and eaten your dinner, then the mind goes into what's the next thing?

Is it television? Is it picking up a phone? Is it internet?

Is it emailing or texting? Is it teenagers too? And many others.

There's nothing bad about it. It's fascinating. I recently started occasionally texting and it's quite fascinating.

But what is important to become aware of the mind's demand for food, for stimulus? And if you don't get it, immediately you get into a state of restlessness or pervasive unsatisfactoriness, as the questioner says. You don't feel at home.

You don't feel there's something. Of course, that feeling is always there. It's just it's obscured by the mind.

So that means if you continuously feed your mind with these things, you never reach the deeper levels within yourself. You're stuck. You have to at some point confront the unsatisfactoriness without continuously anesthetizing the unsatisfactoriness and getting some kind of substitute for true aliveness, because that's really what it is.

You don't really feel alive, the aliveness. So you need some kind of stimulus to get a sense of being alive. So it's important to be able to just stop feeding the mind all the time.

There's enough for the mind to do with the things that it really needs to do. And just sit with yourself and allow boredom to arise without running away from it. Because that's your first, you're beginning to go a little bit deeper, but first you need to send to feel that.

And if you don't run away from it, you can actually go through boredom. It's like

suddenly you're through. So it becomes, it's a little obstacle there inside you.

But if you don't run away, stay with it, suddenly before you know it, you've gone deeper into yourself, especially if it might be helpful to feel the inner body while you sit, when boredom begins, boredom comes in, you can feel it. You start looking around. What's the next thing I can do or think about?

There must be something to do or think about or worry about even better. And you stay and you notice that. And then you just endure the discomfort of the mind not getting enough stimulus, food.

And it doesn't, it's not that bad. It's just, you just endure it and then begin to feel the inner body, the aliveness in your hands, your arms, your feet, your legs. And you've already gone through the thresholds of the boredom into something deeper.

And suddenly you feel alive without mental stimulus. Much, actually more alive than you could ever feel through mental stimulus. Because mental stimulus is always on the surface of who you are, ripples on the surface.

And now you go deeper. And then you have the ability to sit or stand or lie and be at ease with the here and now. It's all there ever is, life, here and now.

Be at ease with yourself, here and now. To feel at home, here and now without needing to escape into some mental realm that's not here and now. Need to think about that.

Need to play a video game. Need to watch this program. Look at the magazine at least.

You can see how people, the mind consumes. See how they look through magazines, go to waiting rooms or into people's homes. Nowadays, magazines seem, in many cases, are being replaced by the screen.

But people still, so they go. A greedy search for what's the next, and nothing is quite interesting enough. It's always the next thing.

So that's the dysfunction. And so the wonderful, this ability then grows in you of being rooted in the present moment, in yourself, without needing some mental external stimulus to make you feel complete or alive. In fact, it's only now that you really come to life.

There was a famous French philosopher lived a few hundred years ago. Was it Pascal? Or perhaps, who said, all the problems of humankind and can be traced back to man's ability, man includes women, can be traced back or have their origin in man's inability to sit quietly in a room.

All the problems of the world can be traced back to your inability to sit quietly or at ease in a room. Of course, the implications are deep and vast. It's not just sitting quietly in a

room, but because sitting quietly in a room implies for you to be able to do that, to sit quietly in a room, you need to be connected with that which is deeper in you than the mind.

Otherwise, you can't sit quietly in a room. You'll be bored. You may be quiet on the outside, but you won't be quiet inside.

So you go within, use the inner body as a starting point for going deeper and taking your attention away from where it's usually lodged in the thinking mind. So you go through boredom into being. And suddenly, you enjoy just being.

That's an enormous awakening if you can just enjoy the simple fact of being. And then you, from that state of aliveness of being, you can look around you and find pleasure and satisfaction in what you see or hear or perceive with your whatever sense. The little things around you, their quiet presence, the flowers, the table, the curtains, whatever is there, the sky through the window, the room, the totality of the room, the quietness, and it's all lovely.

Lovely. So you don't need all these substitutes anymore. You may still, of course, you still use the internet or you use it for, but not anymore to, continuously, because you cannot stand being with yourself.

You can't stand yourself. And that's the reality for most people. Think of that or realize what that means, how dysfunctional that is.

You can't stand yourself. That's why you continuously run into this and into that and into that. And if a person who cannot stand him or herself, of course, what kind of relationships is that person going to have?

If you can't stand yourself, then you're using others to make you feel a little better, but that doesn't work. And basically, the inability to be with yourself gets reflected and projected onto others also. And comes the ability of being with other humans, because at first you try to use them and then you can't stand them either.

So you have to break through that mental barrier because otherwise you spend the rest of your life not being able to sit quietly in a room. And as the French philosopher said, all your problems arise there from that inability, because what that really implies is you are not connected with being. You are not connected with that which is deeper than the mind made personality, the thinker.

So come home to yourself so that you can enjoy your own company. And then you can truly enjoy also other people's company rather than use them as substitutes. Enjoy yourself, as the expression implies, it all starts there.

Can you enjoy yourself, your being? Otherwise, nothing will satisfy you ever because

you're not at ease with yourself. And you take your dissatisfied self wherever you go.

Into any relationship or any place. Attention to the resistance of the present, if powerful enough, will dissolve that resistance and a state of presence will emerge. What will dissolve the central core of the self so that it doesn't create endless waves of resistance?

Can we explore the nature of the realization that is necessary? What will dissolve the central core of self so that it doesn't create endless waves of resistance? The central, so what is the central core of self?

The mind structures, the mind movements that are the mental image of me with its accumulated content plus the pain body, the two in cooperation form the central core of self. So what will dissolve that? Of course, that's easy.

Surrender, only now, surrender, it's too easy, isn't it? It's too simple. Surrender to whatever form this moment takes.

Then the self cannot survive in the state of surrender to what is. It's as simple as that. The pain body cannot renew itself when you surrender to the fact that there is a pain body.

And so surrender, I'm not telling you from now on, you need to be in continuous surrender for 24 hours a day. Oh no. It's not that difficult.

It's only this moment that you need to surrender to, not just this, just this, whatever form this takes, it's always this and that you meet in and through surrender. That you can do. You can't surrender for 24 hours a day.

That's a problem, but just this, it's only now. And so the egoic self, nor the pain body can survive in surrender. And so, and then the question may arise, well, how long is it going to take before the central core of self, and my pain body have dissolved?

And that question implies that surrender is not yet complete. Is this moment that bad that you need to get to a future one where you achieve a certain state? To realize the goodness and depth that is already here.

And only through surrender, you realize that. Who you are already. You are greater than in your wildest egoic dreams.

You could ever be, you are already greater than you could ever be, even if the wildest egoic dreams of achievement became realized. Now, already, you are that. This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive.

To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. Now, if you're new to this, you're going to wonder, what's he waiting for? Or when are we going to start?

And of course, the implication behind that question is that meditation is something that you do. And that's a fallacy of many meditators. Then meditation becomes just another doing.

And you can put it in your schedule somewhere after all the appointments and whatever you have to do, then you do the meditation. But meditation is really about finding the dimension of depth in yourself, which is not a doing, it's discovering or sensing a deeper level within yourself, which we could call being. Now, you can't really do anything to find being because being is prior to doing.

And it's always already there as the essence of all life, including the essence of yourself. And now, again, if you are new to this, you may wonder, what's he talking about? How do I find being?

Being is all-pervasive, but because it's so all-pervasive, it's so easy to overlook, just as easy as it is for a fish to overlook the eternal fact of water, because it's so all-pervasive. And so the fish says, water, I've never seen it, it's looked everywhere. So what does that mean, this analogy?

There's something all-pervasive that is both within and without, and that is the essence of who you are. And that is where your sense of identity ultimately derives from. So as we sit here together, can you become aware of the simple fact that you are, the fact of being, the fact that I am right now?

To give you another pointer, can you become aware of your own presence here, without which there would be no sounds to listen to, there would be nothing to see? What is it that makes the listening and the seeing possible? That's the dimension of depth.

That's ultimately where your sense of identity comes from. You can't define it, it just is, you just are. When you become aware of that, all that it really means is not so much that you become aware of something, but you become aware of the fact of awareness.

Still, when I put it into language, it still seems as if you were aware of something, because that's how a sentence is constructed, subject and object, but that's not the reality of it. The reality of it is awareness becomes aware of itself. It's not two, but one.

And awareness is consciousness, consciousness that has become aware of itself. And that's so all-pervasive, that's always in the background of your life, as a deeper sense of I am, or of beingness, or of presence, but you get distracted and seduced by all the things that happen and that you do. And continuously, consciousness identifies and gets attached to all the things that occur, especially the thoughts in your mind.

Consciousness becomes seduced into losing itself in every thought, and then you don't know who you are anymore. You get a false sense of identity, and you don't feel enough, and you feel there's something missing, and that you need more to grow in your sense of

identity, and it never is enough. And here, in the dimension of depth, you are already enough.

There's already a sense of completion, of fullness and aliveness. You don't need to become more alive. You're already alive.

So another way of putting it, it is you become aware of the very aliveness that you are, the life that you are, which is one with the totality of life, the one life. Let's just take a moment and become aware of the present moment. Vitally important in any endeavor that you undertake, no matter what it is, is not to lose your connectedness with the present moment.

So before you start a new enterprise, a new activity, always good to take a moment for awareness, basically. That's what it is. Sometimes people ask, well, what is the present moment?

How do you, where is it? What does it even mean to become aware of the present moment? And the first thing, of course, is that you become aware of whatever surrounds you.

That's the entry point into the present moment, a very easy entry point into present moment awareness. Some people may call it mindfulness, is to become more aware of whatever surrounds you here and now, sense perceptions. Just be with what is.

Give it attention, some attention, the room you're sitting in. Maybe there's a window, you can look out of the window. You can see trees behind me.

I can't see them. I know they're there. This is, you enter the present moment by becoming more aware of sense perceptions, auditory, visual, and perhaps others.

And of course, what that does, you might notice is there's less mental noise. The voice in the head that speaks and speaks, that talks to you, that you have a dialogue with, a monologue that comments and interprets and takes positions, mental positions, identifies with likes, dislikes. Yes, no, never stops talking.

That's the mind, the voice in the head that most people are completely identified with. And that means they're not present. So the first step is take some attention away from that by simply becoming aware of sense perceptions.

And if you can look at something natural, that's even better because a natural thing, a tree, a flower, a plant, the sky, a natural thing lends itself to a present moment awareness more than a man-made, a human-made thing. So anything natural that you can look at for a moment, focus on and give it attention, acknowledge it. You don't need to think about it.

So it's just come aware of the present moment through a sensory perception. And already, if you can do that, if perhaps a few minutes before you were very much immersed in the problem-making mind, it wasn't actually solving any problem because this continuous mind activity actually creates more problem than it solves. If it's not focused, it's unconscious.

So already, suddenly there's a certain amount of peace that descends upon this, the world, your world. It becomes a bit more peaceful. You become aware of the aliveness of things.

So being the light, what does that mean? There's a very important statement that Jesus made that kind of inspired me to use this perhaps seemingly strange expression. In one of the gospels in the New Testament, Jesus said, addressing his disciples or whoever was listening to him, basically addressing each one of us, he said, you are the light of the world.

That's a very profound statement, not perhaps necessarily understood in the churches. There's another statement that he made in another, the Gospel of John, where he said, with reference to himself, I am the light of the world. So we have two statements of profound significance.

On the one hand, he said, you are the light of the world. And then elsewhere, we find him saying, I am the light of the world. So what does that mean?

He's talking to, and he says, you are the light of the world. He was talking to his followers, simple people, not people who are important in the eyes of the world. They were simple people.

So he was not telling them that they are very special. He was pointing to a deeper reality, a deeper, I would say, a deeper identity within them, deeper than their superficial social identity, their form identity in this world. He was pointing to an essence within every human being.

Now, you may find that probably nowhere in the Bible is the word consciousness used. Jesus never used the word consciousness. It would have been meaningless, and probably in his native language, which was Aramaic, the word consciousness probably didn't even exist.

There's even a dispute whether the word consciousness existed in ancient Greek, which of course is the language in which the New Testament was written. There probably is, but we don't need to go into that. So if there had been the word consciousness, it would still have been meaningless to his listeners who were simple people.

And somehow humanity was not ready to hear this. It would have been meaningless to most people alive on the planet to say, the essence of who you are is you are conscious.

The light stands for obviously consciousness.

It could not stand for anything else. And the light in which the world appears is the consciousness. Without consciousness, there's no world.

The greatest mystery about the universe, there are many mysteries in the universe. I love mysteries. There are superficial mysteries.

I love the mysteries of UFOs. And I love the mysteries of crop circles, things like that. And then of course there are the deep mysteries of the vastness of space, outer space, the almost infinite number of galaxies.

Every galaxy is an entire world system. Incomprehensible, inconceivable, unbelievable mystery. We've only scratched the surface of that.

We've only scratched the surface of what this universe is. Then we have the mystery, the outer mystery. Then we have the mystery of the atomic realm and the subatomic realm, which also is inconceivable, incomprehensible, we cannot fully understand it.

It's just an amazing mystery. So we have the macrocosmic mystery and then we have the microcosmic mystery of the world. And in between, we have our everyday world, which we move in.

And yet underlying all that, underlying both the macrocosmic and the microcosmic and our everyday world is the deepest mystery of all. And that is the mystery of consciousness. The most incredible thing is that there is not only a universe, but the most mysterious thing about the universe is that the universe is conscious.

And we don't know what consciousness is. We cannot know what consciousness is in the same way in which we can know something that we look at and examine, that a scientist can examine. The macrocosm, the galaxies, the microcosms, atomic and subatomic realm, scientists rarely talk about consciousness because they don't know what to say about it.

How does it originate? What is it? Where does it come from?

And yet it's so beyond any doubt, one could almost say the one thing that you cannot doubt is that you are conscious right now about yourself. You can doubt everything about yourself, but what you cannot doubt is that you are conscious. Even if the entire world that you, what you experience as the world could all be a dream.

It could be, maybe it's even the matrix. I don't think it is, but a matrix is just a modern form of saying it's a dream-like thing. This very moment could be your dream, that you are dreaming that you're listening to somebody talking about the fact that you might be dreaming and that you might be dreaming that you're seeing this image on the screen

and this person and this person is talking.

But of course, where is this person talking? This person is talking, where does this talk take place? In your consciousness.

I am in your consciousness. Obviously, that's where the whole thing is created. Now, whether, when we say your consciousness, whether that is correct, I would say probably not, although we use that term, your, the way I see it, there's only one consciousness.

You are a manifestation of that one consciousness. So I am speaking in this one consciousness and who am I? I am the light of the world, the one consciousness.

As are you. You are that consciousness. And that is the one thing that you cannot doubt.

You are the light of the world. And this is an experiential realization. It's not something abstract.

It is not something to believe in. Then I believe that I am the light of the world. It's nothing to believe in.

But to realize firsthand, immediate, to realize this in your immediate experience, the very fact that the one thing that you cannot doubt about yourself, your whole identity may be just a mental construct. It is, by the way. Your whole identity is just maybe so that you don't, you won't stop listening to me.

Your whole identity may be just a temporary mental construct that can be doubted a little bit, perhaps a bit like a dream. And your whole life could be, it is a kind of dream. Is it, it's a question of perspective where you say it's real or it's a dream.

A dream evaporates very quickly, dissipates, it disappears. But every experience that you have disappears very quickly. Even the dinner you had last night, was that a dream?

Your last vacation, was that a dream or did it happen? And then you remember a dream you had last night. Okay, that was a dream, but the vacation was real, but it's gone now.

So you can doubt many things. You can doubt the absolute reality of this world and your experience that may be, but there was a famous, as you know, probably a French philosopher, Descartes, who came to this point. He wanted to, and he came at the end of the Middle Ages, which had all kinds of weird beliefs and superstitions.

And so he wanted to know, is there anything that is beyond doubt? Everything can be doubted. And he went inside, and then he realized that he was still thinking all the time.

And so he said, I think, therefore I am. That's beyond doubt. But he hadn't gone quite deep enough.

He was on his way towards the true realization, but he stopped before he reached the point where you transcend thinking, but are still conscious and aware. If he had waited a little, and if he had stopped thinking for a moment and realized that beyond thought, there is a consciousness, there's a vast realm of consciousness. Beyond thought, there is an awareness, and where there is the light, the light of consciousness before it becomes a thing, that the light shines through every thought form.

The light is not separate from, the thoughts are not separate from the totality of consciousness. They are like a form that consciousness takes. So the realization, I am the light of the world, is extremely important.

And that's the realization of the one thing within you that is beyond doubt, that you are conscious. And even if it's all a dream, for the dream to be perceived, to be experienced, for the dream to happen, there needs to be a light in which it happens, in which it is perceived and known. And that is the light of consciousness.

And the entire world, to appear, it needs to become a world, it needs the light of consciousness. And so this consciousness, which is the light of the world, which is the essence of who you are, you cannot, scientists have such a problem with it, because that's the one thing, not a thing, I'd just call it a thing. It's the one thing that cannot be an object of knowledge.

Everything else, you are the subject that knows the object. You look at something, you're the subject. I look at my hand, he is my hand, I look my hand.

Anything that the scientist does, the scientist is the observer, and what he or she examines is the observed. Now that works with everything, except with one thing. You cannot be the observer of consciousness.

In other words, consciousness cannot become the observed, because consciousness is the eternal subject, the eternal observer. So if let's say the scientist is looking for consciousness, and the power that is looking for consciousness is the light of consciousness. So whatever the scientist looks at to solve the mystery of consciousness is the consciousness looking for itself.

And so you could never find that consciousness and say, oh, there it is. You can never say, I have it. You cannot even say, I understand it.

It's the eternal mystery, but that is the eternal mystery of who you are. So you cannot, essentially you cannot make yourself into an object of knowledge. That would be the ego itself.

You can know yourself as an ego and say, that's me, and talk about yourself or your conditioned entity, the person, the personality, the historical person, the mental construct that is who you are, that can be an object of knowledge. But the essence of

who you are can never be an object of knowledge because it is the eternal subject. So you cannot, and it is inseparable from the transcendent, which is really God.

So in essence, you are God, or perhaps say more acceptable and perhaps more accurate to say, perhaps I wouldn't go so far as to say that you are God, but I would say that you are an emanation of God in the same way that a ray of sunlight is an emanation of the sun and is connected to the sun, but is not the sun. In the same way, you are an emanation of source, the one, but God, you are. Now, if you look for God, the same applies because really that is consciousness is the emanation.

If the same applies, you cannot find God as an object, and there it is. Jesus said that literally, but people just don't seem to get it because people asked him, he used this expression, kingdom of heaven, which in my translation is kingdom is dimension and heaven is spaciousness. It's the dimension of pure consciousness, spaciousness, the dimension of spaciousness.

And kingdom of heaven is not an external thing, it's an inner dimension of consciousness. So find the kingdom of heaven that is within you. Okay, he said, and then his disciples said, when does the kingdom of heaven come?

Because they had completely misunderstood what he was talking about. When does the kingdom of heaven come? And he said, now he's talking, this kingdom of heaven is the consciousness.

And he said, the kingdom of heaven does not come with signs to be perceived. You cannot say, look, it's over here, or look, it's over there, because truly I tell you, it is within you. He said it all.

What does it mean? He says, the kingdom of heaven does not come with signs that you can perceive. You cannot perceive it in the way in which you perceive external things, because it is the eternal subject.

You cannot make God or consciousness, which is the emanation of God, into an object of perception or an object of knowledge. And that's why the only way a sign can be perceived is can understand consciousness. If the scientist becomes, directs the attention that goes outward back into itself, and the scientist or anybody, you, becomes aware that what he, she has been looking for is already the answer.

It's in the answers, what you are looking, you are what you're looking for. Because if you try and try and try to get enlightened, and then it just, you get so frustrated, it's just not happening, so you join the suffering group, and then you're much more likely to find it. Now, here's an interesting little paragraph on the Bhagavad Gita.

What kind of people become spiritual seekers? And it divides into, there are four types of persons, according to here, and this still applies very much nowadays, and this was

2,000 or 3,000 years ago. There are four different types of persons who seek spirituality or God.

So Krishna talks again as the personification of the one. Four types of people seek a connection with me. One, the world-weary, people who worship God for the alleviation of physical or mental agony, or to be released from fears and adversity.

There's many people, of course, who come to a spiritual teacher or teaching or a spiritual book, come for that reason, and it is a good reason to be, one, to be free of suffering. And of course, the whole Buddha's teaching is about freedom from suffering, so that's one type. Two are the seekers of happiness.

They are seeking happiness through worldly things, people who pray to God to obtain wealth, family, power, prestige, and so forth. So maybe those are people also who do go into manifesting things through positive thinking and affirmations, but come out connecting with a somewhat deeper level, yes, in a limited way still, yes. So they're seeking spirituality because they want something in this world.

It still applies. Not that much has changed, apparently. And then there are the seekers of, this number three now, the third group, are the seekers of spiritual advancement, people whose motive for connecting with divinity is to gain knowledge and experience to aid their self-realization.

And I would add, people also who want to have the high of what they conceive of as the high that surely enlightenment must be, as I sometimes call it. They want the fireworks, they're waiting for some ultimate experience. So that's another group, many like that.

And of course, I'll talk about that in a minute. Number four, these are relatively rare, according to the Bhagavad Gita, are people who want to know God, who truly want to know the Atma, the Self, who know that God alone exists, and whose only impulse is for the divine and nothing else. And those are relatively rare.

I just want God. So the ones numbers, whose motive for connecting with divinity is to gain knowledge and experience to aid their self-realization. So we have wanting to be free of suffering, wanting to be happy through this, that, or the other, three, wanting knowledge or experience or some high, and four, the direct wanting the one.

I just want that. So it's, of course, Bhagavad Gita says, of these four, the last is the highest because they know my truth and are devoted to me as I'm supremely dear to them, they are very dear to me. The first three are attached to the worldly objects or mental states they desire.

But certainly all four types are noble because any reason for turning Godward or inwards will in due time lead to spiritual transformation and is therefore ultimately good. So my comment on this is the, it is true that the ones who just want God are rare, and that's

fine, it's not needed. Wanting to be free of suffering is more helpful.

Those who want to be free of suffering or adversity who've had enough suffering, that is a very powerful motivation for seeking spiritual awakening. It's a more powerful motivation and more likely to lead to realization or awakening than those who are seeking either happiness because they will have to experience it. None of the things they seek, even when they get them, is really going to fulfill that purpose of making them happy and fulfilled.

And then they begin to suffer. And so they join group one. So first you're in that group for quite a while, and then when you realize, okay, my manifestation is great, it works, but still it's not quite right because nothing fulfills me.

Then you join, you go back to group one. You're suffering. And if you're seeking, now many spiritual seekers seek some kind of enlightenment experience or awakening.

And sometimes I get, they write in and say, I've been trying so hard for so many years and it's not happening yet. I want to be free. I want to be enlightened or whatever they call it.

And they are expecting some kind of experience or they believe that if they acquire enough knowledge about it, finally it's going to work. And so they become very knowledgeable. They can quote all kinds of scriptures.

It's all there. And they know more and more about it and more and more. And for those people, it's quite hard.

In fact, unless they join another group, they're not going to make it. But they will have to join another group, which again is group number one, suffering. Because if you try and try and try to get enlightened and then it just, you get so frustrated, it's just not happening.

So you join the suffering group and then you're much more likely to find it. So I'm really very fond of group one, suffering. As long as you're not identified with yourself as the suffering entity, when that becomes your identity, then you have another problem.

But nothing that cannot be addressed and recognized in yourself. It can be a helpful thing to be in unusual surroundings because it's easier to be more present. In unusual surroundings, that's the advantage of traveling.

And that's why, as I've written somewhere, many people feel more alive when they travel. And when they are at home, their surroundings are so familiar that they lose presence completely. They don't see things anymore.

They go from where they live to their office or wherever it is, go and done it so many

times, they don't see it anymore. And you would be surprised even at home, your usual surroundings, you might have a painting on your walls and haven't looked at it in the past three years. Might be very beautiful.

Or your garden or the plants in there. So this is the familiarity can lead to a kind of semi-sleep-like state. And when you're traveling, you go, oh.

And the good thing is you might not even have a name for all the new things you see. At home, you know what everything is called. But here you see things, you might see a weird animal.

Or the mind stops because you can't name it. And that's a wonderful thing. Or you see trees that you haven't seen before and you go, oh.

Or you might say to your friend, look at that. And you might notice in the moment of looking at that, you're not naming it in your mind because you don't know what it's called. And so there's a moment, a few seconds of just being present.

Be the presence rather than the naming person. So it helps to be wide awake to your sense perceptions because that is one way of coming into the present moment, which is why we are here. Because there is more to the present moment than we realize most of the time.

There's more to it. It's the access point to the deeper dimension within yourself. So as a general theme, underlying theme, I recommend, surprisingly, that you practice being in the present moment.

Although you've been taken out of your usual surroundings, you have carried with you something else. And of course, that's your mind. It travels with you wherever you go.

That is perhaps the meaning of a book that somebody wrote. I believe the title is Wherever You Go, There You Are. So wherever you go, you carry your mind and the conditioning of your mind with you.

So that is the challenge here, to transcend the conditioning of your mind. And the habitual way of interpreting, the habitual way of reacting to things, habitual mind patterns. If a mind pattern in you is that you frequently and very quickly become discontent with where you are, if that's a pattern in you, then that pattern will arise here also.

If your mind pattern is one that loves complaining and finding fault with things, then it's very likely that very quickly this mind pattern will appear here also. So you get surprising things, things that your expectations are not met in various ways. And that is a challenge to the mind, to the conditioned mind, because the conditioned mind wants its expectations met.

And if they're not met, it gets uneasy, restless, irritated, angry, starts talking about what's wrong, either silently in your mind or to others. And if others can agree with you, then it's even better. Or you can go on the internet and then you can get 1,000 people agreeing with you.

I'm not saying if there's something really wrong, you shouldn't do something to rectify it. So if something is leaking in your room, say, no, I'm not going to say anything because I'm not supposed to complain. No, of course.

Say there's something there that needs to be rectified. That's not a complaint, it's just information. Complaint means there is an emotion behind it.

And the emotion says this should not be happening. Then it becomes a complaint, or it's your fault. Then it becomes a complaint.

If it's simply presenting information, it's not a complaint. It's just a fact. And then the question is, can anything be done about it?

If yes, good. What they're saying, there's nothing we can do. Do you go on insisting that this is very bad and create suffering for yourself?

Or do you simply accept this is what it is? Remember to turn off the ringer on your phones so that you don't get disturbed. And let's just settle into the present moment, which is not something perhaps that you would normally do because there's always something else that's more important or pretends to be more important.

And then you forget that the only important, the only really important thing in your life is the present moment because there is nothing else ever. You have to really realize that fully to see the implications of that and how one could almost say devastating it is to realize that there's only ever this moment. But most people live as if other things, past and future, were more important than this moment.

It's an unconscious pattern. So meditation is about becoming present. Then the word itself implies, of course, now, present moment.

So we sometimes speak of present moment awareness. I sometimes call it presence. And that is what meditation is all about, discovering that dimension of consciousness in yourself.

And usually meditation techniques are designed to get you there. But our meditation is a meditation that does not really have any particular techniques. I'm just inviting you to come into this present moment with your attention directly.

Just drop into the now. This is something you can only verify or realize for yourself that you can actually almost sense, one could say, the presence of the present moment. Well,

it has no shape or form.

So you can become conscious of the present moment itself. What does that mean? First of all, you become more conscious of sensory perceptions.

An alertness arises that normally is not there when you are trapped in the continuous stream of thinking. Then that alertness that is synonymous with presence or awareness is just not there. So the normal state of consciousness is to be trapped in this continuous stream of thinking, a lot of it quite useless and repetitive.

Thinking can be a powerful thing, but most people's thinking, 99% of it is repetitive, useless, often negative. It's mental noise. And when you're identified with that, when there's that voice in your head that never stops speaking and you don't even know that you are not that voice, so you think you are the voice, you become the voice, that is a dreamlike state.

And you can observe people around you often who are in that dreamlike state. You can see it in their eyes. They're not here.

All their attention is absorbed by their thinking. They're just a little bit left just so that they know where they are going and not bump into furniture. But so you can see how many people are, most of the time, not really present because almost all their attention is absorbed by this continuous noise of thinking.

And so they go, and when they look at you, they don't really see you. At best, they see you through the stream of thinking, which is judgments that they may have about you. So there's never a clear perception of anything.

Everything is filtered through the thinking, through the judgments of the mind. And that's a, traditionally in spirituality, that's called being asleep. And that's why the term that is used in various ancient spiritual traditions for enlightenment or whatever you want to call it is awakening.

So there's an alertness that is suddenly there when you become conscious of the present moment. At first, you might notice it as suddenly becoming more aware of your sense perceptions, listening, looking, seeing, hearing. You might also find that alertness is there when something new suddenly arises in your field of vision.

Somebody comes into the, something appears, or in your hearing, a sudden noise, and when a sudden noise appears, and, or suddenly somebody comes in or comes around the corner, and you suddenly look or listen, and there's an alertness behind the looking and listening. And for those few seconds, when that new thing arises and you give it your full attention, for those few seconds, three, four, five, maybe two, there's not a thought in your head. Thought then comes in after a few seconds, and it may, for some people, only be a couple of seconds, and then immediately interprets what it is that's there.

But there is always, there's a moment when something new arises, when there is clear perception and just an alertness in the background. And that's an interesting moment because that is a natural way of presence arising in you, but usually it's so short-lived that people miss it. So it's a good thing to discover that you actually already meditate for brief moments.

You are in the state that we call meditation, and perhaps didn't even know it. And sometimes there may be moments when you just sit somewhere and you suddenly become completely comfortable with that moment as it is. And an inner peace arises, and you feel there's nothing missing here.

And this can suddenly can happen where before your mindset, why am I still waiting here in this waiting room? I've been sitting here for an hour, and why are they keeping me waiting? And suddenly there may be a shift and you say, well, I'm here this moment.

I might as well be here fully. And suddenly all that noise of thinking subsides and you realize actually there's nothing really missing in this moment. I'm breathing, looking, listening, feeling alive.

And it's fine when the mind is not telling me that it's not fine. And you'll be surprised how often the present moment is fine when you really check it out. Whereas the mind would habitually tell you that it's not fine.

It's not good enough. Something is missing. Something shouldn't be there.

But of course it is. And when you argue with what is in your mind, that's called unhappiness in whatever form it comes. Irritation, impatience, anger, sadness.

Oh, no, not this. So meditation is learning to align yourself in time only with the present moment and become aware of the present moment. So first of all, through sensory perceptions.

So I just said that sometimes those things arise naturally. You suddenly, either something new comes into your field of vision or your hearing and an alertness is there for a few seconds. Or there may be a moment when you are relaxing into the present moment.

And I'm not talking about becoming tired because that's not where we are going. We are not going towards sleep. We are going towards a heightened sense of alertness which is what the meditative state is.

Or let's do away with the term meditation altogether and just call it presence. There's a heightened state of alertness. It's very different from the lowered alertness that when you are moving towards sleep.

So that is not meditation. And even when people talk about relaxation, usually or often it's associated in people's minds with kind of you're gradually moving towards sleep. I'm so relaxed now.

Or if you go to a hypnotist, you might say and your eyes are becoming heavier and heavier and we are not going that way. That's nice. It gives you a little bit of relief from your mind.

But here we are exploring the possibility of a higher state of consciousness, heightened alertness. So I'm talking you into it as we sit here. And as I speak, you may find that shift already happening in you that as you sit here and now you're becoming aware of this moment as it is and no longer needing it to be different.

So if you thought you were here to meditate so that eventually you can reach a meditative state or some kind of peace that you don't have now, let's forget about that and just be with this moment as it is and accept that this moment is as it is. Of course, it always is as it is. So you might as well accept it.

So you become comfortable with it, aware of what you're looking at. You see this man on the screen. You hear the voice talking.

There is the room or wherever you are. Peripherally, you're aware of that and it's fine. This moment is as it is.

And what else is there apart from your sense perceptions? What you see, what you hear, is there anything else? Well, you may feel a sense of aliveness in your inner energy field, the body.

You may feel, as you sit here, just a distant sense of that, yes, there is this. I can feel that the body is alive. So some attention moves there.

An all-pervasive sense of aliveness in your body, in your legs, your hands, your arms. It's a very subtle thing. Sometimes you may want to focus on one little thing, one flower, one leaf, one tree, one bird.

And then at other times, you can take in the totality of a particular view. So you have a totality here of trees and plants and one or two houses, sky. So you can take in, but whether you focus on one thing or you focus on a larger landscape, larger section, visual section, sense yourself as the presence while you look.

And that is how you become aware of the sacredness of nature. And nobody could explain to you what sacredness means, but you will know when you sense it, you'll know it. It's all an expression of the one place.

It's all an expression of the one, the underlying one life, one consciousness. And if you

love whatever you see, you, there's a sense of no longer separateness. You love it.

There's a joy that comes with seeing that. But the joy is there because you're in touch with yourself. So that is again, an aspect of the balance between being and doing to be aware of being while you do.

And even when you're not doing something, not to lose consciousness. The danger is when you do activities, let's say your normal work situation, a little bit more complex than putting away clothes. The danger is that you lose yourself in the activity.

And so you're no longer rooted in being, you're out there. And then the sign, the clear sign signal that you are out there and lost yourself in it is something arises like stress, anxiety, some negative reactivity, some belief that something out there is terribly important that needs to be done now and nothing else matters. So you lose yourself in the doing.

Now, if you sit quietly in your room, the danger is that you drift off to sleep. At first you're there present, you're above thought. And then before you know it, you can observe it.

Many years ago, I spent some time occasionally in one Buddhist monasteries and you can observe the early morning meditation, especially when the monks sit 4.30, 5 o'clock sitting for an hour for the early morning meditation. Now I must have been not meditating all the time because occasionally I opened my eyes and looked at the monks. And so at first they're always there.

And then after 15, 20 minutes, some of them go. And of course, in a Zen monastery, you have the head monk who may hit you if he sees you're drifting off. That works.

So don't overdo the being, not doing anything to do it. Sometimes don't say, I'm not going to sit for one hour in this room and be. No, just take it as it comes.

There's a time for being and there's a time for doing. Now, many humans alive now are actually feel very uncomfortable with just being. They can't do it.

They can't do the being. Or when they're trying to be, they are trying to do the being, which is like trying to do the meditation. You can't do a meditation because the meditation is about being.

Doing a meditation implies you want to get somewhere. But true meditation is you are somewhere. You go into the vertical dimension.

So many humans who are very uncomfortable with silence, can't stand it, need some noise, or they need continuous sensory or mental stimulation, need something to get my mental teeth into. And when they don't have it, they were very restless. The worst thing

that you could do to them is put them in a room where they have no devices to produce noise.

That would be hell for many humans these days. Sense deprivation of noise. So not with you though, because all of you are comfortable.

With being and with the absence of noise, and you're actually appreciative of silence. It's precious and it's beautiful. Now, you wouldn't want to have it all the time.

No, there needs to be a balance between noise and silence, and between thinking and not thinking, and doing and being. Some ancient cultures who are not yet lost in mental development, like our more advanced, so-called more advanced culture, some ancient cultures, the people have a natural ability to just be, and they're not uncomfortable with being. It was reported by when North America, the Europeans came and settled in North American continent.

I remember reading one doctor or somebody observed people lining up somewhere in the States for a doctor's appointment. And some of them were Europeans who had come to America, and some were native Americans. And it took so long, the doctor was overburdened with work.

And these people, there were not enough chairs. People had to line up long way. And whether it was a doctor or nurse who wrote about it, observed it, all the Europeans became increasingly restless.

And then they got very angry. What's going on? I've been here now for three hours.

And all the native Americans were just completely happy with just standing there. So the person who wrote it was so amazed that he wrote about it. So there's a natural ability to drop in and go still.

Now, then the Westerners came, and then of course there was a clash between the old culture of the native Americans and the mind dominated culture of the West. And then many of the native Americans became very confused and became very destructive for that culture. Now, when we go there, we have been through the development of the intellectual faculty and the mental faculty, and we come out the other end, and then we encounter that ability again and even more deeper.

If you haven't lost something, don't appreciate it that much. You don't even know it that much. So for thousands of years, humans could actually drop into stillness.

I'm sure as these native Americans could, they could drop into stillness quite easily. Perhaps they were fighting one moment and the next moment they go. In the same way that a duck does it, as I described in the power of now, the ducks get into a fight.

And then two minutes later, flap their wings completely back into stillness. So, but they didn't even know it. It's just, they just did it.

They didn't know they did it. But once, when you lose something and then you regain it, there's always an element of depth to it that wasn't there before, because then you knowingly go into the stillness. It's not a natural thing anymore.

It's a knowing thing. This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

There was a question somebody submitted. I don't have it here, but I remember it. Probably asked by a young man or woman.

I'm not sure. And he said, this is somebody who was watching us. Hi.

So, he said, when I listened to you, I have this strong compulsion to become a spiritual teacher also. But when I listened to a great business leader, suddenly I have the compulsion to become a great business leader. What to do?

What to do? And my recommendation to you is to try the business leader first. I also recommend Tony Robbins seminars.

And there's nothing wrong with that. It's one aspect of life. It's, I can do it.

Yeah, I can do it. Yeah. Build up your energy.

And it's quite enlivening. So, it's not a bad place to go to and try things out. There is a, if you say, let's say that he represents doing and I represent being, but there is, as you know, the symbol of yin yang, the intertwining, the two.

And in the middle of the one, of the one polarity, the yang, there's a little dot and that represents the other. And in the middle of the other, there's a little dot that represents the yang. And so, I have a little bit of the other in me too, as you can see.

And as I found to my amazement that Tony Robbins, I don't know when he started doing that, he has introduced short periods of meditation into his seminars, usually towards the end. And then he goes, now let's just be very quiet. And wow, so that's the other, the other one, the yin is coming into the yang.

Well, that's good. Of course, ideally, in a human life, a human being, human being, you remember how, what that word means, those two words mean when you put them together. Human is the form that you are.

And human is the doing, whatever the form does. The being is who you are in your essence. So you are both.

You are the being, the consciousness, and you are the form that that consciousness takes. And the form that that consciousness takes will do things and think and do and act upon the world and be acted upon. So there's hardly any human, there may be some human beings who are completely balanced between the human and the being, who are in the being and the doing, the human and the being.

They're quite in the middle. Most people go a little bit that way or a little bit more that way. Our civilization as a whole, of course, has gone into the doing mode, very, very far to one extreme.

So the civilization itself is actually mentally ill because of that. And the connectedness with being has been almost entirely lost. So it's a very fragile civilization, despite its many achievements.

It's a little bit like when you go into a supermarket where they sell fruit, you'd look at the oranges, and they're all, they look so shiny and polished, and the tomatoes, they look so shiny and polished. But often when you cut them open, they're completely dry inside and tasteless. So that's a little bit our civilization.

The surface appearance is nice and shiny, but if you look deeper, you can see there is a, there's something that is, something fundamental that's not, that is missing there. And therefore, the civilization, unless it returns to, back to some kind of balance between being and doing, it cannot survive for that much longer. And that's why we are here.

And so predominantly what we focus on here is the being side, because that's, we need to redress the balance within the collective and in your personal life too, because every individual conditioned by this society tends to live, even starts with little young children. They're already taught to be in the, just do and think and to play, right? Go, let's get going.

Okay, all the tension goes out, and then they start their video games and stuff. We can't focus on anything for very long. That's a huge disability.

Many, many young people have that these days because of the influence of many, many factors, and especially the video stuff and devices that they have, cannot focus on anything for very long anymore, cannot give attention to anything for very long because the mind goes. Because that's what, when you, then they watch video games or even many movies, the scene changes every few seconds. And so, if you cannot give attention to something for a certain period of time, there's never a flow of creativity.

You cannot, because creativity, you have to, your attention needs to rest upon something and you need to give it time and look and be with it and become still, and then creativity flows. If a whole generation grows up that is unable to do that, then the civilization cannot produce anything new and it cannot even cope with its problems

anymore because even to cope with problems in a good way, you need to be able to look at a problem and be with it and then allow the greater intelligence to inspire you and then come up with a solution. So, humans, as I call it, yeah, they are lost in doing, lost in the mind, they're lost in thinking.

Because thinking is a kind of doing too, you're doing your thinking. Well, you are not. The thinking is doing stuff to you, you're not even thinking.

Thinking happens to you. Humans say, I think. They don't think.

Thinking is an autonomous activity in their minds, a reflection of the collective mind. They are not thinking, they are being used by thought, which is, and well, their personal thoughts are just an aspect of the collective thoughts and they don't know that. So you are being thought, you don't think.

So, and all that is doing, that's the doing mode. Those who are naturally more drawn towards being, they don't really fit into our society at all. In older cultures, there was some room for them, they could go, there were many monasteries they could go to and there were many jobs that actually did not require you to do a lot of doing.

You can just be, there were simple jobs that you could do. And nowadays it's harder for the humans who have this natural inclination towards being to fit into this world. Some of them are here now.

But even those who are very effective at doing eventually become frustrated and unhappy because they realize the emptiness of their doing. So even those who have become very successful doers encounter frustration and emptiness, not the Buddhist emptiness, a different kind of emptiness. And so society is, our civilization is longing without knowing it, is longing to return to the roots, to the being dimension.

And that's why things like these strange videos on YouTube are becoming so popular because this is one way of getting a little bit of being and getting out of doing. And so you watch half an hour of somebody handling an object. Wow, so lovely.

And then comes a point when it's time for another stage to arise where the dream of form is no longer, your no longer consciousness isn't beginning to awaken from complete identification with form. And that is happening to many humans. And this is why human beings are drawn to these two spiritual teachings with the awakening from the dream of form.

Who am I? What does it mean, I? What is identity?

What does it mean when I say I? What does it feel like? What is I?

What am I? Now, to most people, yet, if you ask them, what is, who are you? They will

define the word I in terms of form.

They will say, well, obviously this body, that's I. This comes maybe first. And then there comes the mind with its accumulations, its accumulated, its thought, habitual thought movements, its memories, they come the emotions that go with the thought movements, the psychological form of I.

So they say, well, I am this body. Then there's a name, which of course is just a sound. You say, John, I am John.

And many people say they think that's already a big part of who they are. When they can say their name, John, oh, okay. And then they add a little something else.

I'm a, an architect. Oh, okay, we're getting even closer to who you are. And I'm a father, which, okay, good.

And your age, okay, something, that's, okay. We're almost there now. Just need a few more details.

And then we know who you are. And so you can put it on a piece of paper, a summary of it, or if you want a detailed account of who you are, you can write down your life history in a book, and it becomes your autobiography. Oh, that's interesting.

Now we know who you are. And if that's not enough, and if you think there may be hidden parts of me, then you can go to psychoanalysis for 10 years, and then all these hidden memories, and hidden desires, and feelings that you had when you were four and a half years old towards your mother, and your father, and your grandmother, and what, they all readily, they all come up, and then you can add that, and then, okay, now I've got it, I've got my autobiography, and I've got, that's I, I'm me, I'm complete now. And then you look 50 years later, which is not much on a universal scale, 50 years is very little, I know that now. I thought when I was 20, 50 years was a lot.

But I'm older than 50, by the way, by the body. The 50 years pass, and what's left of the body and the psychological me, that entity in the head with its history, what's left? Nothing.

Well, maybe there's one or two copies left of your autobiography, and maybe one person finds a copy in a secondhand bookshop. This is somebody's autobiography. And your grandchildren, or their descendants, well, after, my mother passed away three years ago, and I realized a few, recently, that I'm virtually the only person now who remembers her, because all her friends died before she did, and her family.

And all the other people who knew her only knew tiny fragments. They said, oh, she was a little bit of an eccentric, and she was outspoken, and so on. They had little fragments, but the person who really remembers her more than a fragment is me, and when I go,

nobody remembers her.

And then all that's left is photos, and a generation later, nobody will know who this person on the photo is. But this is strange how an identity evaporates that seemed so solid and real. And so, form, we're talking about form identity.

That is, when you're asked, who are you? Or you ask yourself, who am I? Okay, now, is that all there is to who you are?

Is that what can be defined through form, what can be, that which is form, thought forms, emotional forms, physical forms, a conglomeration of that put together for a while becomes what you think is I. Is that really your identity, or is there something else? Well, perhaps we can just, at this moment, see, as you sit here, right at this moment, you don't remember your past.

You don't have to. Let's pretend you don't have one. You have no past.

There is no past. Let's say there is no past, which, by the way, is the truth. Ultimately, there is no past.

There's only the now. So, okay, and no future. Let's pretend there's no future.

Well, there is no future anyway, but there's only this. So you can't remind yourself. You don't even, unless there's a thought in your head that says, I am such and such, even that you don't know right now.

Let's say you don't know anything about who you are. Nothing that you can formulate, conceptualize, call something, you don't. What is left?

Is there, what is lost? Nothing is lost. In fact, when you encounter this, which cannot be named, which is a formless presence, aliveness, that's the, you've touched your, that which is beyond form, consciousness itself.

And that is identity. That is where your sense of I comes from. And so you are more truly yourself when you don't remember your past than when you do remember your past.

And you are more truly yourself when there's not a single thought in your head than when you are full of thinking, thinking about me and my problems. And whenever you feel this sense of I, this, the light of consciousness, which you can know directly in the stillness that is always there, available to you as the essence, your essence identity, your essence identity, timeless, that's always there. And that is one with universal consciousness.

It's just coming through this form. It's never lost. When this form dissolves, the consciousness goes choo, out like a little tentacle, choo.

Being. So let's stay with this for a moment here. You have no past or there is no past.

What is lost? Nothing essential is lost. You get a stronger sense of who you are in your essence when you are not telling yourself in your mind who you are.

This is why I said in Stillness Speaks, I believe, you are never more truly yourself than when you are still. And still means, of course, the mind has become still. It's an inner.

Doesn't, whether there's noise outside or not, doesn't matter. You're never more truly yourself than when you are still. Then you can sense the essence of who you are.

And that does not depend on the age of the body, whether you're 20 or 90, it's the same stillness. That frees you then from the suffering that comes if you have identified with form, which then sooner or later will leave you, you suffer. If you identify with a strong or beautiful body and that body eventually grows old, you begin to suffer because you seem to dissolve.

You haven't realized who you are. And so we have, you have form identity and essence identity. And suffering arises through knowing yourself only as form identity.

My history, my story, my body, my past, my this, my that, my that, my, my, my. That's whatever you identify with in the world of form. If you know yourself only as that, that's a state of unconsciousness, the dreamlike state.

Consciousness is dreaming the dream of form. And then it acts, attempting to become free of its inner state of incompleteness, dissatisfaction and fear, which is inevitable when all you know is your form identity. There's always underneath the surface or even very much on the surface, there is dissatisfaction, fear, unease, discomfort, fear, I am not enough, this is not enough.

This is not the right place where I am now. This is not the right people I'm with. This is not the right thing that I'm doing right now.

There comes the need to go out and search for more forms that I can identify with so that I can feel more complete. But the only way you can actually reach the state of, being at home, being rooted in yourself without the dissatisfaction that always comes again and again and again, and without the fear, the only way is encountering that which is beyond form. And it's so much, it's right here, it's closer.

It's God's realization, it's another word for it, but let's not go there. The God within, the timeless within. And so the universe then has, all the people who are into creating traditionally have been very unconscious because those who were most identified with form had the strongest desire to manifest and create more things out there and conquer an empire or accumulate more and more possessions or have more power.

So they got driven. So all the powerful people, the people who created human history, if you read the history books, they were deeply identified with form and they're all unhappy, of course, very unhappy, hoping by achieving this, that, or the other and conquering this, that, or the other, the other tribe or whatever, to become free of their state of unhappiness and of incompleteness. And never getting there.

And that's been, so traditionally, the doers, there were always some people who were not into doing, but in many traditional societies, there wasn't much of a place for them. Later, monasteries came into being, so they could become monks. Long story, but.

So, we still associate going out and doing with unconsciousness. I believe there's a line by T.S. Eliot in a poem where he says, the best lack all conviction and the worst are full of passionate intensity. Talking about contemporary humanity, early 20th century.

The best lack all convictions means that they don't know what to do. They get, because they are torn between, there's some inkling of, inside them, of their essence. So, they're not, the desire to do, to, is not as overpowering as in those who are totally identified with their former identity.

So, that's an interesting, that where we are at as humanity as a whole is a realization that there is an essence that has nothing to do with a form. And only if we are rooted, if some of our attention is in that formless essence, can we do things in this world without creating more havoc and suffering for others and ourselves. If we only go into doing without the rootedness in the eternal dimension, which is stillness, which is here now, always now, inseparable from now.

Whatever you do, when you lose yourself in the doing, identified again with form and creating some new problem. So, the foundation for all doing is conscious being. So, that's the important realization about what about manifesting.

That's good, but before we talk about manifesting, before we build some new building or structure, get the foundation first. Do you have the foundation? Don't start building a house without any foundation.

Let's manifest this great business empire. This is going to change the world. Yes, but have you laid the foundation?

What foundation? Being, being, the formless, the eternal. No, we haven't thought about that.

No, of course you haven't, you can't think about it.

[Speaker 2] (6:01:17 - 6:01:18)

No. No.

[Speaker 1] (6:01:22 - 7:29:05)

The foundation is being rooted, realizing what that means, what being is, not intellectually, not by trying to understand, because as you may have noticed, there's nothing much to understand about being. You can't, being, can you explain a bit more, please? Being.

Stillness. I don't understand stillness. Can you explain stillness?

No, because there's nothing in it to explain. You can't look at it under a microscope or dissect it. Aspects of stillness, PhD.

The purpose of our meditation, of course, is always getting in touch with that which transcends the person to discover that there's more to you than the person. Person meaning both the physical body and your mind. Plus emotions and so on.

So all your thinking is to do with the person. Emotions, your history, successes, failures, so-called. And even if you've reached a very high point in your life right now, you've just succeeded at something, just gained something, just fallen in love, you will find that it won't be long until that is no longer a real source of satisfaction for you and it may even turn into its opposite.

High becomes low. Now, that's not a negative way, a gloomy, pessimistic way of looking at things. And it's not saying that you should not appreciate when good things happen to you or you achieve things.

It's wonderful and it's to be enjoyed. So you can enjoy it knowing that, of course, it's not going to last forever and it cannot be a source of continuous satisfaction forever if you were suddenly transplanted to the most beautiful place. Let's say you're not happy where you are living now, maybe the climate isn't good enough or the environment isn't good enough.

There's nothing wrong with striving towards finding a better place. But even if you were suddenly transplanted to the most beautiful location you could imagine, perhaps for some people that would be an island and where it's always warm and pleasant. And there's the blue sea and there's white sand or whatever else you could imagine to be the ideal place and suddenly you're there and you have nothing to worry about, all your needs are met.

And of course you might say, well, then I could really get into the spiritual stuff because we wouldn't have to worry about all these other things anymore, making a living or succeeding or helping my family members or whatever. So it's all ideal suddenly and you would be happy for a while. And then gradually you would become dissatisfied.

First boredom sets in and after a while your energy level would go down too because in

the absence of challenges, you would, the degree of alertness would diminish. So as far as your spiritual life is concerned, the best place is where you are right now and discover the dimension, the transcendent dimension here and now and use whatever problems or difficulties you have as an encouragement or an incentive to go deeper into yourself, not running away from problems. Of course, you still may have to take action if action is possible or necessary or desirable and take action to change situations, to improve situations in your life.

But at the same time, see if you can discover the deeper dimension within that has nothing to do with what goes on in your external life. And that's why we're here, to discover that. This is not about managing your external life better.

There's nothing wrong with that, but you can, there are other teachings that can help you with that if you still need them. But it's discovering a deeper dimension within and that also has a byproduct of discovering that is actually that it improves your external life immeasurably because you're no longer dependent on the ups and downs, the gains and losses, the good days and the bad days of your external life. You're not dependent on those things anymore for your sense of well-being or fulfillment or inner peace.

And isn't that an incredible thing when you can enjoy things, deal with things? Yes, but you're no longer dependent on the ups and downs. So all of you already have some access to that dimension within and we're just here to deepen it.

Or if you're completely new to this, this may be an occasion when you have your first glimpse of that in you which transcends your person, the personal life, the personal dimension. So just like the universe, and the universe is whatever is around you, the room you're sitting in, or you look at the stars at night or look out of the window. There's the universe with lots of things in it and it's easily overlooked that you're not dependent the most essential thing is not the things, but the space in between things.

Even the room that you're sitting in, there's stuff in it, furniture, there's a floor, a ceiling, walls, but the essence of every room is the space in the room. So there are two dimensions, form, furniture, walls, ceilings, floor, ceiling, floor, and space, formlessness. Or you look up into the sky at night, what do you see?

You see countless stars, most of which are suns, just like our sun, many of them much bigger, countless stars, and the vastness of space. Well, you can't actually see the vastness of space, you cannot see space, that's the strange thing, you can never say, oh, here is space, because space is not something, everything else is something. And now the amazing thing is there's an equivalent in you of what we call outer space, space, we could call it inner space, and that's the essence of who you are, just as the space in this room is the essence of this room, or the space that allows billions of stars and galaxies to exist out there is the essence, and yet you can never pinpoint it or examine it under a microscope.

So the essence of you, you also cannot pinpoint, scientists can examine your brain, but they won't find you there. We know almost nothing about the brain, of course, there's a connection between the brain and consciousness, but the brain is a kind of transmitter of consciousness or receiver, it does not actually generate consciousness, most scientists haven't discovered that yet. They claim to know what the brain is all about, we don't even know what a thought is.

No scientist knows what a thought, does it exist as molecules? Nobody knows what a thought is. And that's still the level of form, thought.

So the essence of who you are cannot be defined just as this place around you cannot be defined, it has no boundary, it's absolutely mysterious, you cannot know it in the sense that you know something in this world, you can only become aware of it by unknowing, by letting go of all that you know for a moment, and just be conscious and realize, you can be conscious of something, which is normal for everybody, you're conscious of perceptions and so on, but you can also be conscious of being conscious, and that is the transcendent dimension. And that at first, people may not understand what it is that these words are pointing to, be conscious of being conscious, sounds like some kind of duality, but that's only because we're using language. Now, as you know, as I've often pointed out, life or your life could be compared to a dream, things happen and then they evaporate, when you get towards the end of your life, it may begin to look more and more like a dream when you think back, and of course, a real dream, when you wake up in the morning, it dissolves, and you say it was just a dream, and many philosophers have argued about whether what you experience as your life is real or it's a dream, it's a question of perspective, of course, but it does have a very strong dreamlike quality, or if you want to use modern terminology, it's your movie, the movie of your life, some movies are very dramatic, with lots of sound and fury, to use the words of Shakespeare, full of sound and fury, and then Shakespeare adds signifying nothing, or another expression of Shakespeare is actually a play, much ado about nothing, and that's many people's lives, and it may not be until you reach the end of your life that you realize that most of it was really, you got upset about nothing much, it's better not to wait until the end of your life to realize that you often still get upset about nothing much, the movie, that's all. So is your life real?

Yes and no. Is it a dream? Depends how you look at it.

It certainly is dreamlike. Is this moment really happening, or am I just imagining it? Am I imagining that I'm looking at the screen and somebody is talking to me, and saying, are you dreaming?

You just don't know. What you do know is, that this is what you are experiencing at this moment, it is being experienced. And a prerequisite for this, so that it can be experienced, whether it's a dream or not, is what we could call the light of

consciousness.

Without consciousness, there could be no dream or no experience. So the one thing you know without any doubt, is that you are conscious. And even that is not absolutely right when we put it like that.

Let's put it differently. The one thing that you know without any doubt, is not that you are conscious, because there's again a duality, I am conscious as if we're conscious with something added onto you. No.

The one thing that you know beyond any doubt is that you are consciousness. One does not accomplish great ends in some by and by future. Only in the present can you hammer out real achievement.

The worried mind tends to veer from the only real goal, realizing the atma, uniting with divinity, the true self within. So you cannot accomplish great ends in some future moment, only the present, only in the present, can you hammer out, as he translates, real achievement. So all true achievement is in the present moment, and that determines the quality of your life, as I call it.

How present you are in what you do, immediately brings quality into what you do. It's hard to define what I mean by quality if you cannot feel it. There's a, do something totally as a means to an end or observe somebody performing some action, only concerned about the outcome.

And you can see what I mean by low quality action. You'll be doing, going, want to get, I need to get there, do this, not paying attention to really to anything because you have some thought of future outcome, and you get upset at the slightest obstacle that comes into you. Of course, obstacles arise all the time, of course, in one's life.

I want to get there, but then something stops me. And immediately, when an obstacle comes in, somebody even questions something. You get either angry or fearful.

This shouldn't be happening. Whereas if you're aligned with the doing, then when an obstacle comes, immediately it's accepted and you look, you give it attention. And then you see, you immediately adjust to the newly arisen situation and take action.

You don't complain, oh, about somebody or some situation that has arisen. There's no huffing and puffing. As I sometimes call it, because many humans go through life huffing and puffing about this, complaining about this, shouldn't be this.

All that drops away because they're huffing, puffing, because they have some idea of what they want in some future moment. It's never going to come anyway. So as an obstacle arises, immediately you look at it.

And then intelligent action arises because you're aligned with the present moment, you become much more intelligent. Not knowledgeable, necessarily, but intelligent because you connect with a deeper level within yourself. And then what you say and do is more intelligent when you're aligned with what is instead of trying to get it out of the way.

That's the only way you can truly become intelligent. That's why there's a book by Krishnamurti called The Awakening of Intelligence because that's what it is. The true intelligence is not really awakened at universities.

There you acquire knowledge or you develop your ability to analyze, but it's not yet true intelligence. A little example from my own life. I was for several, quite a few years, I was counseling individuals and giving small talks for a number of years.

Spiritual talks. And I would write down often after giving a talk or after a counseling session, I would take notes and write down what I had said during those sessions. Often happened that I said things in counseling sessions with individuals or in very small groups.

I said things very often that I didn't know beforehand. It only came to me in the moment because it came from the depths of my being. They were intuitive realizations that came out of the present moment.

And they only came because the question was asked. Somebody asked the question or somebody had a problem. And so an answer came.

And then later, of course, I didn't know it. I knew these things. So I wrote it down afterwards.

So writings kind of notes accumulated over the years. And then at some point I realized there's a book that's going to be written, but I also knew the notes themselves are not the book yet. But I had a sense that a book was wanting to be written, wanting to be born into this world.

And that sense was halfway between having a vision of something that is almost inevitable and desiring something to happen. It was halfway in between. So when I wrote down, there is a book I knew.

I never used the future tense, as you must not in any manifestation. There is a book that will change the lives of millions of people and bring consciousness to the planet. And I wrote that down.

And that was, as I said, it's hard to describe, but the only way I can put it was halfway between writing down something that I already knew for sure, because it is a vision that had already some reality on some level, and halfway between that and between wanting something to manifest. So the wanting to manifest it and seeing it already as manifest, it

was this kind of, became a single thing. And perhaps that is the most powerful way of manifesting when you have the feeling that what it is that you want to manifest actually already exists not in the physical universe, but on another level.

So I knew this book already existed. And the writing down of this affirmation was only just a reflection of what I already knew. This book already exists, and that I'm writing it down.

I drew a little circle on the paper. In the middle of the circle, there's the book. I don't think I didn't have the title for it yet.

And then I knew, then I said, now what comes out of that? Out of that comes this one line that says, I give talks all over the world and thousands of people come. I knew that.

And that again was not so much that I wanted it to happen. It was almost knowing that it would happen. It was almost like predicting the future rather than wanting to create the future or halfway in between.

There's a book, there's traveling English talks. And then there's another book I think I wrote. And there are various other things that I wrote down.

And I also wrote down that my life circumstances are more pleasant and there is financial abundance. So I'm not worried. I was not really worried about money and I lived on very little for many years and I was quite happy.

But my preference would be to have more abundance in my life. And through this, I said more abundance is coming into my life. And a very pleasant living situation.

There were a few other things associated with the central thing. And those things I've focused on for, I don't know how long, maybe several weeks. And then I put it aside and then a few more weeks focused on it every day.

I think it's on my wall somewhere and focus on it. And then I moved many times. This piece of paper got forgotten.

It got somewhere to my paper. And two, three years passed and I actually completely forgot that I had written this piece of paper. And then various things happened.

And I've suddenly, without going into detail, the energy stream came within me. Oh, and the book suddenly started to come, be written through me. I used a little bit of some of the notes that I had written, but they were not the book.

The book was an empowered energy stream. Oh yes, that came maybe three years after doing this piece of paper. Vision board, they call it sometimes, or something like that.

I realized, well, not that much is happening yet. I'm still doing these small, very small

scale. I'm helping a small number of people and that's good, but I knew I could help so many more, but why isn't it, it's not happening yet.

And then as well, one further affirmation I did, and it only, I only did it for one day, I think, or two days. I went into a church in a small village church in Somerset in England, where the county where I was living at the time. And this empty church, I sat there and I looked at the symbols and I just, in the stillness, I said, I asked, I actually asked for something.

That's strange, one shouldn't normally ask for things, but all I asked for is acceleration. I said, I'm asking for acceleration. I knew it was happening, but it was too slow.

Said, I'm asking for acceleration, please. And I could feel it had been received and I could feel, somehow I could feel the reality of acceleration within myself already. And soon after that, everything started to change in my life.

I had to move away from where I was living. I had an internal impulse to move away. I had to sell everything.

I had to move to the West Coast of North America. And there suddenly the book came out and then everything got accelerated. And now let's go forward a few more years.

The power of now is out. It has reached millions of people. Oh yes, I'd also written down on this original paper, translated into don't know how many languages.

All that was there. I'd even colored it. I remember there were red colors and blue black.

The center was like the sun emanating various things. And so forward a few years, the power of now was out. It was a bestseller, been translated into many languages.

Oprah had discovered it. I had financial abundance. All those things were there.

I was unpacking my things. A trunk was coming from England where some of my things had been stored. And I was going through my old papers.

And at that point I saw this old paper that I had written many years before. This thing that I described and then read it. Oh my God, it's all happened.

I forgot that I had written all this completely. And then it was all already written down and it all came to pass. How amazing.

I was kind of speechless. So that's more or less the story of how it happened. The story goes that he was the only one that understood that sermon of the Buddha, the one who smiled.

I could have held this flower up and stopped speaking. And the Buddha's silent sermon,

2,600 years ago, people still remember it. He sat there and he was going to speak and then suddenly he saw this flower and he took this flower and looked at it.

For how long, nobody knows, but it must have gone on for a long time and everybody got restless. That's called the Buddha's silent sermon. And then after half an hour or one hour, we don't know, because they didn't have clocks then.

One of the, because they were all monks at that time, other people didn't have access to anything, to spiritual teachings. I talk about that in the New Earth at the beginning. One of the monks, all the other monks looked puzzled.

What's he trying to do, what's he saying? And one monk suddenly started to smile. And the story goes that he was the only one that understood that sermon of the Buddha, the one who smiled.

And this smile was, according to the story or the legend or the scriptures, the smile was passed on from generation to generation of teacher and pupil. So he became a teacher, that monk. And they say he passed on the smile, which really means the realization, to the next and the next and the next, and after six or seven or whatever generations, it became the origin of Zen.

That's how the story goes. So what is it then that he smiled about? Well, let's not conceptualize it.

I think you will realize it for yourself as we progress here. Not, are we then returning, when we go into nature, are we then returning to the level that trees live at or flowers or minerals or birds, whatever it is, is it an act of return to a primordial stage of being? Not quite.

We join whatever natural thing it is that we are perceiving. We join it in the state of no thought. But when we go there, we've gone through thought already.

We rise above thought. The flower exists below thought. So, and then we meet in the dimension of no thought.

But at a very deep level, we do not become the flower or the cabbage. Well, you had a choice. You'd probably rather be a flower than a cabbage, but cabbage is beautiful too.

We are not regressing. Cabbage is fine for the cabbage, but not for us. The cabbage is totally at ease with itself, one with a source, doesn't inhabit a world of problems, doesn't generate conflict.

The cabbage is rooted in being. So is the tree, so is the flower, and even the dog. Well, most of them, and the cat, except those who have lived for 20 years, or too long with neurotic humans, they are rooted in being.

And this is why people love dogs and cats. It's not, there's actually a deep reason, a deep meaning to that, because they can sense that the dog or the cat is more deeply rooted in being, is more at rest within him or herself than the human. The human has gone out very far from the source into further and further differentiation.

Everything originates from the one source of all life, the unmanifested, formless, timeless, one source. Everything then comes out of that source, and humans are a product, a very differentiated product, gone out a long way from the source, a little bit like the prodigal son in the New Testament who leaves the father's home and squanders his wealth and becomes destitute. He has left the source.

He has gone so far out that he becomes destitute. He doesn't remember his origins anymore. So the dog, and even less so the flower or the tree, they haven't gone out that far, so to speak, from the source.

There's still more of a connection to their origin, and this is also why they are not fearful of death. They don't think about, oh, I'm going to die, and when an animal dies, an animal is very accepting. It surrenders into that.

It doesn't make a problem out of living, and it doesn't make a problem out of dying. It doesn't live on the level of problem-making, which is a level when you lose your sense of connectedness with the source, and this is because you're identified with a thinking mind, then a world of problems arises. You create a world of, that's what you manifest then, and that's what you end up with on this planet, on this beautiful planet, which is paradise.

You end up with layers and layers of complexity and increasing problems. Oh, my God, it's all getting so complicated. It's just survival is getting complicated, very complicated.

So really, now, when we talk about nature exists closer to the source, we have gone out very far, and for us, it's not a return to the original level where the animal lives or the tree lives. It's a transcendence where you regain awareness of the source of being with full consciousness rather than as a natural state, and you don't really know. The dog doesn't know that the dog is one with being.

He just is one with being. The tree doesn't know. If you tell the tree, are you one with being, if the tree could understand you, of course, but it doesn't have conceptual.

Trees are one with being? Don't know. So there is a, but if you look at nature, everything exists in its, it's so much, so at rest within itself.

It has so much integrity. Everything natural has such integrity. Integrity, the word originally means being one with yourself, not having split yourself into two or three.

For example, when you say me and my life, the tree doesn't say me and my life, my

difficult life. The tree is life, an expression of life. The human says, I have a hard life.

And the hard life that the human says he or she has is a mental construct because it has no real reality except as a movement of thought because the only real life that you have is at this moment ever, always. This is your life now. I'm sitting here, breathing, perceiving.

There's aware presence. This is life. This is your life.

The rest is memories or anticipations or thinking. So the dog doesn't have a life. The dog is an unproblematic expression of life.

So it's everything in nature. It is life manifesting, the one timeless, sacred, deep down, the one formless life becoming form as millions of life forms coming out of them. They say with the Big Bang, it all started.

Who knows? So before the Big Bang, there was nothing. Nobody understands that because you can't understand nothing.

No thing, no form, no time. Out of that void, which is also the fullness of infinite potential, came the forms. More and more differentiated over millions and millions of years.

And then finally, it becomes the human mind, the most differentiated as far as we can see. There may be others even more mad somewhere else in the universe. You are continuously thinking and analyzing and evaluating.

And then the entity that has to carry that mind is completely out of touch with the source. You're not cut off from the original source, the original oneness. You just don't know it's there.

And so that's it. That's the state of being lost, lost in your mind, lost in the world, split yourself in two or three, having a life that you don't like, me and my life, me and my story, my sad story. And then life is perceived no longer as a joyful expression of the underlying oneness, but becomes a burden.

Gets heavier and heavier. And so this has happened to humanity. Humanity is, this species is at a critical stage now.

There's a possibility of a shift into a deeper state or higher state, if you want to call it that, of transcending conceptual thinking, going beyond. You can still think, but no longer trapped in thinking. This is where humanity has to go.

And as you transcend conceptual thinking, you regain what was lost eons, eons ago. You regain your sense of connectedness with being. You feel deep down, and you're connected with something vast, and it's not different from who you are.

Just when we put it into language, it sounds as if that was something different from who you are. You're connected with being, with a sense of simple beingness. Being comes from the word to be, to be the most primordial thing.

And everything in nature is an expression of that underlying beingness, and including the physical body. This body, this body. All that we perceive in this world is existence.

Exists, it exists. This body exists. This body exists.

Underlying existence is being. Being is the formless, timeless dimension within yourself. It's very much like the black hole at the center of the galaxy.

When I was writing The Power of Now, I wrote, I don't know why I wrote that, it just came to me one day. I wrote, there is a black hole at the center of every galaxy. And the editor saw it and said, you can't say that because you don't know.

How can you know that? People are going to argue with that. So it was taken out.

And some years later, I read an article by a scientist and said, now scientists believe that there is a black hole at the center of every galaxy. And so, why did I know that? I knew that because I could feel the black hole inside myself.

This spacious, formless, one life, the origin. And so, and I know that the human being is a microcosm. It's just, you can understand the whole universe by understanding yourself.

You are just a microscopic version of that. So that's the, we are regaining by no longer being lost in the conceptualizing mind. We regain something that was lost a long, long time ago, very much like the prodigal son in the New Testament.

Your origin. Not your origin in, you can't say, it's not really your origin in time. It's not saying, okay, my origin was six billion years ago.

That's where I started when the Big Bang happened. That was the beginning of me. That's true, of course.

That was the beginning, but it's not so much that the origin is in the distant past, or not even in the near past. The origin is timeless. I'm glad you could make it.

I trust you're okay with stillness. To be okay with stillness, you have to access the stillness within you. Otherwise, it gets uncomfortable.

If you experience joy or moments of joy or beauty, aliveness, a sense of aliveness, a loving connection with another human being or a loving connection with another life form, or if you have any creative idea, in your life or anything creative comes to you, all those things that I just mentioned imply that you have some access already to the stillness inside you, because all those things, the joy, the sense of aliveness, the

lovingness towards others, the creative impulse, the creative idea, all that comes from that dimension in you. Now, many humans have some access to that dimension. That's why they feel it's good to be alive.

And for most humans, that access gets, for long periods of time, covered up again by excessive mind activity. And then it resurfaces again. It's not recognized usually directly for what it is.

It is recognized indirectly. So you may be aware that suddenly you feel a sense of joy and aliveness, or you look at another human being and you feel a deep sense of connection. So what happens there is that dimension arises.

You don't recognize it directly. You recognize it as joy. You recognize it as a loving connection or a loving kindness, or a creative impulse, or a sense of heightened aliveness, or the recognition of beauty.

You look and, oh, isn't that beautiful? And in the looking and the recognition of the beauty, you may not realize that what underlies that, that which makes it possible, is that for a moment, there was no thought activity in your mind. A space opened up.

That space, that is the stillness. And that is why you could recognize the beauty. Or that is why you felt the connection with another human.

Or a simple aliveness arose within you. So it comes spontaneously to you. There are some humans, quite a few, who almost never experience that opening into the alive stillness.

And their lives are truly miserable. They may not even know that. They may not even know that their lives are miserable.

They think it's normal to be continuously immersed in the thinking. Isn't everybody else? Now, a deepening happens when you recognize that stillness directly.

It may happen spontaneously in a situation. You're looking at a tree, and for a moment, there's no thought. There's just the perception and the stillness in the background.

So you begin to recognize it directly as the foundation for joy, for love, for also compassion, empathy with another. You can't arrive at empathy through conceptual thinking. You cannot sense the aliveness of another human being through conceptual thinking.

But only thinking needs to subside for a moment, and then the sense of separation that's created by continuous thinking disappears in that moment. So I'm inviting you to enter the stillness. Another way of putting it, I'm inviting you to stop thinking without falling asleep.

That's one way, but that's not the way here. And this is the next evolutionary level for humans, rising above thinking, not abandoning thinking altogether, transcending thinking. Thinking can still operate much more powerfully, by the way, when it's rooted consciously in the stillness.

Now, if you're still thinking, this becomes boring or uncomfortable. If it's not boring or uncomfortable, then you are in that state of freedom from thought. You may sense your presence, so to speak, the presence that you are, the essence of you, sense it as a whole body realization, just a sense of presence throughout the body as you sit here.

And that is a sense of heightened aliveness. And if you choose to look around, still sensing this heightened aliveness in your entire energy field, if you then look around, you see that also whatever you are perceiving feels more alive. Even inanimate objects have a certain beingness.

They are. Even a table, chair, even there, there's some life. They are called inanimate, which means, I suppose, lifeless.

But if you look more deeply into the molecular structure of the chair or the table, you would see intense aliveness and intense movement. So at this very moment, the universe, we could say, appearing as you experiences itself. Of course, that's the truth.

You're not separate from the universe. It's an amazing thing. The universe appearing briefly as what we call a person, a cell within the totality, experiencing itself.

So that's the, so the cessation of compulsive and involuntary thinking could be described as the essence of spiritual awakening. The cessation of compulsive thinking. Thinking is addictive for most humans.

Almost every human, except those that have started to disidentify from thinking are addicts. And the greatest addiction is the addiction to thinking. Not to fruitful thinking, not to creative thinking, not to thinking that actually solves problems, but to thinking that is futile, that is destructive, that instead of solving problems, creates problems.

Thinking that creates anxiety, that creates fear, that creates grievances, that creates regrets, that creates all kinds of dysfunctional states, that creates enemies because it's ego, egoic thinking. That is what needs to come to an end. And when that comes to an end, then real thinking, constructive, fruitful, creative thinking can happen.

Thinking is an amazing thing. And we don't, we haven't even started. We're just beginning to touch on what is possible by using the human mind.

A time will come, I don't predict the future very often, but when humans can create through thought already, to some extent, you can do that. You can manifest things through thought. Many of you have already done it.

It's not an answer to your state of dissatisfaction because so we need to go, there's something more fundamental than that that needs to be done first. That needs to be realized first. And then you can create, but it will no longer be the ego that's creating, but something deeper from within you will be creating through your mind.

So a time will come when we won't have factories anymore and all these weird things. We won't need that anymore. We'll create the few things in the material realm that we need.

They can just go, there it is. It's not going to be a Rolls Royce or anything like that, but you won't need that. But so the mind is powerful, a powerful creator.

As Causing Miracles says, every thought creates form on some level. Thought is creative. But more importantly is to access the dimension that is deeper than thought.

And then thought can be in the service of universal intelligence. And then you are the intermediary. You are that through which universal intelligence creates.

Your mind is that through which universal intelligence creates. So this is why, although there are books like the secret and so on, there's a lot of good things in those books, but what they sometimes neglect is to showing the absolute importance of the foundation, which is prior to manifesting through your mind. The foundation is finding the fulfillment of the essence of who you are and the fulfillment of your life, not by projecting, by thinking, when I achieve this, I will be fulfilled because no matter what you create, if you haven't gone, your ability to create is limited anyway, but yes, you can create as an ego too.

Although the ability is limited, you have enough ability to create to create havoc on the planet. So what sometimes these books fail to mention is to put the emphasis on the fact that nothing that you manifest or create in this world is going to satisfy you for long, unless you have accessed the essence of who you are, unless you have realized the essence of who you are beyond the person that comes first. That is the foundation.

This is why I don't speak too much about how to manifest things. This will come by itself. So the cessation of thinking is something that you need to invite into your life, not by suppressing thinking, but by letting go of resistance, resistance, one of the quickest portals into cessation of thinking is letting go of resistance to the present moment, inner resistance to whatever appears in your consciousness at this moment as whatever, and it changes all the time.

One situation, another situation, people, events come into the field of consciousness. And as we mentioned the other day, most humans are in an almost continuous state of not wanting what is, or rather wanting something else that seems to be more important at some future point. And we need to recognize the dysfunction of that state of

consciousness.

And one of the greatest spiritual practices is what I call to make the present moment your friend. To make the present moment your friend is to say yes internally to whatever arises in this moment. The conditioned thought processes never stop.

They go continuously. There's a voice talking to you, or you're talking to yourself, or you're having a monologue, or you're having a dialogue. Some people argue with themselves.

It's all the voice in the head never stops for most people. And that is, spiritually speaking, that is a state of unconsciousness, completely identified with the conditioned mental emotional patterns, which make up the so-called person, personality, the ego. So if you are completely identified with it, every thought has you in its grasp.

Every emotion that arises has you completely in its grasp. And you're thinking, you think you're thinking, but you're not thinking. Thinking happens to you.

There's no, you don't have a choice. If you're unconscious, there's no choice. All your thought processes happen to you.

You're at the mercy of your thoughts, of the conditioned thoughts in your head. And all the reactions that come with it, every situation you encounter, there comes a conditioned reaction to the situation. It's the person or the personality that reacts.

And you don't even have a choice. Why don't you have a choice? Because you're asleep, spiritually speaking.

This thing, it's taken you over. It's a dream-like state also. And you can see, often, people are completely up there.

They're never really, they're not really here. You can see sometimes the complete absence in a person's eyes. They're not really here, they're asleep.

But they're thinking very hard. And even at night, when there's nobody around to talk to, you're still, the voice is going on. And it's telling you, I have these problems.

What's going to happen next? Awful, sick, my God. I can't take any more of this.

What's my life come to? I imagined something different when I was 20 years old. I imagined something very different.

Why did it all go so wrong? Well, that's, well, many people actually have that feeling that something, that has gone drastically wrong in my life. And with others, it's a mixed bag.

Some things went okay, and others didn't. It depends what their mind, and your mind

tends to focus more on the negative than the positive. Much more memorable, the negative, than the positive.

If you go on vacation, and everything goes perfectly fine, okay, you'll remember some nice moments and sunsets. But if something went drastically wrong, you'll remember that for the rest of your life, and you talk about it continuously. You tell the story of what went wrong.

If everything went fine, you don't talk about it, you'll be at a wonderful holiday. Oh yeah, okay, well, that's the end of it. But you know what happened?

We went into our room, and there was these cockroaches crying on the floor, and then the water was coming to the ceiling, and then they stole all my bags. Oh my God. It's so interesting.

And then you know what he said to me? He said, how dare you? And I said, how dare I?

What about you? You are the one with the biggest ego, I said. And then he started hitting me, and whatever.

And the stories go on and on. And so a lot of the things, the negative things are much more memorable, that the ego focuses on that. It loves its enemies, and every negative situation is the ego's enemy.

And then it can claim, it can enhance its fictitious identity. The more enemies you have, the stronger your fictitious sense of self becomes. Entire nations do that, too.

They need their enemies. Except Sweden, it's so peaceful. And...

All the non-peace-loving people have left Sweden a long time ago. They were called the Vikings. And they occupied other lands.

So, then we have, in Indian spiritual philosophy of psychology, there's a word that's been around for a long time. It's called Turiya. Turiya means the force.

First, second, third, fourth. Turiya is the force. It's the force is, it refers to a state of consciousness.

They divided the human consciousness into these four parts. There is dreamless sleep. There is the dream state in sleep.

There is the state of wakefulness, which is ordinary human consciousness. And Turiya is the awakened state of consciousness. That's the fourth state of consciousness.

They've been talking about that for hundreds of years, thousands of years. The possibility of this dimension of consciousness arising in humans, the fourth state. This is

what this is all about.

And it is not some distant possibility that you may achieve in some future lifetime. As many people still believe that. Many Buddhists, I've met Buddhists who say, I think I'll need another 15 lifetimes.

And then, in fact, my teacher told me, they say, he told me 15 more lifetimes and then I'll be enlightened. Oh, wow. Okay, that's right.

Well, you have plenty of time so you can stay unconscious now. It's okay. But the strange thing is, the awakened state of consciousness is already there within you.

It's just covered up, hidden. An essential part of awakening spiritually is going beyond a conceptualized sense of self and living in a conceptual reality. And of course, all that implies being identified with thinking because concepts are thoughts.

So for many people, the question arises, how do I see myself? And there's a very common problem people have and that's called self-esteem. What value do I have?

What value does my life have? Compared to others. Some years ago, the Dalai Lama was asked by somebody about self-esteem and he didn't understand the word self-esteem.

And somebody, the interpreter, spent several minutes trying to explain to him the meaning of self-esteem and she just couldn't get it. Now, of course, you might say, well, if I were the Dalai Lama, I wouldn't have a problem with self-esteem either, but that's not it. Self-esteem and the way in which it's conventionally used is comparative and it's always connected to ego.

How do I rate myself relative to others, either in achievement, worldly achievement, abilities, knowledge, physical appearance, physical strength, good looks, bad looks, fat, thin? And usually it's related to what you have, possessions, what you can do, abilities, what you know, knowledge, and physical appearance. And that's an interesting thing when you look at your life from that point of view.

There's always a sense of unease because there are always others who are better at at least some of these than you are. And then there are others who are worse. I would suggest that the only healthy self-esteem is a self-esteem that is derived from a deeper place than any of those things that usually make up a person's self-esteem.

How you look, what you can do, your knowledge or your abilities, or even weird things like who you know. The strangest thing make up a person's self-esteem. And sometimes it's based in some kind of reality, of course.

And in many other cases, it's a total fiction, but the ego needs that. So if you are, let's say, you're not good at anything in particular, there's nothing much that you can do.

You're not wealthy, don't have much, don't have a lot of knowledge, haven't read many books.

Don't look great. And your body is not that great, neither your facial appearance nor your body are that great. What do you do then?

I hope there's nobody in this room who thinks, oh, that's me.

[Speaker 2] (7:29:06 - 7:29:12)

Oh. Oh. Oh.

Oh. Oh. Oh.

[Speaker 1] (7:29:17 - 8:18:15)

Oh. Oh. Oh.

First of all, usually the ego would create a certain narrative to compensate for that feeling of inferiority in an attempt to create some sense, at least in one area of superiority. So I would suggest there is no, in that, used in that sense, there's no healthy self-esteem. The only healthy self-esteem is not derived from how you look or how physically strong you are or your abilities in whatever area or your possessions or the knowledge that you have acquired or any other things, your family background.

In some countries, that's a very important thing. Who is your family? Your grandfather, your great-grandfather.

They have that sense that determines their self-esteem. In the West, especially in the new world, North America, maybe South America too, Central America, that sense of family history is not as strong. But if you go to Europe, there are still quite a few people who have very high self-esteem, and that's derived from the existence of their ancestors.

They've never done anything, but their ancestors did. You have to go a little deeper into yourself, and true self-esteem is not comparative. It's not I am better than or less than.

Quite simply, that sense of value, of worthiness, is derived from that deeper place of, quite simply, your presence, the presence of you, the presence of consciousness. If you can sense that presence of you, you don't need to compare yourself anymore to anybody else. You know that that is who you are in your essence, and no narrative is required anymore in your mind to justify your existence or to explain who you are in relation to others.

When you think you have a choice and suddenly you become present, that means presence has chosen to come through you. So I sometimes say that you can choose,

once a certain level of presence is in you, you can choose to be present, like now. I can choose to go into my mind and start thinking about my life.

Where am I coming from? Where am I going? Where am I going?

Or I can choose to be reactive when things happen. Well, it looks as if I didn't have a choice, but many people still don't have a choice. The reaction comes.

They're taken over by the reaction. But when there's a certain degree of presence in you, you have a choice. You might forget that you have a choice, but you have a choice.

This is how it looks like, looked at it from the outside, that you have a choice. It's true. But if you look at it from the inside, when you think you have a choice to be present, presence is choosing to come through you.

When you think you have a choice and suddenly you become present, that means presence has chosen to come through you. Nevertheless, it is helpful to feel that you have a choice from this perspective, the outside perspective. That's what presence wants you to feel that you have a choice.

Ultimately, you are present. You are the one consciousness. So it's not that you don't choose presence.

It's just a helpful perspective, a temporary perspective. So when you are dealing with a difficult person or an unconscious person, which is the same thing, an obnoxious person, unconscious person, angry person, unconscious person, then you have a choice. You can be drawn into their unconsciousness, can easily slip.

Any one person, one angry or upset or deeply negative unconscious person can pull an entire room full of people. Like let's say there's a committee meeting of 20 people and one of those 20 people attacks others. This one person can pull almost virtually everybody into his or her deeply unconscious negative state.

This is how contagious a negative state can be. One very unconscious person in a room can do that. You could almost also say that sometimes a few very unconscious people, and this happened before, can create an entire war because they draw others in.

This could, perhaps it was how the First World War started. Nobody exactly knows what were they all fighting about. It started with one person killing somebody in what later became Yugoslavia.

I don't know the details. It's just too much. Don't want to go into that.

One so-called terrorist or whatever killed somebody and that became the First World War. So one, millions and millions killed in a room. The same thing, one unconscious person can pull everybody into, and before you know it, they're all fighting and shouting

at each other.

So there is a danger there because you need to know that. But if you remember that there you have a choice at that moment to be drawn into that or to be there as an aware presence, then you can be where as an, continue to be there as an aware presence. And then that could make all the difference to the energy field in the room.

It could dissolve the unconsciousness of that one deeply unconscious person. Just one person who remains presence. And sometimes it's very helpful.

You can have a group of people discussing things, an organization, whatever they're doing. And one person there who can be, as we could call it, an anchor for presence can help the entire group to remain relatively present while they are discussing whatever it is that they need to discuss. That is a wonderful thing when you realize that possibility.

Or if you are in a group of people and you are there as a non-reactive presence, and if the others in that group are so deeply unconscious that they go on and go off into violent conflict, mentally, emotionally violent, might even come to blows. Often you see in certain countries in parliaments, they discuss something and then suddenly they jump up and start hitting each other. And some countries, it doesn't come, they don't quite hit each other, but they get close.

There's a lot of shouting, can be quite amusing, but so if you, often one person can make a lot of difference, so-called persons, not the person. And if it cannot, if you don't affect the energy fields, then very quickly you will not remain where you are. If your state of consciousness is completely incompatible with your surroundings, your surroundings are so deeply unconscious that there's no way it could affect those, then a separation will happen like oil and water.

You will find yourself being removed from there. That just happens. It can happen with yourself waking up one morning and saying, okay, I'm not going in, this is it.

Or find yourself walking out, goodbye. Or they call you and say, we don't need you, I'm afraid we'll have to let you go. You're too conscious for this organization.

You don't fit in at all anymore. I don't know what happened to you. And you're disrupting everything here.

Although this is not a retreat as such, I suggest that you use your time here, make it into a kind of a retreat. And all that it means is, your main interest is in consciousness while you are walking in this lovely small town, looking at things, talking to people. Be the presence rather than the power of the mind.

Be the person that needs to interpret everything. Be the presence behind the awareness. Sorry, be the awareness behind the sense perceptions.

Like now, you cannot improve this moment by adding unnecessary thought to it. What thought would you want to add to this moment? You just, it just detracts from the aliveness and beauty of this moment.

The mind, of course, can't sense that. And it'll say, what do you mean? What's beautiful about this moment?

Well, everything, the stillness in this room, the spaciousness, the lights, the beings, your being, and the consciousness that you are, without which none of this would be, could be. Sensing yourself as the conscious presence, let's see, ocean. Yes, you're also a person with a body and a personalized sense of self, that's the ripple.

So you go from being a ripple to being ocean. And then you can be both, so that you no longer have, okay, you can be either meditating and very aware. And usually the people go then, I'm practicing mindfulness, or they go about their daily life.

Okay, I've done mindfulness for 20 minutes. Yes. Okay, what do I have to do now?

Oh my gosh, gosh, gosh, I can't deal with all this. There are emails I haven't answered, all these emails, funny. Okay, and then eight hours later, oh, time for more mindfulness.

It's better than no mindfulness, of course. At least you have it there, if you have it. Maybe you're just trying.

But bring it into every moment so that you have whatever it is you're doing and always a sense of yourself as the presence. And this is wonderful when you can feel your presence. It's not yours, but I call it yours.

Because the moment I say your presence, I've created a duality. There's you and there's the presence, but there is no duality there. You are the presence.

Language or language creates duality. So that's fine. So feel the presence.

Right now, you are both a person, but to be a person, you need to remember who you are. Of course, you need to think about me and my life. Then you're a person.

Or at this very moment, you can also be the presence. When there's little or no conceptualization in your mind, but just an arising of what before was the background comes into the foreground. And then you start thinking without losing a sense of presence in the background.

Then thinking is actually not bad at all. It's only when thinking becomes self-serving and you lose yourself in it, then it gets very problematic. It creates one problem after another, pretending, wanting to solve problems.

That's self-serving thinking. So let's practice now here being the presence. No thought

and sensing how liberating that is.

Not needing to know anything beyond that. No conceptual knowledge required for that at all. And if some concept is needed, somebody approaches you, you're just looking around.

Somebody comes and says, oh, can you tell me how to get to such and such a street? Then the mind starts and it's fine. And that's an amazing way to live.

But you can only, you don't need the narratives anymore. Only when you live in connectedness with the deeper level of your being, with the, only when you know that you are and the sense of already being complete on that level, not needing anything on that level, already being fully yourself on that level. You're not perhaps fully yourself on the level of form.

You can still achieve things. You can still learn new things, master new things, try out new things. Why not?

There you are not complete. But on the level of the depth level of being, you are at the deepest level, you are already fully yourself in the timeless present moment of being. You only need to sense that in yourself.

Then you can operate on the two levels and then you don't need these narratives, spin these narratives anymore in order to continuously enhance your mind made sense of self. And then you can be with situations, allow them to be as they are without imposing any unnecessary story on it. So people behave the way they behave.

People don't always do what they're supposed to do. They just act according to their level of consciousness and you just accept that. They act or whatever they do, that's what they do.

The situations are as they are already. So you no longer, because many narratives have this element of deep resentment to them too. You might notice that when the mind constructs narrative as they do in the collective too, these people don't believe what we believe and therefore they are actually bad, evil people.

How can they not believe the truth? They believe that this event happened 100 years, and in the year so-and-so, but in Christianity it happened too in the past, more than now. When was Jesus born?

I'm telling you it was then. What? You don't believe he was not born on the 24th of December?

That's totally wrong. And people killed each other for that. So be careful of narratives, but the only, I cannot, I'm not saying don't have narratives anymore.

First, get in touch with the stillness within, then you'll notice from there that when the narrative still arise, you can smile, or when you can, before you know it, you might have been talking to somebody about your story, and then you notice it and you can smile, and then you realize you don't really need that story anymore. And then it could be that you're not as popular anymore at dinner parties, because you don't have these interesting narratives about what happened, or these people did, but do you know what he did? You'll never believe it.

That's what he did. Oh God, wow. I thought he was, I knew he was like that.

I had my suspicions. So the, there are many Zen stories like that, where the essence of Zen is, of course, to live without a narrative in that simplicity of awareness. And then the simplicity is the famous saying that you probably know from Zen, chopping wood, carrying water, is a Zen saying, which is what you do in the Zen monastery every day.

You chop the wood for the fire, and you carry water for washing or cleaning, and every day you chop wood. And so there's a Zen saying, chopping wood, carrying water, which means you go about your life without adding anything to it. There's not the story of, I can't stand this anymore.

I've been chopping wood now for three years. Why doesn't somebody else do it? Why the, oh, we should employ somebody.

We must get, and this carrying water, just, it's getting too much for me. Why should I have to do that? I'd rather be somewhere else.

I'd rather be playing golf than carrying water. These are all stories that go through people's minds that stop them from being, giving their fullest attention to whatever they're doing at the present moment, doing with resentment. You do what you do it, but there's resentment behind the doing.

You're doing it, but you don't really want to be doing it because I shouldn't be doing that, or whatever the narrative is, why you shouldn't be doing that, or don't want to be, would rather be doing something else. The famous bumper stickers on cars. I'd rather be fishing.

I'd rather be golfing. I'd rather be in Hawaii. Or as Ram Dass's bumper sticker that I saw on his car, I'd rather be here now.

So, that's a good one. I'd rather be here now. So, then you have then always fully in whatever activity you're doing, it's not being obstructed by some kind of story in your mind, then you can give your fullest attention to whatever you're doing without interference of some entity up here that doesn't really want to be doing it for some reason.

And so, many people have continuously some stuff going on there that is in conflict with whatever is happening or with whatever they are doing in the present, not perhaps permanent conflict, but a lot of conflict with whatever they are doing. That prevents a high quality of activity because one can look at activity in terms of quality. Quality in doing something is intrinsically connected with the degree of presence of consciousness that flows into the doing.

So, when you buy something that is of quality, whether it's a work of art or somebody has made it, then that sense of quality derives from the consciousness of the maker of that thing, whatever it may be, because it shows there is attention in it. There is complete attention to the present moment. It wasn't somebody said, oh, we must finish that as soon as possible so that we can make as many things as we can today.

Let's make it as quickly as possible. So, every doing is a means to an end, to the next moment. Let's make this.

And you're already looking to the next one while you're making this. So, in other words, you'd rather be there than here. That's low quality doing.

You're not present in the doing. And because there's mental interference, it creates the thought of the next moment where you would rather be because the next moment is always a thought. The next moment has no actual existence except as a thought.

Isn't that interesting? There is no next moment unless you think about the next moment. I have to think about that.

No, you can't. Is that true? You have to start thinking.

Is there no next moment unless I think about the next? Let me think about that. I'm getting very confused.

It's actually quite simple. It's so obvious. It's like saying, here's an apple.

Yeah, it is an apple. It's true. That's what we call it, an apple.

There it is. There is no next moment. There's only ever this moment, obviously, away from your thoughts.

So if you continuously live as if the next moment were more important than this one, you cannot give your fullest attention to this one. That diminishes the quality of your doing. It decreases your connectedness with true intelligence where creativity comes from, inspiration comes from, which can then not flow into what you're doing or only trickles, little trickles might still flow, but perhaps not even that because you're always, you're looking to the next thing.

You're not fully with this thing, when the next thing is mental stuff. It's a thought. So

that's another aspect of the interference of narrative because even the next thing is a small narrative in your head.

And that tells you, I need to get there. I'd rather be there already. Therefore, I need to get this out of the way quickly.

And then whatever you are doing here is not, you're not fully present with it, which is reflected in the quality of the doing, which has infinite repercussions because other people are affected by it also. And so your life then continuously is experienced as unsatisfying because you never arrive at the next thing because when the next thing comes, it's the next thing. You're trapped in a mind pattern that says you live for the next thing.

So if you discover within yourself that a lot of the time you're in a state of lack, of insufficiency, of not enough, and you feel that the answer to the remedy is to be active in this world and achieve and do as much as possible, then you'll probably find that ultimately that is not the answer to your state of lack in order to transcend, to go beyond your state of lack, of neediness, of not enough, spiritual practice and spiritual realization is necessary.

Focus on the realization of being. It's only there that you can go beyond that state of lack, which is ego. Go within and discover who or what you are beyond.

That's the person. If dreadful things happened in your past, it is especially liberating to sense that. And it's often people who have had a very difficult life that come to this realization.

They have had their crucifixion and then there comes the transcendence of suffering. And again, please remember, I'm just using words. So it's not the ultimate truth cannot be expressed in words.

It's only a distant approximation. That which you sense when thinking subsides, if only for a moment, and you can sense the beingness that is always there underneath it, the timeless presence, you sense that. Is that, and then as you can sense that and you become more rooted in it, even in your daily life, you begin to be able to sense that in the background through the simple fact that you're aware that you're aware, even when you're doing things.

You're aware that you're aware when you're looking at something, there's not only what you're looking at, there's only the awareness that you're aware of. So that's there, the awareness of awareness. And that, now, is that God?

I would suggest not quite. It is, I'm speaking purely intuitively, but some mystics and others have had similar realizations. It's the emanation of God, in other words, the consciousness that inhabits you and temporarily disguises itself as a person is an

emanation of the source, of all life.

And that source, which cannot be named, which does not exist, because exist means to have a location in space and time, everything exists is somewhere. So in that sense, God does not exist because God does not have a, God is beyond this dimension where existence unfolds. But like the sun emanating light, God, or the source of all life, which cannot be named or understood at all, emanates consciousness into this dimension.

And gradually, this dimension evolves. Gradually, it expresses more of that light that emanates from the transcendent source of all life. Gradually, because this was an important discovery of Darwin that there is an evolution of life.

It becomes increasingly complex. What he didn't realize is there's an intelligence that expresses itself through that. So there's a source of all life beyond the transcendent source, which is God.

And God shines like the sun shines. And the light of the sun, you can feel it on your skin. Now, whether you say this is a sun, in some sense, the light of the sun is the sun because there's no separation.

But in another sense, the sun is not different, but infinitely faster than the light that you feel on your skin. In the same way that the emanation of God, which is consciousness, yes, it's God in the sense of it is an emanation of God. And so this is what you are.

You're an emanation from source, source emanation. And the consciousness in you is the light, as Jesus said to his disciples, but he meant really every human being because his disciples were not that special. You are the light of the world, he said.

And he said it of himself in another gospel. He said, I am the light of the world. He said both things.

He told others, you are the light of the world. And he said, I am the light of the world. What could that possibly be except that because the people he was talking to were not special, particularly important VIPs in this world, but you are the light of the world.

The light in you is the consciousness in you. And without the consciousness, you are the consciousness of the world. You are the light of the world.

Without the consciousness, the world would not even be. And that is when you realize that, that your essential identity is being consciousness, which is an emanation of source, whatever you want to call that, and your essential identity is that, the being. And then that, then that is where you derive your sense of identity from who you are.

It's no longer the memory of your past becomes relatively insignificant. Yes, you remember it, but the wonderful thing about your past, it has brought you to this point of

awakening, no matter how senseless it seemed at the time, because every life is kind of messy in one way or another. And many things seem, why did this happen to me?

Why did I do that? That was so stupid. Or why did this have to happen to me?

My childhood could have been, it was so unhappy. Why did this? But all your past, it brings you to this point of awakening.

So it fulfilled its function, but it no longer gives you an identity. You recognize it. You acknowledge it, you know it, but you no longer derive your sense of who you are from your past.

That comes from a deeper place. Ah, you can sense the presence that you are, the being that you are, not conditioned by your past whatsoever. And this is especially liberating if you have a very heavy past.

If dreadful things happened in your past, it is especially liberating to sense that. And it's often people who have had a very difficult life that come to this realization. They have had their crucifixion, and then there comes the transcendence of suffering.

As it's pointed out, even for non-Christians, even if you're not a Christian, you don't have to be Christian to understand the deeper significance of the cross, which is no different from the Buddha's teachings. Buddha said, I teach suffering and the end of suffering. And in the Christian cross, it's there as an image.

The teaching is that suffering is, the cross is the instrument of suffering. Jesus is nailed to the cross, the deepest image of suffering. But the cross is also the symbol for transcendence of suffering.

The cross is also a symbol for the divine. It's both. It's a torture instrument, and it's a symbol for the divine.

That's amazing. The two together. This can be, a teaching can be transmitted in this way, even to people who would never understand it conceptually, as I'm talking about it conceptually.

There's a deep truth embedded in that archetypal image. Jesus is the archetypal human, and the cross is the archetypal journey of every human being. So be thankful for all the suffering that has brought you to this point.

It's brought you here. That's amazing. Awakening.

Does it mean that from now on, life will not be challenging anymore? No. The challenges continue.

But they may be of a somewhat different kind, no longer produced by the dysfunction of

the egoic mind, as is often the case with many humans. But still, challenges come in many forms. The difference is, as you become increasingly rooted in the being of yourself, the transcendent self, not the being, the challenges are no longer converted into suffering.

So there's no longer a personality that complains about what's happening to me. The challenges are simply accepted for what they are. Action is taken if action is necessary or possible.

No action is taken. A simple surrender happens when a challenge comes and there isn't really anything you can do. Then that's what is.

And then once you reach this point, every challenge can deepen. If it's a real challenge, it deepens your state of consciousness. It makes you more present.

And that is a wonderful thing when you've reached that point. I have noticed with the so-called pandemic for the last couple of years, some people have become very, very, become less conscious than they were before the pandemic, some. This is the same with any, also the challenge that happens to you individually, anything going wrong in your life, a breakup, loss of a job, loss of home, a desk from one close to you, a court case or whatever threat.

Some people become more unconscious when they're being challenged, but are more reactive, more deeply entrenched in their conditioning, in their ego. Every divorce lawyer meets people at their most unconscious, usually, unless they're already evolving, in which case it's fine. And even realtors and people like that find people that are so, why are people, they get so attached to the outcome, result.

It really pulls them down. A challenge can make you unconscious or more conscious, depending where you are at. And some people through the pandemic have become more present.

They've accepted, they have had perhaps been affected in different ways, financially or jobs or life situation or relationships have been affected by it. All kinds of things have happened. And some people have been able to use that and become more, go more into being.

Sometimes there wasn't that much doing anymore. You had to go more into being. And others have become more reactive and more angry and more fearful.

Fear has been a big thing. More fearful of the fear of, ultimately the fear of death, what could happen to me, the fear of, oh my God, that's ultimately, fear is always ultimately the fear of death, the fear of the greatest loss of myself. And that tends to go away when you are rooted in the being.

It's hard to explain why it goes away and how it goes away, but it does. The fear of death seems to disappear. I have to, I'll just mention, the challenges continue to come.

I've had my entire life, I've had virtually no health challenge until last, late last year, early this year, late last year. And I'd never been in a hospital as an inpatient, hardly ever see a doctor. And suddenly I was hit by a, just a few months ago, a huge challenge, what normally people would consider a huge life challenge to a medical condition.

And immediately comes the possibility, okay, well, I may only be here for another few more months or not, who knows. And after the initial diagnosis, I just went, okay. I became even more emptier than I normally am.

I'm normally fairly empty, but I would just like that. And there wasn't any, no fear. I was basically dead already.

There was no, but there was a presence left. The person didn't matter very much. And then I spent many hours in just complete presence.

And then I was operated on. And then I, they looked at it again. And for the time being, the challenge seems to have dissolved completely.

Will it come back? Who knows? So that's it.

They continue to come, but just the greater the challenge, the greater the intensity of presence. I've often found that in other situations in my life too, and the challenge has come, they go more. So there's no longer a person that reacts to what's happening.

It's just the beingness, just the presence, just the consciousness. That means you become aware of your thoughts. You still have your opinions, but yourself isn't in your opinions, which means you hold them more lightly.

You are not possessed by your opinions because otherwise, humans that have no awareness, they don't have opinions. The opinions have them. They don't even have thoughts.

The thoughts have them. So that's the shift is the person remains, but there's a suddenly a depth to you that was there all the time, but because of the seductive or hypnotic nature of sensory experience, and more importantly, mental experience, you didn't know it was there. You didn't know the dimension of depth.

You had been seduced out of the depth of who you are onto just the surface level of life, thoughts and perceptions, surface. And it becomes a very unsatisfying experience to live on the surface of life only because on the surface of life, nothing is fulfilling for very long. So there's the continuous search.

[Speaker 2] (8:18:40 - 8:20:42)

Getting what you want and not getting what you want is a very strange thing, because I feel that when I walk through life, you don't even know you're getting whatever you want.

[Speaker 1] (8:20:42 - 8:24:47)

away from the mind is to transcend the thinking mind. Transcend doesn't mean it becomes completely abolished, but you discover in yourself a deeper dimension. It's only by discovering that depth in you that you can become free of being the slave to conditioned thinking, the voice in the head that never stops.

So we are here to find or deepen that dimension that is in everyone. One could call it a dimension of consciousness that has been pointed to by ancient teachers for thousands of years, the possibility that there is another dimension in you, not something that you need to bring about, but something you just need to discover because it's already there. It's just being overlooked continuously, very much like the fish may be tempted to overlook the presence of water and spend his whole life looking for it.

And says, I've been told there is this incredible thing that pervades everything and surrounds us and is within us, and I've been looking for it all my life. And it's very much the same with what is sometimes called a spiritual dimension of life. It's already here within you, and yet most people haven't found it.

You're just directing your attention to sense perceptions rather than thinking. So there's a shift from being absorbed in interpreting sense perceptions and just noticing the sense perceptions. I cannot predict what your reaction or response will be to this gathering.

It could be a wonderful beginning of discovery of a deeper state of consciousness, or it could be that you are finding this gathering and this talk incredibly boring or irritating. I can't, what is he talking about? I can't stand it anymore.

And then the mind goes on.

[Speaker 2] (8:25:00 - 8:25:01)

Sorry, sir.

[Speaker 1] (8:25:01 - 8:50:09)

Help is coming. Thank you. So this is all about what we might call the awakening of consciousness.

So just, I'll be coming back to it again and again, this terminology, but just to summarize what that means for those of you who are new to it, is when you discover in yourself the ability to know what's happening in your inner space, either on the level of emotion, on the level of mind, so that you are, you're beginning to find there is an observing

presence there. The observing presence can observe whatever happens in your mind, the movement of thought, instead of being totally drawn into it, totally identified, identified with it. That is the awakening, the disidentification from thought plus emotion, the disidentification from thought.

So that's what it's all about. We can approach it from many different angles and directions, but the core of this is always that. So as a little exercise in awareness or presence, let's do this.

I call it do, but it's not really a doing. Becoming aware of sense perceptions, because that is part of your experience of the present moment. Sense perceptions, visual, auditory are the main sense perceptions, but the others may come in too.

So there's the totality of this room. There's a man sitting on a chair. You see him on the chair, you see him on the screen, stage, people.

So you take that in, the voice. You're becoming aware of that. You're giving it attention without any strain or effort.

You're just directing your attention to sense perceptions rather than thinking. So there's a shift from being absorbed in interpreting sense perceptions and just noticing the sense perceptions. Huge shift.

And that's already an enormously wonderful and empowering and important spiritual teaching to become aware of sense perceptions, sensory perceptions, and remove the interpretation of the sensory perceptions. Very fundamental, deep spiritual practice. It may sound a little strange, but to be aware of something, you can either direct your sense perception towards a particular noise that you hear in the background, whatever it may be, a bird singing or the engine noise of cars or whatever, or visually a flower or a tree or the sky or the totality of whatever surrounds you and take in the various sense perceptions and just be with it, be alert.

They build an alert presence for the sense perception like now. There's no need to interpret. So what can you add to it?

You let go of the, sometimes one should say, compulsive need to immediately find some kind of interpretation for it, naming it, the continuous naming. Every moment has to be immediately classified and personalized and named in some way. I'd like it, I don't like it, or this person is not quite right.

And a lot of the naming is of a negative kind. You might notice when you name, there's a difficult person around or you observe an unconscious person behaving in an unconscious way because what else can an unconscious person do? You can't ask them to behave in a conscious way.

So you're looking at an unconscious behavior and say, awful person. And then you let go of that. It's easier with trees and flowers and with people, of course.

With people, it's a more advanced stage, but I'm just pointing it out already because you have ample opportunity in this world, in your life to practice with people, continuously. You may have noticed people are not easy. They're difficult.

And some are quite crazy, but we'll go to that. And there are moments of craziness and relative sanity, and then they got crazy again. That's another story you might remember your ex-husband or wife.

So sense perception, bringing just awareness to sense perception like now. You can do it in your room. You sit in your room alone and look around the room, let go of the mind wanting to say something.

We don't need it. So instead of naming, there's just an awareness behind the sense perception. That's a spiritual practice.

You can do it anywhere. I recommend that you do it whenever you're waiting for something to happen. Even a simple thing like waiting for the elevator to come or while you're riding in the elevator or you're waiting at the traffic light or you're waiting on the phone, you're waiting for your bank to speak to a human being.

Half an hour, an hour. That may be too much for this spiritual practice to start with. So whenever you're waiting, and you might be surprised how many times of your day you're waiting for something.

Now, most of the time, unfortunately, these days, when humans are waiting for something, even at the elevator or in a lineup in the supermarket, whatever it may be, airport, oh, there's a lot of waiting at airports these days. Wherever they are, unfortunately, most humans immediately get hold of this device. Even I have one.

Here it is. They can't wait. They cannot give themselves even half a minute without needing to fill this half a minute with something.

Now, before they invented this, it was a little bit more difficult. You had to fill it with something. You had to think of something or you became restless, waiting, the elevator's still not coming.

It's only been 20 seconds. But now, of course, you have this. You can immediately go because everybody else is doing it, too, so you have to do it, too.

So you pull this out. There's nothing in particular happening, but everybody's doing it, so you do it, too. And you're adding to the clutter of your mind and you're adding to the unawareness of the present moment.

And even worse, it is when you're out, let's say you're out in nature, and then even there, you're on a bench, you're sitting on the beach or somewhere, wherever it may be, going out. Even there, some people cannot let go of this because this is an extension of the thinking mind. The thinking mind was already a huge challenge and a problem for thousands of years, and it grew and grew and grew, and then the thinking mind was so clever that it came up with an extension of itself in the form of this.

And now it's even more challenging because it amplifies the thinking mind. It amplifies and adds to the clutter of your mind. Clutter meaning useless thinking, just going around in circles, ruminating at night even when you can't sleep.

And a lot of the thinking is not pleasant for most people. You don't think for very long about a wonderful sunset that you saw last night or two days ago that was such a wonderful sunset. You can't do a lot of thinking.

The mind needs something else. It needs a difficult person to think about, somebody who was rude to you last week, and you cannot let go of the memory of that and what you should have said to him, but you didn't, but now you can do it in your mind. Or what may happen tomorrow or the next week, you have to think about that now because otherwise it'll all fall apart if I don't think about this now.

And people don't realize that they live with a burden of unconscious thinking. I'm not talking about useful thinking when there's something to apply your mind to. There's a problem that needs to be solved.

And what can we do? What can I do about it? Let's look at this and that and that.

The mind is a very wonderful thing when you're not the slave of your mind. So a lot of that thinking is actually destructive and unpleasant. People don't realize that the burden they carry in their minds, the burden of, for many people, an unhappy story they carry in their minds and they think about it.

And what is that unhappy narrative they carry in their mind? What do they call it? They call it my life.

Oh, my life. So why did it go wrong so many times there? And that shouldn't have happened.

I had imagined it when I was 17 and 18. I imagined something real, very different, but that didn't happen. And then, of course, there are good things too.

It's for many people, it's the narrative of my life is a mixed bag of good and bad. But for many others, my life is very problematic and I cannot stop thinking about it. And the story, I have to tell myself, the story of me and my life.

And anybody who wants to listen, I'll tell them the story too, of me and my life. Are you ready to listen to my life? Okay, and then I'll tell you mine, okay.

That is the narrative in your mind that you confuse with who you are, which is all your memories, accumulated memories, not necessarily objectively true, some maybe, but many of the memories are colored by faulty interpretations of what people did or said or did. You can verify this. If you have siblings and you're grown up and then you talk about events that happened in your childhood, when we were six years old, you talk to your brother or your sister, do you remember this event when I was six and you were eight or you were seven?

Do you remember what happened? And then your sibling says, no, that's not what happened. So this is what happened, completely different.

But each one thinks that's exactly how it is. And in some cases it may well be, but whatever it is, it's a memory in your mind. You replayed an old movie, it replays itself.

And often involving people, but if somebody did to you, undoubtedly, they did do that to you and they shouldn't have done it. This is very true. Many people have had relatively unconscious parents.

They did their best, but nobody can act beyond their level of consciousness. I realized that it was a wonderful liberation when I realized, I was ready later in my life, I realized that my parents could not have acted differently because they would have been beyond their level of consciousness at that particular time. I would like to explore with you this afternoon the deepest truth of human existence.

When I say that, that may sound a little bit abstract, interesting, but abstract human existence. And it may sound a little bit philosophical, but this is not a lecture on philosophy, nor is it a lecture at all. The best way to look upon it is as a meditation.

Although somebody is speaking, look upon it as a meditation. So when I say the deepest truth of human existence, it sounds a little bit removed from your everyday concerns. So let's put it in another way.

We are here to explore the deepest truth of who you are. Because you are human existence. We are here to explore the deepest truth within yourself, knowing yourself at the deepest level.

A level so deep that knowing yourself and knowing God become one and the same. There are two levels to this talk, if it can be called that. One is the words, and one is the gaps between the words, a certain stillness.

I just point this out because it is helpful as you listen to be aware not only of the words, but of an underlying field of stillness out of which the words come, nothing personal.

There's a field of stillness that is both within and without, gaps between the words, a silent space in between and underlying the words. And simply to be aware also of that dimension.

Then listening to these words is more than absorbing information because there isn't that much information here. It's not an information-based talk. Then it becomes a meditation to just sit here and listen.

And the deeper teaching, if it can even be called teaching, is not in and through the words. The deeper teaching lies in the dimension of stillness because the moment you acknowledge that underlying dimension, you have accessed a realm within yourself that is deeper than the stream of mind with which most people are identified as themselves. Simply as we sit here to acknowledge, to notice, to listen to an underlying stillness, that which acknowledges that in you, that which is able to listen to that dimension, listen not to something, listen to nothing, to nothing, just the act of listening, that in you which is able to acknowledge that dimension, to be attentive to that dimension is a realm of stillness underneath the stream of mental noise.

In other words, the moment you pay attention to that dimension of silence, there is a stillness in you because through thought, you cannot pay attention to silence because thought is noise. So already, although through words, we are going to progressively explore the deepest truth of human existence, even as you sit here and follow the words that progressively explore the deepest truth of human existence, that deepest truth of human existence is already emerging in you as you sit here and listen, even now, simply by paying attention to silence through the inner stillness. That is the only way you can notice.

The stillness in you notices that. And you have gone beyond the continuous stream of mental noise that for most people is who they think they are. Everybody, every human being in life form is an expression of that one formless and timeless one life.

And that is beyond anything that could be destroyed. It's life itself. It has no opposite.

The one life has not, death is not the opposite of life. Death is the opposite of birth. And birth and death apply to the forms that appear on the surface of the sphere.

So when death happens to life forms, even violent death, yes, it is from the perspective of the surface reality is dreadful, but from the perspective of knowing the transcendent dimension, even that is no longer dreadful. It is transcended because the realization is there. The life that you are and the life that I am can never be destroyed.

The essence of every life form is eternal. It derives from the one. It's an expression of the one.

To know that, not just as a belief, but deep within yourself to know that which cannot be

destroyed, what the Buddhists call amara, the deathless, this is the closest perhaps that the Buddhists come to talking about God, the deathless dimension, timeless, deathless, that which cannot be destroyed, every human and every life form is a temporary expression of that. When you know that within yourself, you look with deep compassion upon the madness that happens on the surface reality, perpetrated by humans who don't know who they are. And because they don't know who they are, they don't know what they are doing to themselves, ultimately, because every other is yourself.

Thank you for being my spiritual teacher.

[Speaker 2] (8:50:09 - 8:50:32)

You've really helped me a lot. You say in the power of now that you are here to enable the divine purpose of the universe to unfold. Could you please explain what the divine purpose of the universe is?

No. No. No.

[Speaker 1] (8:50:36 - 9:50:00)

No. No. No.

Coming into this dimension is the divine purpose, but the divine purpose is twofold. One is the universe delights in creation. It delights in creativity.

It delights in creating new forms. How do I know that? Well, just look around on the planet here, the millions of life forms in the sea, on land, in the air.

The universe delights in creating this multiplicity of forms and it delights in experiencing itself through all those forms, because you are not a separate entity. It's not the case as sometimes the ego, ego itself believes here's me, and there's the rest of the world or the universe, or the ego thinks that it is in the universe. It somehow suddenly appeared, fallen into this universe, and then where am I?

On this, I'm in this universe. You're not in the universe. You are the universe.

The one life expressing itself through countless life forms. And there's a growing complexity in life forms. And with every experience, the universe is experiencing itself.

Your life is extremely differentiated in human beings. The way in which life or the universe or the one consciousness experiences itself in this dreamlike world is extremely differentiated. It is amazing.

Every human being is different of those billions of humans on the planet. Every human not only looks different, you could recognize if you know one person out of these billions, I can't remember how many billions are on the planet now, you could recognize this

person out of billions of other human beings just by looking at their face. This is how differentiated it is on the surface level already.

And then every life experience, of course, there are many similarities, but there's a uniqueness to every life experience. Every life experience is a world that arises and subsides. My mother's life, your mother's life, your parents' life, anybody's life, was a particular world.

The way she experienced the world was very different from the way I experienced it. It's like my mother and I, and I'm just taking one example from my personal experience, seemed to inhabit completely different universes. But we were in the same place.

But experiencing life in a totally, totally different way. And the universe delights in that complexity of experience, so it wants to experience itself as form. It means, and so the forms become evolving more, more complex.

The humans that are alive now have far greater complexity than the humans that were alive 10,000 years ago, or 50,000 years ago. Life at that time was more simple. Gather the food, gather the plants, or hunt an animal if they did that.

Prepare the meal, go out hunting, come back home. It's fairly simple. There wasn't the complexity of New York City, LA, freeways, and all that's behind that.

There were nuclear physics, whatever, and so on. And so the universe delights in that, and you are an expression of that. It wants to become conscious of itself through you.

And it's doing that, attempting to do that through humans, but that one consciousness is not separate from you. You are an expression of it. But the universe also wants to know itself deeply, its own source.

It wants the source realization also. So I know that because I know it by looking within myself. There is an outgoing movement into creation, and there's a return movement that wants to realize itself in its essence.

The universe wants both. It wants to go out and create. It also wants to realize its own essence through you.

In a human life that expresses as wanting to do things in this life, wanting to contribute to this life, wanting to create something, to make something of your life, your so-called life, it expresses as that. And the other, the return movement, so you have the outward movement of the universe. The return movement expresses as coming totally into the present moment, stepping away from becoming into being.

Becoming is the outward movement. What can I do now? I need to do something.

I want to create this. I feel that this wants to, there's something coming through me. I

feel a piece of music wants to come through me.

A book wants to be written or something, whatever, I want to do this or create this, set up this business or that or whatever. And then it's this becoming, doing, but then there's another movement that says, I just want to be and be still. And this present moment, go deeply into this moment.

I don't need to become anything at all. I just want to be fully who I am already and go deeply into being. So you have, it's almost this contradictory movements.

In some humans, the outward tendency is greater. In others, the inward tendency is greater. Both are necessary and somehow both need to be there as long as you're here in a human form, both to some extent will be in you, but there will be different to different degrees.

Some are much more going within and to being, to the source. But I would suggest that it's not either or. There are certain spiritual additions that look upon it as more as either or.

They say, forget about the world, just realize who you are, and then you can just sit in a corner for the rest of your life and never do anything again you don't need to. That's one way. But for us, it's finding a certain balance, which doesn't mean it needs to be totally in balance.

A very few humans who are totally balanced between the outward movement of creating and the inward movement of connecting with your inner being and the source of all life, you need to have both. So that the universe can create through you without losing itself in its creations. So you can create not from a place of egoic need where you depend on the outcome.

If I don't get that, I'll kill myself. If I don't achieve, if I don't get famous and rich, I don't know what I'll do. Not that, but a playful participation in the world of form and contributing to it, to the world of form without losing itself in the creation and in the doing.

If you become stressed, means you're losing yourself in the doing. This is more important than you completely forget, you become uprooted. You're no longer connected to the spaciousness, the unconditioned, the one within.

So to be and do at the same time. But some humans, yes, are much more drawn to being. I call them frequency holders.

They hold the frequency of being on the planet. They're not interested in creating huge things out there. They're interested in doing perhaps little things, gardening, cooking, looking after animals, being with animals, helping humans in some capacity, helping

even physical, helping humans with their bodies and so on.

So they are frequency holders. They are more into being than there's some doing, but you cannot, you always have to do something. You can't, but they don't put the emphasis on doing, the emphasis on being, and then they allow presence to flow into what they do.

And they affect the world also very significantly. Others have a greater tendency to performing creative action. They need to go out there and become active, but their challenge is not to get lost in what they do and thinking that's all important.

They forget that this is a play of form. And then there comes a seriousness and a heaviness into the doing, and they get unhappy. And when you are unhappy, whatever you create has some flavor of that unhappiness.

So the divine purpose of the universe, to summarize my long explanation, is to know itself both through the creation of form and through realization of the formless essence of all life. And that is the divine purpose of the universe and that you are here as part of that. That's it.

Thank you. But even if it is a dream, there must be something that is more real than the dream, without which the dream could not be taking place, could not be. Here we focus on being because most humans are suffering from the dreadful affliction, which we may call forgetfulness of being.

And because there's forgetfulness of being, they are lost in doing. They lose themselves in their doing. Or if they're not doing anything, maybe they're hanging around at street corners, then they are lost in semi-consciousness.

They'll have moving below thinking, or they're trapped in very dysfunctional mind patterns. And even the thinking we could even categorize as that's also a kind of doing, that doing is not just activities that you're engaged in in daily life, but underlying this external doing, there's the doing of thinking. The thinking is happening and that belongs to the realm of doing.

Although, in most cases, it's not you who does the thinking. You are not doing it, it is a doing, but really thinking is something that happens to most people. It's not something they do voluntarily as a choice.

So your thinking happens to you, one could say. So I sometimes say you don't think, you are being thought, you're being created by the involuntary and compulsive movement of thought that is conditioned by the past. And this involuntary compulsive movement creates a mind-made kind of entity, a sense of self, and this entity is the ego.

And for most people, that's who they perceive themselves to be. And so you live with

this entity, you are, there's a good analogy one could use, and that is that you, as the deeper consciousness, are asleep and you're dreaming the dream of your life. Occasionally, you might wake up briefly and then you fall back into the dream state, which is the, whatever drama is happening in your life, whatever situations are happening in your life.

So there's a personality or a person that's a dream-like entity. From the point of view of the awakened consciousness, you can clearly see that when you retrospectively, perhaps, as you awaken, you look back on your life and you can see how many unconscious things happened that you were involved in, that you participate in, and so on, and there was a whole drama unfolding, sometimes not so bad, and at other times, really dreadful, and a kind of nightmare in some cases.

And so if you go back in all traditions, whether you go to Western philosophy or Eastern spiritual traditions, there's often the comparison of unawakened existence with a dream state. Many Western philosophers also have questioned it. Is life a dream?

A famous play by Spanish playwright, Calderón de la Barca is La Vida is when your life is a dream. It's an ancient play. So the extent to which you are still identified with you as a person, you may still be trapped in the dream.

It is possible that as you sit here or wherever you sit or stand or lie, the awakened being is emerging, has emerged partially or maybe fully. And so there's a, you might be a hybrid between the dream, the dreamt entity and the one who is doing the dream, which is the consciousness. You've probably heard of lucid dreaming, which means this is actual dreaming when you're asleep and you dream.

It can sometimes happen you're in the middle of a dream, you suddenly realize that you're dreaming. It's a very interesting point. Oh, it's all a dream.

And then you might think, okay, I could do anything now. Let's, what can I create in this dream? In most cases, this doesn't last very long because the awakened, the wake, the state, the state of wakefulness in conventional terms is not really compatible with dreams.

So it's very brief. If you become aware in the dream, it's most likely that very quickly you'll wake up out of the dream, then it's gone. And then you wake up into normal wakefulness, which is another, spiritually speaking, another kind of dream.

Now, let's assume that this, right now, this room here, a man speaking, you sitting there with your history, with your person, conditions created by your history. And we could perhaps assume, could this be a dream? Could you be dreaming this?

Were you, in the middle of the dream, you're dreaming of a man who says, you may be dreaming. Oh. And let's assume for a moment that that is the case, that you're actually

dreaming this very place, that situation, everything is part of your dream.

And we don't know, it could be the case. It depends how you look at it. From certain perspective, it is.

From another perspective, it's not. Let's assume that it is for a moment. But even if it is a dream, there must be something that is more real than the dream, without which the dream could not be taking place, could not be.

And this prerequisite is, of course, there must be a consciousness in which the dream happens. So it becomes of secondary importance whether you're dreaming this moment or not. Even if you are dreaming this moment, there must be an essence within that dream that is real.

And that essence is the light of consciousness in which the dream images appear. And that light of consciousness is creating the dream. But the moment you realize that light of consciousness within you, that's the same thing as awakening within the conventional dream, the normal kind of dream which I just talked about right here now.

Now, let's assume this is a dream, a dream-like thing. In many ways, it is, because dreams evaporate very quickly. They come, and then something else happens.

After this retreat, you might wake up the morning after and say, did I just dream of this retreat? Or did it actually happen? So let's assume it is.

And suddenly you become aware of something within this dream, if that's what it is, of something beyond, something that transcends the dream, is not separate from it, but without which the dream could not exist. And that is the sense of beingness or presence of I am, of consciousness, the realization that you are conscious, or rather, language is very deceptive. Mistakes can easily creep in the moment you verbalize something.

When I say you are conscious, it's not quite right. You are consciousness. The essence of who you are is consciousness.

If I say you are conscious, and there's two of you, the you and the consciousness. So in the dream, if you suddenly realize that which is beyond the dream by becoming aware, not becoming aware of something that arises, because everything that arises would be part of the dream, not becoming aware of any new form that arises as a thought or a sensory perception or an emotion, but becoming aware of awareness, which is not something. It's not, you can't say, there it is, I got the awareness, there it is.

Or no, it's over there. I just had it, but it's gone now. So awareness or consciousness cannot become an object of consciousness.

Everything else is an object that arises in consciousness. But if you attempt to make

consciousness into an object, then you're lost again. You cannot make consciousness into an object because consciousness is the very thing.

If you're looking for, let's say you're looking for yourself beyond the person, where's the real me, where's the real, I want the being behind the person that I'm looking for it. If you're looking for it, waiting for an experience in which this thing happens, that would be very misleading because you would be waiting for some experience, fireworks, spiritual fireworks. Tsk, tsk, tsk, tsk, tsk, tsk, tsk, tsk, tsk.

The ultimate vision, as you see in some ancient paintings of Christian mystics, and they go. And you can't have that for that long. I mean, the vision is there.

How long is it going to last? So if you're looking for yourself in the realm of experience or in the realm of manifestation, phenomena, object of consciousness, you can't find it there because the very thing or no thing that's looking for yourself is you. It's like a flashlight.

You use a flashlight to find the flashlight. I'm looking for the flashlight. Becoming aware, right?

For example, now, becoming aware that you are conscious right now. That's a strange thing. There's no content to that.

There's simply a presence. And for that to happen, and I'm finally getting to it, that is, there needs to be the cessation of thought. And so this is my invitation to you.

You do not need to think continuously in your daily life. It's if your mind tells you that if you do not think and do not worry, then your life is going to collapse. That is not true.

It's a lie. But your mind might either explicitly or implicitly say that I need to really think about my life. Thinking has its place.

It's a wonderful tool. It can be used for manifesting. It can be used for creating.

It's a tool, but if it takes you over, if you're identified with a tool, then it comes to possess you, and that's a terrible limitation. So the new state of consciousness is a mixture of thought and spaciousness so that you can go about your daily life, walking from point A to point B in that state of simple aware presence. Let's do it now.

I'm calling it do, but it's not doing involved. Simply become aware of yourself as you sit here, just as I am aware of myself as a conscious presence. This is a very strange thing.

It's not, you can't say, oh, you cannot become an object to yourself in this. Everything else is an object that arises in your consciousness, an object of consciousness. But knowing yourself, you cannot be an object in your own consciousness.

So you cannot know yourself in a subject-object relationship at the deepest level. You can only know yourself as the eternal subject. There is a space of stillness in that moment of knowing yourself as the essence identity.

There is an alive sense of stillness and presence. Like, let's separate. Let's just say my two hands, this is thought, you're thinking, and then you go, and here's a space of no thought, just awareness.

You can't define what that is. You can't think about it. You can only be it.

Stillness is one word we could use to point to it. Stillness has nothing to do whether there's noise outside or not. It's inner stillness, is the cessation of thinking without loss of consciousness.

And that is realizing yourself as the unconditioned consciousness, because everything else is conditioned by the past, but that is the unconditioned in you. That is your essence identity. You cannot, by exercising willpower, that is not the way to go to stop yourself from thinking.

I'm not even saying stop thinking as an active practice, but simply become so alert that thinking stops by itself. One way you can do it is by becoming aware of sense perceptions, acutely aware of sense perceptions. I give the example in the power of now of a cat watching the mouse hole, and the cat watching the mouse hole is in that state of absolute attention.

And the cat goes, no, you don't have to stare like that, but that is the state of, that is this state of awareness, consciousness. That's the only thing in your life that you cannot question, that the only thing that is absolutely and undoubtedly real. Everything else you can question, for example, whether our gathering here is a dream or not, you don't really know.

It could be that you are dreaming, that you're sitting here and there's a man talking on a chair, suggesting to you that you might be dreaming. You cannot, as many philosophers have pointed out, you cannot know for sure that this life that you're experiencing is not a kind of dream. And from one perspective, it is a kind of dream.

Look at, I like to sometimes look at old photographs made, taken in 1900, early days of photography, 1920, whenever, of street scenes or gatherings. And you look, you can go to secondhand shops and they sell sometimes old photographs. You can buy one for a penny or two.

You have no idea who these people are, nor has anybody else an idea who these people are, but they are running around the city street excited about this or that. And then there's another gathering, see people sitting around a table, eating and laughing in this old photo. And where is that now?

It has evaporated like a dream. Nobody even remembers who they are. And that is the same with anything that you experience here.

It quickly evaporates. So there is a dream-like quality to human existence, any existence. So you could say, okay, maybe it's all a dream.

That may well be, but one thing you cannot doubt that is that you are conscious. Because if you're not conscious, there couldn't be a dream. A dream can only arise in the light of consciousness.

So the one thing, whether or not this is a dream or not, it becomes irrelevant. The only thing that matters, if it is a dream, is whether you can realize what the essence of the dream is, consciousness. And you can only realize that directly here and now as this.

Oh, Descartes, of course, the French philosopher, said, I think, therefore I am. If he had waited a little bit longer before saying anything, he could have come to the point of cessation of thinking, and then he could have made the more profound statement, I am conscious, therefore I am. Thinking is only an expression of consciousness, a surface expression of consciousness.

So this realization of, we could call inner stillness, of spaciousness, of presence, of, well, there's a term that's very popular these days, and that's a good thing. It's called mindfulness, which I use almost never, except when I explain why I don't use it. I don't use it because it seems to imply that your mind is full, but it's not what mindfulness is.

It really should be called mind emptiness. The entire practice of, for example, people find certain esoteric spiritual practices very strange and hard to understand. Zen is one of those.

So what does it all mean? What's Zen all about? Cessation of thinking without loss of consciousness.

That's what the Zen masters are trying to show you, non-conceptually, as the Zen master became famous, because when he was asked, please explain the meaning of Zen, all he would do is raise his finger and look at you. Is that it? Yeah.

And I was in the, I've been in the monastery for 15 years for that. Yes. Sometimes it takes a long time before realizing that it doesn't take time to know who you are.

That's a paradox. So I'm not saying don't go to a Zen monastery. Perhaps you have to.

It may take time to realize that it does not take time, but it doesn't have to take time. It's here and now. I'm saying this to especially the spiritual seekers among you who have made it your life purpose to seek whatever it is, the ultimate spiritual experience or transformation.

And the very seeking has become without you knowing it, the greatest obstacle to spiritual realization. Because by being in the seeking mode for some spiritual realization or awakening, you're in the same, basically the same state of consciousness that everybody else is in, except they are seeking through material possessions, achievement, relationships, this or that. They're seeking there.

What's the next thing that I can? It's a mind structure, the seeking mode. And spiritual seekers adopt that.

They see themselves as more spiritual than the one who is seeking after the latest model of that particular car or seeking a life partner who enhances their sense of self, the trophy husband, the trophy wife, the beautiful arm hang. And seeking and never being satisfied because if you're in the seeking mode, you never reach the satisfaction, you get stuck in the seeking mode. So to the spiritual seekers, I would suggest that you stop seeking and come into this present moment and find out whether it is possible for you to stop thinking.

You won't surrender, which means, surrender means only accept this moment as it is. But you won't be able to surrender unless you're completely fed up with suffering. You've had enough suffering.

And at some level, you recognize that most of your suffering is self-created. It is created out of resistance to what is. It is created out of an interpretation of something that is.

It comes from a thought, from an interpretation, not from the situation. So you realize really that I've had enough suffering and only when you've truly had enough suffering in your life, are you able to say, I don't need it anymore. Suffering is a wonderful teacher.

Suffering is most people's only spiritual teacher. And suffering deepens you. It gradually erodes the mind-made sense of self, the ego.

And for some people, the point arrives where they realize I have suffered enough. And that, for example, is the case with almost all the people who come to a retreat. If you ask them, they've all had their share of human suffering, otherwise they wouldn't be open to the message.

They've had their share of human suffering and they have reached a point where they are ready to listen to the message that says there is another way to live. There is another way in which you can live that does not create further suffering. For yourself.

Because to a large extent, humans create their own suffering. And so, when you are ready to hear that message, and that's really the message that is in every religion. That's the message, the central message of Buddhism is the end of suffering.

And even the central message of the teaching of Jesus is finding the pearl of great price,

finding the kingdom of heaven that is within you here and now, as Jesus says. And that, of course, is the end of living in a state of suffering. So, one could say that you need suffering for you to realize, for you to come to a point of realization that you do not need to suffer anymore.

There's a paradox here. If I had not suffered, I would not, this teaching would not exist. So you could say it has come partly as a result of intense suffering.

Because as a human being, I would not have evolved spiritually if I had not suffered. So suffering was my main teacher. And suffering is for many people their main teacher.

But then, some people are, when they are ready, they come into contact with a spiritual teaching or teacher, and that can speed up the process of realization that you don't need to suffer anymore. You're ready to hear that. So that was, the Buddha talked about nothing else already 2,600 years ago, that there can be an end to self-inflicted suffering.

And when you don't inflict suffering on yourself anymore, and remember, it's the thoughts, your thoughts make you suffer more than anything else. It's not usually the situation, it's your interpretation of the situation, of how dreadful it all is. And so when you see that, then you see there is another way to live in which I no longer mentally argue with what is.

And that's the end of self-inflicted suffering. And if I no longer inflict suffering on myself, I no longer inflict suffering on others because the two go together. Once you know that also, it's the end of fear, because there nothing can be destroyed.

So it's wonderful, that's your practice. It doesn't matter where you practice, wherever you are in your life, you practice. Every situation, every moment is the two dimensions and that's the end of fear comes with that.

Fear being a normal human condition for most people, sometimes buried under something else. Fear and its many manifestations, nervousness, tension, anxiety, anger really comes out of fear. Stress really is a form of fear.

All many forms of fear, quite normal. Why? That's all you know, that's fear.

You don't know that. Once you know that also, it's the end of fear because there nothing can be destroyed. That's why they cause in miracle starts, which is all you need to know, the prologue, the first before it all starts, it says this course can be summarized in the following words.

Nothing real can be threatened, nothing unreal exists, herein lies the peace of God. Nothing real can be threatened and that is here because nothing unreal ultimately exists in the world of form. The form is ultimately not real in itself.

Nothing unreal exists. Herein, which means knowing that, lies the peace of God. God, of course, is the formless, timeless, eternal, unmanifested, that is both within and beyond the world.

But some of you, as I mentioned earlier, are able to step out of their mind and you can practice that through a conscious choice. Be present. Nothing to think about right now, just be present.

You don't carry your history with you when you're present. Your life situation, I use that word in power of now, very important, your life situation, everybody has one. Past, future, relationships, job, health, finances, where you live, what happens to you, and all your life situation.

You have a life, you're here with, you have a life situation, of course you do, but you also have, it's not that you have a life, you are life itself. And when your life situation is all you know about yourself, which is another way of putting, that's all you know, then you miss life. Now, you're very good at dealing with your life situation, but you miss life.

You do all the right things, but it never really gets you anywhere because you miss life. Life is now, and life is not in the doing. Life is in the being, now.

Step out of thinking, into alert stillness, if you can. And also, another way is not to completely believe in every thought that comes into your head. Realize it's a thought, it's a position, it's a judgment, not completely identified with it.

It's a story that you are telling yourself. It's amazing how many stories people tell themselves in their head. Many are completely distorted.

It's not the reality, it's the stories, how you see the reality. The reality usually is much more simple and more benign than the story. One of the early lessons in A Course in Miracles says you're supposed to look at things around you in the room and say, nothing that I see in this room means anything.

This table doesn't mean anything. This glass doesn't mean anything. This hand doesn't mean anything.

This floor doesn't mean anything. Now, what does that lesson mean? It doesn't mean anything.

What it means is it's attempting to erase the continuous conceptualization of reality, like scribblings on a blackboard, because whatever you think it means is a concept in your mind. And if you deny the continuous and compulsive conceptualization of reality, it's like erasing the conditioning of your mind. And coming to the place where the Dalai Lama is, you just don't know.

So this lesson in A Course in Miracles, all it's teaching is to come to the place of spacious emptiness, alertness, no longer trapped in conceptual thinking. Doesn't mean anything. And of course, that's another, you're moving into a different dimension by living in this way.

It's just you inhabit, suddenly life opens up. And all the narrowness that the mind had imposed on it dissolves and life becomes spacious because you found the space within. There's suddenly a spaciousness to life, not a threatening place anymore.

What's life going to do? Where's my next threat coming from? And again, the same thing, for example, there's an entire spiritual teaching based on denying the reality of your story.

And Byron Katie's teachings is based on the simple fact of denying your story. How do I know, do I really know that this is true? No, I can't really know that.

So it takes you to the same place where the Dalai Lama is, don't know. So it's a wonderful thing, you can enter that not knowing and then, but it's only not knowing from the viewpoint of the conceptual mind. You're actually connected with a deeper intelligence, unconditioned.

And if you really need to know something, it comes. But it comes out of the spaciousness of not knowing. Well, it's a little bit like jumping off a cliff and then seeing if you can fly.

To the ego, it's a little bit like that. The ego says, don't go there. Because the ego has worked it all out.

It explains the whole, it has its philosophy of life. It might be very defective, limiting philosophy, but it has some kind of philosophy of life. Every person has their story through which they interpret reality.

And usually, it's not a pleasant work of fiction. But at least you think you know. It gives you some illusory foothold.

And of course, the ego thinks, if I let go of that, I won't know anything anymore. Which in a way is true, but not completely true. In a deeper sense, it's you only let go of a distortion of reality created by the conditioned mind, which is part of the collective human mind in its present state of evolution.

And so the collective mind of which your mind is part has created this human-made world, which is full of problems, and they seem to be, they pop out one after another. When you think one thing is better now, suddenly, oh, God. Now it's the economy, and then it's that, and then it's that.

Another war. And see what happens when you pay attention to the way in which you

interact with objects and what is, okay, every minute of the day, you pick something up, you put something down, you unbutton your shirt.

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[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 1:01:20)

You take off your shoes, you lift this, put this there, open your zipper back. You look inside, take something out. Can you feel it as you take it out?

Can you feel the texture of that? And then you put it on the table. It makes a sound as you put it on the table.

And then you have a glass of water and the light is reflected in it and it moves. Perhaps you drink and it tastes and you put it down again. And then you look at a familiar object and instead of using it always as a means to an end, here you have the luxury of occasionally just taking an ordinary object that you handle every day and just for a few seconds give it attention and acknowledge its being just as that object.

Just feel it, see it, as it makes a noise as you put it down. And again you bring in sense perceptions. Getting dressed in the morning, putting pants on, they make a noise as you put them on a little bit.

Listen. Do things. You pick up the toothpaste, you hold it for a moment, open, put the cap on the sink, click, and then turn on the tap.

And then while you brush your teeth you turn off the tap because you don't want to waste water. But that's not part of the exercise, that's the natural thing. And you can actually begin to like and to enjoy the tiniest things around you that would normally be completely overlooked.

So the way in which you interact with the world of objects and that brings a richness into your life that doesn't depend on how many objects you own. You don't need to own them to interact with them. And so here you acknowledge their beingness and you sometimes you might just put your hand as I'm doing now, here's a table, it's wood, and I'm putting my hand on it and for a moment I feel the smooth texture surface of this table.

And it feels very pleasant. But I don't need the mind to tell me that. I can sense that.

And the strange thing is even so-called inanimate objects in a strange way have a life of their own. Forgiveness is something we need to be very careful with because it's often used in a superficial sense. People say you need to forgive yourself for something you did and they say you need to forgive somebody else for what they did.

And then sometimes people say I forgive you but how deep does it go? Perhaps they have an image of themselves as quite spiritual and then that what they say corresponds they want to simply to reinforce the image they have of themselves as a spiritual person who does not harbor resentment. I'm too spiritual for resentment.

I forgive you, you're fine. But deep down there's still many negative emotions when you have a strong self-image of a particular kind for example spiritual or religious. You have that this is who I am and then it can easily happen that you deny certain things that contradict your belief in who you are.

They're the exact opposite of your belief of being a spiritual or religious person. So if there are many cases that happened over many centuries to many religious people, impossible to recognize the negative emotions within themselves because they would have conflicted with their self-image. And if you then repress them they get even worse and then they come out in bursts of extreme anger or even violence.

And then the mind, even that is justified then by the egoic mind. So the unconscious parent who beats their child in a rage but who thinks of themselves as spiritual say I'm doing it for your own good. So they reinterpret what they are doing which is bad.

They reinterpret it so that it fits in with their self-image as a good person. So you lie to yourself continuously. Crazy.

So all these things happen when because there's lack of awareness and there's a you're looking for an identity and you're grasping some wherever you can find your identity in the past. You're grasping at some things, certain memories, images. So you haven't found your deeper identity which is the indwelling consciousness itself.

And then you need some substitute identity. So these are all cases where people have substitute identities. They have conceptual identities of who they are and basically you live in a kind of in your own matrix conditioned my egoic mind.

And you cannot see reality. You can't see what you are doing. Jesus said the famous words on the cross, forgive them for they know not what they do.

What he means of course maybe if it had been in recent times he would have expressed it slightly differently, would have said forgive them for they are totally unconscious. Now the forgiving, the real forgiving happens when you recognize that there is a dimension in you that has not been affected by whatever happened to you, whatever anybody did to you. There's a dimension in you which is why we're here to access that more deeply.

And again whether we call that this the stillness, the consciousness itself, the unconditioned consciousness or if you are religious Christ consciousness, the Christ within the inner Christ, the inner Buddha, Buddha nature, whatever you want to call it. There is something that actually cannot be touched by anything that happens to you as a person. As a person you can suffer a lot in this world and some people suffer more than others but everybody suffers.

As a person you suffer. As a human you suffer. The being beyond the human, because as you know you're a human being, the being beyond the human is actually not touched by

suffering.

So you have to find that, that timeless essence that is within you, that is the inner aspect of what we call the world soul, which also the world soul also is beyond suffering. Among the many questions I found this one. I'll answer that first.

That was the answer. On the surface of things the retreat comes to an end but in the same way that the Buddha image really represents the state of consciousness, so the the real retreat underneath the surface of surface appearances is a state of consciousness. That's the essence of the retreat, deepening presence.

It is that state of consciousness that's the retreat. In that sense you could be on a permanent retreat after this and in that sense the retreat doesn't leave you and you don't leave it. Although the scenery around you is going to change.

Some of you are leaving today, others are leaving in a day or two, one or two days time. So soon the scenery is going to change and there's a continuous flux of things as described by Heraclitus or Heraclitus, one of the first philosophers of ancient Greece, pre-Socratic, so he taught before Socrates taught, and he's famous of course for the saying everything flows and also for the saying you cannot step into the same river twice. He emphasized, he lived about the same time as the Buddha, but of course in Greece, he emphasized the impermanence just as the Buddha did.

It must have been in the consciousness, there was an awakening at that time. So this retreat on the surface is impermanent of course, everything is, but soon after Heraclitus or Heraclitus, another philosopher came whose name was Parmenides, also a pre-Socratic, and he said to Heraclitus, I'm not sure, nobody knows if they actually ever met or he just read, he said you got it all wrong, nothing real ever changes. At the heart of the universe there's a timeless essence, this is a very free translation.

So he said impermanence is ultimately a kind of illusion from his perspective and he said reality remains constant and timeless, the rest is just fleeting forms like dreams. Of course both are correct, Heraclitus and Parmenides, so there is at the heart of you and at the heart of the universe, which is the same thing, there's a timeless essence. So there's the temporal you, the person, and we saw that when we watched these movie clips of the city scene in Berlin 1900, the temporal selves moving about the surface of things and then disappearing.

And so there's the temporal you, the person, and then there is the transcendent you, which is connected to the transcendent dimension of the universe. In some teachings it might be called the higher self, that's the consciousness, the conscious being that you are, because as you go within you don't immediately dissolve into God, there's the non-physical being, the higher self, but they're not divided and then there's the transcendent dimension. I don't normally use the term higher self because it makes you look upward,

to look for you, you're looking for yourself.

I'm getting a message from my higher self, it's coming through. A better expression might be the deeper self, deepening presence, and if you can sense as you move away from here this unchanging presence in you, then you can enjoy the short-lived nature of all things. You don't need to attach yourself to anything in particular, you can appreciate everything, you can honor everything, see the beauty and aliveness in everything, without needing to attach yourself to anything.

Attached means in some way it is linked to your sense of self, then that creates the attachment. You can create things, enjoy the act of creation, without attaching yourself either to the outcome or mentally projecting yourself forward to the outcome, or when you finally achieve the goal, attaching yourself to the goal and claim credit, feel, I did that, look at me. Why sometimes you people go, yeah, yeah, a little bit of ego in there.

If there's no ego you create and then you step back. So this non-attachment is something that comes with being present. As a natural result of being present, you become less attached to outcomes, to achievements, to things, even to people.

Although you can love, you love, there's a loving, an outflow of loving kindness, but not the clinging attachment. I love you, don't you ever leave me, because you know it's going to happen then. As I mentioned in a book, the Spanish for to love, te quiero, literally means I want you.

It's the same word, and that's the normal word for I love you, so that's a very honest way of saying it, because most love comes from the ego. It might have other elements mixed in with it, but most of that kind of love is egoic and can easily turn into its opposite. So it's not real love, if it can turn into its opposite suddenly.

I want you. In English it would sound strange. There's a poetic way in Spanish to say I love you, but not many people use it.

Te amo. It's like a poem, and it's beautiful. I want you.

I really want you. You want me? As strongly as I want you?

And so when wanting is thwarted, and things happen, then anger arises. Even hatred can arise quickly. So that's attachment.

So many teachings, spiritual teachings, speak of the importance of non-attachment, but it's not really possible to practice non-attachment in the absence of sensing the presence. You cannot sense the transcendent dimension of who you are, and you cannot sense yourself as the presence. You may do your best to practice non-attachment, but it's almost impossible.

And then you will end up getting attached to your practice of non-attachment, and feel unhappy because you don't quite manage it. In the same way, loving your neighbor as yourself, your neighbor being anybody you happen to be with, not your next-door neighbor, that's not... people have tried to practice that because they were taught to do that, but it's been a struggle, and most people have failed, unless presence arose within.

They connected with that transcendent dimension within, stillness, awareness, and then there was a natural outflow of loving-kindness, and that's loving your neighbor as yourself, because as you look at another and listen to another, you can sense that what you share, what is one, your oneness is consciousness. The essence of the other also is consciousness. It's the same consciousness that you are, and that is seeing your neighbor as yourself, and seeing your neighbor as yourself is valuing and appreciating him or her as yourself, and that is loving your neighbor as yourself.

And since the teachings of Jesus have come to us as fragments, there was nobody there who was taking things down in shorthand when he was talking, and there were no recorders, so we had to rely on people's memories and defective understandings also. So I'm sure that Jesus didn't quite say, you must love your neighbor as yourself, because he would have known that that's impossible, unless you find the kingdom of heaven that is within you. He always talked about that, and then he said, and when you find that dimension within you, that realm, that kingdom, that dimension of heaven, heaven is the sky, and the sky is vast, spaciousness, it has no form, it's the closest you can get in the physical reality to the formless dimension of consciousness itself, it's the closest thing you can find, the sky, because it's not even a thing, you can never reach the sky, there is no sky, it just seems to be a sky, it's just emptiness, spaciousness, it's the Buddha's emptiness, and it's the kingdom of heaven, so it is the kingdom, it is around the dimension of vast spaciousness, inner spaciousness, the kingdom of heaven, so my translation of kingdom of heaven is the dimension of spaciousness, oh, okay, now I get it, and if you find that within, and are rooted in that, then as a natural byproduct of that realization, you love your neighbor as yourself, because you recognize your neighbor as yourself, and this love your neighbor as yourself has been misunderstood, most people think it's about you have to love him or her as much as you love yourself, so you look in the mirror, I really love myself so much, I'm really in love with myself, I'm so great, I love myself, okay, now I'm going to try and love you too in the same way, I love you in the same way that I love myself, but at least I'm trying, but I still love myself more if I really have to admit that, and so when you're rooted in that dimension, you're not really on the surface of things, you're going somewhere, but really you're not going anywhere, just things change around you. I know you say that whatever you feel the world is withholding from you, in my case true love, you already have, and you just need to let it out, so I know you say that whatever you feel the world is withholding from you, you already have, you already have it, and you just need to let it out, in this person's case it's true love, do you have any more practical tips for doing this?

I wrote about that in the New Earth, because there are many people who go around life saying or thinking that life is depriving them of something, in some cases it may be, yes, as the questioner says, true love, we'll have to see what that means, or recognition, people don't appreciate me, or care, nobody really cares about me, or I'm deprived of, say, wealth, I'm lacking, the world is withholding from me abundance, these are all beliefs that seem to find confirmation in external reality, because the person who has these beliefs says, well, it is a fact that life is withholding abundance from me, because I have very little, or it's a fact that life is withholding love from me, I haven't found anybody, nobody loves me, or it's a fact that life is not giving me any appreciation, nobody appreciates me, and so on, so many people feel then it's something that's being withheld, and I wrote that what you believe is being withheld, you are in reality, you are withholding it from the world, because what you think the world should be giving you to make you happy, recognition, care, love, abundance, whatever it may be, is really something that is inseparable from the essence of who you are, it comes out of that, and so you have to discover that it's already inside you, what you think the world is not giving you, it is already in you, but you have to allow it to flow out into the world, and then that very quality comes back to you. Love, can you love that which is, the isness of life, love is connected with to appreciate, to appreciate the being of any life form, can you love on a daily basis, do you love what is, do you love when you look at the sky, do you appreciate the beauty that you see in the sky, do you appreciate the flower, do you appreciate whatever it is that is around you, the fact that you're breathing, do you appreciate a simple object that usually one takes for granted, its silent presence, so are you giving out that appreciation of things which is a form of love, and then you can notice there's an outflow of attention onto things, rather than somebody says, I'm not getting it, you can sense energy moving out, nobody cares about me, nobody calls me, well do you care about, or do you call them, not because you call them as a means to an end, no, because you're truly interested in them, you're truly wanting to know, you're giving them attention, how are you, not as an empty question, truly being able to listen to somebody, giving them attention, appreciation, listen, which means an outflow of attention, so if you care for people around you, or strangers, then you always get back what flows out, life always reflects that back to you.

Abundance, how do you get in touch with, and again I say, abundance is inseparable from your state of connectedness with being, that's where all abundance arises out of the one, the unmanifested one life, that's where abundance arises, the fullness of life, Jesus calls it, so can you appreciate the fullness of life and the abundance of life at every moment, before life gives you things that in conventional terms would be called abundance, abundance comes when you see the abundance of nature, you walk past a flower shop and see the abundance of beauty and the flower, all these flowering plants, you see, you don't even need to have a plant, a flower, even to appreciate what you see as the infinite abundance of life, or you see the vegetables and the fruit in a store, the abundance of that, the abundance of the Sun pouring out its abundance of energy

continuously upon the planet, can you feel that on your skin, how the Sun pours out its abundance for millions and millions and millions of years, no end to it, and it's given the very warmth in your body is derived from Sun energy, because you eat plants and it's the energy that the plants have accumulated from the Sun, and so you appreciate the incredible abundance of the Sun, the abundance of rain that comes down from the sky, the abundance of water, no matter where you are, you will find some abundance in one form or another, and you don't need to own anything to appreciate abundance, you must respond to it and recognize it, so your attention moves there, the abundance of life forms, when you look around the street where all the people and the cars going by, life is producing billions of different life forms everywhere, as humans, as animals, or going to a forest, or anywhere in nature and see the incredible abundance there, but of course the essence of abundance is not multiplicity, when you see it in the outer world, abundance is many things, many beautiful things, all kinds of forms, but the essence of abundance isn't in the forms, the forms are manifestation of abundance, but if you appreciate the manifestation of abundance outside of you, that puts you in touch with the source of abundance that is within you, as the fullness of life, before life becomes a form of life, so by appreciating the manifestations of abundance around you, you get in touch with the feeling of abundance, which is the aliveness that is behind and within every life form, so the more you appreciate it, you can actually feel that, go to a little store where they sell fruit and vegetables and look at that for just a few seconds or half a minute and really see how alive everything is and how so many beautiful things are there, the vegetables and the fruit, you can do the same in a shopping mall with other things, but let's keep it simple, and feel the aliveness that's there, amazing, and at that moment you feel it in yourself, because you can only feel the aliveness that you see in the manifested, you can only feel that through your own, which is basically residing in the unmanifested, and you begin to feel alive, you respond to the world's aliveness, and that's abundance, beginning to arise, the feeling of abundance, so you acknowledge that abundance is already in your life, you don't need to own anything to feel that, it's all around you, and that initiates the process of outflow, of recognition of abundance, and then you'll see that life brings things to you that confirm your innermost feeling of abundance, and actually, things tend to come to you, they like to be acknowledged, strange as it may sound, they seek you, and it's no longer that you then need the external abundance to feel abundant, you feel abundant first, external abundance follows, it's no longer primary, you just feel just as abundant as before, so for many years I lived below the poverty line in official terms, not in third world terms, but in Western official terms, below the poverty line, and yet I didn't feel poor, I continued to feel the abundance of life, and I was surprised when I read in the paper a person who has that much, less than this amount of money per year, is below the poverty line, oh, I must be poor, that's strange, I knew I couldn't, there are many things I couldn't buy, but it didn't seem to matter, and I had this love, strange thing for, let's talk about just this seemingly trivial thing, my means of transportation, and I still have that, a love for, it's almost as if it were alive, in my 20s, my means of transportation was a bicycle

throughout my 20s, and so I felt some connection with that bicycle, and the strange habit which I still have, even now, once I parked the bicycle somewhere, chained it to a railing or whatever, I would walk away and still occasionally stop for a moment and look back at it, why?

I felt a connectedness, and I loved just its presence, that's the bike, and then when I was 30, somebody gave me an old car, and I had that again, when I appreciate just its being there, and I felt a connectedness, even a form of love, one could say, perhaps, but feeling appreciation for it, and it's, again, I did, whenever I parked the car, I would just walk a few steps and look back at it for a few seconds, and I still do the same now that I have a much better car, I still do it, what I did once with my bicycle, there's still a, it's a strange thing, it's an inner, it's a sense, I have that with many things, that things are, actually have some life, even so-called inanimate things, and so you feel there's a fullness to life, and that whether it's a car or a bicycle, didn't really matter. And now, this questioner talks about true love, so he or she feels, he, I believe, that what the world is withholding from him is true love, which I presume means another human being in their life, and again, do you love other humans in your daily life? Are you able to look upon them, not with what is conventionally called love, that would be a little silly to, you can't go around and say to everybody, I love you, I love you, you can try, but it's not advisable, most humans would not be comfortable with that, and you don't even have to say in your mind, I love you, because you can't force yourself to love, it's not like that, but are you able to give them, to appreciate their being, when you look at them, to give them space to be, for example? Judgment and love obviously can't go together, so if you compulsively go around judging other humans, there can be no love.

To use a slightly different term, the Buddhists have a term that's translated as loving-kindness, which is quite nice, it's an outflow of loving-kindness meta. You have that loving-kindness towards other humans, but that implies a spaciousness while you relate to them, perceive them, or interact with them. The loving-kindness towards another human can only arise if there's some inner spaciousness in you, like here now.

And from there you look upon that human with appreciation and loving-kindness, and you can look through the ego in the other, because the moment you judge another, you get stuck in their ego, and you strengthen your own ego. Looking through the ego, or egoic behavior, or whatever front the humans present to you, some role they play, and you immediately see that there's the role, you see it without naming it, you see the role and you don't react to it, you look through that in stillness. In stillness, you look through their roles, and there's something emerges that's underneath that's more real.

And sometimes the roles collapse or are relinquished temporarily by the other person, and there's a true interaction. But the important thing is, do you give out love as you move through life? And again, it's really all, when we talk about care, love, recognition, appreciation, abundance, but it all, when you go deep into those things which seem to

be different things, when you name them, if you go deep to their source, you realize it's all, they're all really one.

They're all manifestation of one underlying state, so to speak, and that is the unconditioned consciousness. They all arise out of that. As you look at me on the screen, and as you listen to the words, you become aware that there is a background to this experience that you are having at this moment, which is visual, mainly visual and auditory.

There is a background of, could say, stillness to that experience. So the surface reality is your experience of looking, hearing, listening, then in your mind, decoding the sounds and the visual signals. But then, becoming aware that there is a background of stillness, which is in between the words and behind the words.

And that is a dimension that, if I perhaps had not pointed it out, some of you might not have become aware of. And you would only be interested in the words or in looking at me for some reason. But you can also be aware that there's a background to this experience that you're having right now.

Which is a little bit like the canvas on which the artist paints. The difference here is, of course, this metaphorical painting, which is the experience that you're having at this moment, is not fixed. A painting, once it's done, is fixed on the canvas.

But this is a fluid, continuously moving painting, which is your present experience. And you can be aware, simultaneously, as you're having this experience right now, which, from a conventional viewpoint, could not possibly be called interesting. But there is something deeper to this reality than what is conventionally called interesting on the surface of things.

If I start screaming now, then it becomes interesting. Or something happens. A house collapses.

Oh, that's interesting. That's the surface reality. So, meditation is deeper than interesting.

You can now be aware, simultaneously, of the experience you're having at this moment. Words, visual image, mainly. Some thoughts, because the words I speak become thoughts in your mind.

They become your thoughts. But these thoughts point elsewhere. They are pointers or signposts.

They are not self-serving thoughts. They don't say, look at me, believe in me, adopt me as your opinion, identify with me. That's not what these thoughts are saying.

The thoughts are simply pointers beyond thought. And what is it that the thoughts point to? The thoughts appear, they are part of the surface appearance on the canvas, the metaphorical canvas, that on which your present experience is painted, appears.

But these words that appear on the canvas point to, speak of, the canvas on which they appear. They say, don't just be aware of me, the thoughts say that, don't just be aware of me, be aware of where I appear and how I appear, how I emerge, where I emerge. Don't just be aware of what makes it possible for me to be.

Now, what makes it possible for a painting to be? The canvas. So, you become aware that there is a stillness, as I said, in the background of your present experience, in the background, and it even interpenetrates your actual experience.

It becomes into, it goes, you find it in the cracked of between words. It's there everywhere. And what else could we call it?

So, I want to give you a few more pointers, helpful pointers. In addition to the experience you're having, and whatever makes up the experience you're having at this moment, and right now it's a very simple thing, because there's only a few simple words, and a man talking to you through the screen. But in addition to that, there is a silent presence that has no form.

You can't say, there it is. You can't say, look at it. You can't grasp it.

You can't analyze it. In fact, you can't know anything about it, and yet it's there. It's the one thing that is beyond doubt about the reality of this moment.

Everything you're experiencing at this moment could be a dream. So, you can doubt that. And in some ways, it is a dream.

It evaporates quickly. It dissolves, and then something new appears. So, you can doubt that what you're experiencing right now is absolutely really real.

What you cannot doubt is that you are experiencing something, whether it's real or unreal, whether it's dream or reality. You cannot doubt that something is being experienced. You don't even have to say, I am experiencing, because the I that says, I am experiencing me, the person, could be part of the dream, and in some way it is.

But even if the person is a dream, and in some way, yes, the person is a kind of dream, but the dream is happening right now. What is it that enables the dream, if it is a dream or if it's not a dream, what is it that enables the reality of this moment to be? And since I use the word to be, we could say, it is the being that is behind everything.

The silent presence, which is being. So you become aware of that, this again is the canvas, as we called it. But what is that?

The mind may ask. And many answers are possible. Not one answer is the correct one.

Every answer, what is to the question, what is that? Every answer will limit it, will not be absolutely correct, will distort it. And yet, let's say this, it is you, that canvas, that silent presence, is the essence of you.

Not the surface you, the essence of you, the surface you knows what that is, a kind of dream. And you become aware of that underlying silent space or presence.

[Speaker 2] (1:01:47 - 1:02:33)

I do have a question for you, this is a terribly personal question, and we can edit this out of the tape if you don't want it in the program. But I want to know whether, because I want to tell you, and I'm not pumping sunshine into your ear, this is the truth for me, you have stood for me as as close as I have come to see on this planet as a living master, who understands, but who does more than understand, because to be honest with you, I think I understand. But the difference I see between you and me, to be honest, and totally transparent is, we both understand it, we can both say it really well, but he lives it.

[Speaker 7] (1:02:35 - 1:02:36)

I don't.

[Speaker 2] (1:02:39 - 1:04:13)

Except when I do. But what I notice is that I live at probably 20, who can give a number, not enough of the time. And when I'm with my beloved, with my family, in private, I somehow get into all of my, you know, thoughts.

And I forget what I'm saying right here to you, as if I didn't even say it, to the point where my loved ones look at me sometimes and say, you ought to read one of your own books. And it's well deserved. It's well deserved.

So I've come to you for a personal counseling session on television. How do I take what I think that I am? How do I take what I've experienced?

I'm going to not even say what I think I am, because it's out of thought. It's not from thought. How do I take what I experience myself to be?

And wash the canvas of my life with it, especially when it matters to me the most. In the end, honestly, I don't really care how it is with you. I'll never see any of you again.

That's the truth. But that lady sitting over there, my wife, I see her every day, every hour. Why can't I summon this, then?

[Speaker 1] (1:04:24 - 1:04:58)

First of all, in certain situations, the presence is there fully in you and comes through you, such as here. You know that. In a so-called teaching situation or writing situation, the presence moves through you, and then there's the rest of your life.

And it is sometimes there, I would assume, and sometimes not. Is that right? Or is it mostly not?

[Speaker 2] (1:04:59 - 1:05:08)

I think it's more there now than it used to be, but it's still the majority of time not. And people who know me would tell you that. They'd say, you think this is a nice person, you should work for him.

[Speaker 1] (1:05:12 - 1:07:29)

So all it means is your mind still takes over, and either you relinquish it voluntarily in your daily life, which requires the minimum of awareness that this is what's happening right now, my mind has taken over. But I believe that you do have that. It comes in sometimes that you realize that your mind has taken over.

And in that moment, you can relinquish that and invite presence into your life. Whenever any conflict situation arises or any kind of suffering arises, irritation, anger, whatever it is, then it can be used as an alarm clock to tell you, oh, something has happened here. I sometimes say it's an alarm clock that tells you, I've lost the present moment.

I'm not present in the now. So in other words, you're trapped in your mind. So you can use any conflict situation, and the moment you notice it, you can invite presence back into your life, and so immediately the alertness comes back.

It's a voluntary death. If you don't do it, you'll need more suffering, and then it'll happen. But if you voluntarily relinquish, because you know how it works, you know how it works because you experience what you do in a situation like this, there's that complete openness.

You are not identified with old mind. Your mind is simply a servant of the deeper awareness. As you speak to us, it's beautiful.

You're not here. You're not protecting your ego, which is a wonderful thing, and because there is one thing much vaster here speaking through you than the limited ego that still arises in your daily life. So as you sit here, the ego is not operating.

Otherwise, you would have to hide the fact that you don't live it in your daily life, but something much greater than the ego is speaking through you right now.

[Speaker 2] (1:07:29 - 1:07:32)

You think he's going to miss a chance to talk to Eckhart Tolle about this? You're crazy.

[Speaker 1] (1:07:52 - 1:38:44)

I am a therapist, and I now feel that I don't take people's problems seriously. I don't know if I can continue to be a psychotherapist. Okay.

I also find myself, when I listen to people's problems, a smile arises sometimes, not because of their problems, but because I'm in touch with a deeper reality where their problems are relatively unimportant, and to be in touch with that deeper reality is liberating, and there is a joy in knowing who you are beyond your problems. There is that joy that's there, and I can feel the reality for that person beyond their problems, and that is, I'm not laughing or smiling at them, but at the relative unreality of their problems, and that is actually a form of healing. So if that is the case with you, then you can continue to be a psychotherapist.

You're not just, you can continue to listen to their problems without giving their problems this absolute reality. A relative reality, yes, but be in touch with that level deep within where there is no problem, where that person is already complete and whole, and that is the formless consciousness. Every form identity is not complete.

It never has the feeling of being complete and whole. There's always stuff missing in your form identity, and there are things that didn't go according to what you imagined when you were young. How did you imagine your life to unfold?

Well, you had all kinds of ideas. In many cases, that didn't quite happen, and then people come and say things like, oh, I would have imagined when I was, I imagined my life to unfold very differently from the way it did unfold. It's really a sad story, and I feel I haven't, my form identity is really, there's so much still missing in who I am.

There's so much that I could have achieved, but things happen to stop me from achieving it, and then there's that stuff that I did achieve, and it all came to nothing. It dissolved. I tried so many things, but why didn't I, why didn't I succeed in this or that?

Or if you did succeed greatly in this or that area, you go, why was I, why am I still so restless and unhappy? I've had, everybody thinks I'm so great, and I've got all these fans on Twitter and Facebook. Why am I still, why am I still unhappy?

Why do I need more of this or that, even though my picture is in People magazine, and other magazines that are not that great? So whatever it is, there's always something wrong with their form identity, and if you think everything is right about your form identity, it won't last for very long. Then you happen to just have hit a period, a brief period, when you feel it's all, everything is going great in my life.

I've got a great place to live. I've got a great relationship. I've got a great job.

I've got a great income. I have a great car, and people recognize my importance. They tell me I'm a VIP.

Everything is great. That's how life should be. Now, it is possible for human to, for brief periods to be in that place, but they would be quite brief, because life just isn't like that.

It is designed for things to go wrong. No, no matter how much positive thinking you do, which is all good, but no much, no matter how much positive thinking you do, there is this thing designed into life. It's a, we could call it a sabotage element of sabotage or disruption, which universal intelligence has built into everybody's life.

You, you might have noticed it, but you, what you might not have noticed is that it is built into everybody's life, and you might have thought that life singled you out to sabotage your life, because some people are very good at hiding the, that element in their lives from others, and they wouldn't even admit it, that at night they lie in agony and, or whatever it is. So that's an interesting fact. Once you know that this disruptive thing is built into your life, then you may come to actually accept that fact, that that is a universal thing that every human is meant to face.

So there's always, in some area of your life, there's always some disruption happening, or just happened, or happened a few years ago, but still leaving a lot of traces around, and you're still influencing the way in which you experience life. And then the next thing comes in, and the next, and once you've resolved your financial problems, and you're okay there, finally I've got financial security, ah, and suddenly a health problem comes up, or the other way around, or the great job, you suddenly have this wonderful, fulfilling job, but, and suddenly your company gets taken over by another company, and suddenly you're told, we don't need you anymore. Who am I now without that? No matter, you can, you all know examples from your own life, so, and with some of you, it seems to be just a succession of things going wrong, but they can't have gone that wrong if you are sitting here now, because it's taken you to a spiritual awakening.

Nobody would go to a spiritual awakening, well, nobody I know, without experiencing the unsatisfactory nature of one's life situation. So I am grateful to that in my life, and you can be grateful to that in your life, because otherwise the evolution of consciousness would not have happened. If you had been totally happy all your life, no evolution is possible, no development is possible, no deepening is possible, you would be dancing on the surface of things.

Let's have another drink, and good food, and lots of other good movie and sensory pleasures, and sex, and let's travel and go to another place and explore that, and isn't that nice? And just no depths whatsoever. Of course, you would be incapable of compassion or empathy with other human beings.

You would have no deep insights, which all come out of suffering, just surface existence. But fortunately, very few humans or no humans have that, and if they had it, that would become the disruptive element. The fact that there is nothing disruptive would become the disruptive element in your life.

So on the level of form identity, you never arrive at complete satisfaction. You can't. I can't get no satisfaction.

And once you realize that, you're actually, it's liberating to know, okay, you can still try to improve your life. It's a wonderful thing. Of course, you try to make your life better.

If you're not happy where you live, if you can find a better place to live, or if your health is not well, maybe you can do something about it. Maybe you can't. If you can't do something about it, take action out of, but the foundation for action needs to be present moment acceptance of the isness of now, and then you take action.

But it'll never be totally satisfying. Therefore, the only satisfying thing is to realize that there is another dimension to who you are. And that's where all satisfaction comes from.

The realization that there's more to you than the person, the personality and the personal history. And that is consciousness. You are in essence, timeless consciousness.

This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. Most humans, except for those who already are in touch with that dimension within that lies beyond this superficial realm of delusion.

Most humans then have a number of things that may derive their sense of self from partly collective, partly personal. Collective could mean your nation, your tribal identity, which relates to sport teams, and so on. Religion, my religion, our religion, or particular church or movement within one religion as opposed to another church.

That's different. Nationalism, in some places is still strong, not as insane as it perhaps as it was in the 20th century in many places. And many other collective identification from my club, my town, my this, my that, or our, and then personal possessions, status, recognition from others, or lack of it.

Knowledge, personal appearance, external appearance, and so on. All things the mind identifies with. Very precarious, because basically they're all mental fabrications, stories.

There's nothing wrong with mental fabrications and stories, you can enjoy those as long as you know that's what they are. But if you take them to the ultimate reality, then very quickly you begin to suffer. We continue to live surrounded by these stories.

Enjoy them, you can watch the game, can even be happy if your team wins and the

other team loses, but it doesn't go that deep anymore. So if your team loses, yes, there's a surface dissatisfaction which you observe, or if your team wins, there's a surface elation, you go, oh yeah, but it doesn't go that deep. Because on a deeper level, you know that that has nothing to do with who you are.

It's a game, it's a story, a play, a dream-like formation. Now mostly in a dream, you don't know that you're dreaming. Occasionally it happens that you have a lucid dream, and you suddenly, in the middle of a dream, realize that you're dreaming.

And then there's a fundamental shift in the way in which you experience the dream. And the same in daily life, most people are so identified with mental formations, things, events, and so on, which all become mental formations, that the lucidity factor is missing. So they are in the dream of daily existence, but so identified with it, they don't know it is a kind of dream.

So they try to derive a satisfying sense of self from it, which is impossible. Now the equivalent of having a lucid dream, or realizing in the middle of the dream that you're dreaming, is, of course, to become aware in your daily life. Suddenly there is an awareness, which is not a thought.

The awareness, sorry, from the dimension of awareness, you can recognize a thought is just a thought. And you realize who you are, essentially, is that deeper aware presence, the lucidity that enables you not only to have sense perceptions, but also enables you to have thoughts. That is lucid living.

So you have, you can have lucid dreaming, but more important, it's much more important to experience lucid living. And that is the beginning of the end of misidentification with who you are. And what then happens is that there can still be minor manifestations of happiness and unhappiness.

But it doesn't go that deep anymore. Now some people might say, okay, I'm okay with unhappiness not going that deep. But they might feel uneasy with happiness not going that deep anymore.

What I mean, of course, is the what is conventionally called happiness is a temporary surface phenomenon. But there is a deeper happiness, if we even still want to use that term. Usually I don't.

There is a deeper sense of presence of rootedness, of vast spaciousness, of aliveness, that is sometimes called joy. But you can call it inner peace. You can call it a deep sense of contentment in the background.

And this is why we're here to be reminded that that dimension is there within you, waiting to be discovered, or waiting to reveal itself to you. Or if you already live in connectedness with that, to deepen it. That's why we're here.

So the question then, of course, is, do I know who I am, beyond my physical body, or beyond my external appearance? Beyond my place in society? Beyond whatever country I happen to belong to, because I happen to be born there?

Beyond my religion, which, again, in most cases, is my religion, because I happen to be born in a particular place? Beyond my social function, status in society? Or beyond my possessions?

And all those things I mentioned are really, they may have an external existence, but you experience them as images in your mind. And of course, you are the presence behind those images, and even within those images. So right now, there's a chance for you to stop thinking, not through any kind of effort, not through any willpower, act of will, not through suppression of thinking.

But simply because you realize that right now, thinking is not really necessary. You don't need to figure out what I'm talking about, by thinking about it. You understand the words.

So of course, there is some mental activity. But the words are not understood on the level of mental concepts. They are understood by you at a deeper level.

Where the truth that these words point to is immediately recognized as your own presence. So the only presence, when words point towards presence, only the presence in you can recognize the meaning. You go, oh, you might not be able to explain it to anybody.

It's just the simple fact that you are conscious right now, which is beyond doubt. Everything else may be a kind of dream, but there must be a consciousness for the dream to appear. It appears in the light of consciousness.

I am that I speak for you and for myself. I am that I am. I am conscious presence.

I am consciousness, formless, timeless. And I know myself as the formless, timeless consciousness. But that knowing can only arise between two thoughts or in the absence, temporary absence, cessation of thought right now.

Between this moment, because on the external, there is time. The deeper, there's no time. Between this moment now and this moment now, there's no thought.

It's a very amazing thing. So let's try it again. I say now twice.

And in between the two nows, see if you can just be there as the presence. Now. Now.

Well, that wasn't that difficult. Now a little longer. Now.

Now. You can either close your eyes, or you can look into my eyes. It may be helpful to

look into my eyes because I'm not thinking.

And that can connect you with the state of not thinking. Do it again. Now.

[Speaker 7] (1:39:02 - 1:39:03)

Now.

[Speaker 1] (1:39:10 - 1:40:13)

There's nothing more important in your life. And I'm totally 100% confident and certain that that's the absolute truth. There's nothing more important in your life, no matter who you are, then accessing that dimension, which is not only the dimension of your true identity, but also the place where true intelligence arises and creativity and peace and loving kindness towards all beings, because that is the formless realm of life itself, of consciousness itself, that then recognizes itself in all other forms.

So it's vitally important.

[Speaker 2] (1:40:40 - 1:41:21)

To this special three-part video series on Conscious Manifestation 2020. In this series, Eckhart addresses how we approach conscious manifestation right now, right in the midst of the global pandemic, when so many people are feeling so much instability and economic insecurity. Here's Eckhart Tolle with part one on the first step of conscious manifestation.

[Speaker 1] (1:41:21 - 2:01:19)

So whenever you encounter adversity or loss or extreme limitation that suddenly comes into your life, some kind of disruption that comes into your life, that is a call to come more intensely and intensely into the present moment, first of all. So allow the, whatever form the adversity takes, whatever it is that you're experiencing right now, allow it to, one could almost say, force you into the present moment. If you're not in the present moment, you will be in a state of fear.

So the first step for manifesting something better is to forget about manifestation and be completely concerned with the present moment only and give your fullest attention to the present moment. That includes not only whatever is happening around you at the present moment right now, your sense perceptions and so on. This is, of course, part of the present moment.

It also concerns the thoughts that you're going through your mind at the present moment. So there's a huge difference between having thoughts go through your mind and being aware that certain thoughts are going through your mind at the present moment. This is something very important, easy to overlook.

Thoughts go through your mind all the time. For most people, particularly people who have not awakened yet in any way, who are still unconscious, which means completely identified with a thinking mind, for those people, there's no awareness behind the thought. This is why we say they are unconscious.

Without awareness, there's only the movement of thought. And the movement of thought reacts to whatever is happening around you. And the way in which the movement of thought reacts to whatever is happening around you depends on the way in which your mind has been conditioned by past experiences.

So the conditioning of your mind determines how you react to things that are happening around you, how you interpret them, what kind of narrative you create around what is happening around you. You talk to yourself, that's the voice in the head, the thought processes. This talking to yourself becomes a narrative.

Without awareness, you are completely identified with the stream of thinking that is reactive to whatever is happening around you. And if something is happening that is challenging, in other words, some kind of adversity, limitation, loss or disruption of your life, then the normal thing for most people is a very scary narrative that arises in your mind. The way in which you interpret what's happening is scary because you're not only looking at what's happening now, you're also extrapolating from there and saying, how is this going to affect me?

What's going to happen tomorrow, next week? There's the future. You project yourself into the future where you see things are getting even worse than they are now.

You see already how whatever is happening now, how it's going to affect your life and you play out scenarios in your mind, which are not pleasant. And you don't know what you're doing. You believe that what you're experiencing is the reality, but it's not the reality.

What you're experiencing is what your mind has created. It is a narrative that your mind has created as a reaction to what's happening around you. So you're not experiencing reality, you're confusing what is happening in your mind with reality.

So once an awareness comes in, awareness, another word for it is presence. When awareness comes in, you suddenly become aware of the kind of thoughts that your mind is creating. And that is the beginning of awakening, spiritual awakening, the awakening of consciousness.

That is to become aware of the way in which your mind functions and what it says. And this is why it's so important to become conscious of the present moment, because that is an intrinsic part of being present is to become aware of what your mind is doing in this moment. And this is why I said, the first step is to forget about wanting to manifest

something different.

We can go there later. The first step is become more intensely, more acutely aware of the present moment, because if you're not without that awareness, you are at the mercy of your mind, the conditioned mind, without even knowing it, you have become a victim of your mind. And so it is true to say that for many people, their worst enemy lives between their two ears without, and they don't know it.

So the most foundational step is coming into the present moment, which implies the arising of awareness or presence. And as that awareness arises, you become aware not only of your immediate surroundings, which is part of the present moment, but you also become aware of the thinking mind and what thoughts is your mind producing. And you look at the, are these thoughts reflecting truly a reflection of reality, or are they a fiction that my mind is creating, projecting itself into the future where things are usually seen as going to get worse.

And then you experience the emotions, the emotion usually reflects mind activity. So if your mind is producing thoughts that are telling you that your situation is dangerous or critical, although in the present moment, it is very unlikely, highly unlikely that your situation is dangerous or critical in this moment. If it is dangerous or critical, of course you take action.

You have to do something to get out of this immediate challenge, but it's highly unlikely that in this moment, there is immediate danger or your situation is critical right now. So it's, first step then is coming into this moment and realizing, okay, this is, you become aware of sense perceptions. Then you become aware of thoughts.

It may take a little while for some people who are deeply identified with the stream of thinking, it may take them, it may not even be very easy at first to become aware of sense perceptions, which is part of being present. Why is it not easy for many people to become aware of sense perceptions? Because the entire consciousness is continuously being absorbed by the conditioned mind.

And so their entire attention is in the thought processes. So their entire attention is consumed by unconscious thought processes. And so they go, and if somebody says to them, become aware of your surroundings, it may not be easy at first for people who are deeply, deeply trapped in fearful thinking, particularly, to even liberate some of their attention, so to speak, to extract, to take some of your attention away from thinking and direct it towards sensory perception.

So you may find, particularly when you find yourself in a challenging situation, when the mind has become very reactive and is thinking and thinking, what am I going to do now? What's going to happen to me? I need to do something, but I don't know what, and all kinds of scenarios.

So your mind is, your attention is completely taken up by the unconscious thought processes. And if then I say, or whoever it is says, become aware of your sense perceptions, you may find there is an almost magnetic pull by your mind. It wants to continue thinking, and it has a certain, I sometimes call it a certain gravitational pull.

There's a gravitational pull like a magnet, and that, and you cannot free even a small part of your conscious attention and give it to sense perception. And sometimes you have a, your mind may even be creating a thought that tells you why you cannot give attention to sense perception. And that thought might tell you, what's the point?

I've got other problems now. I have to think about my life. I can't, this is completely irrelevant.

I have to solve the big problem of me, my life, my life situation. I have to think about this. Don't tell me about, become aware of my surroundings or sense perception is pointless.

So that the gravitational pull of the conditioned mind is there, and it might even find some kind of justification to prevent you from taking attention, even some attention away from unconscious thinking. But once you discover that, you say, okay, you don't have to believe in every thought that arises in your mind. You don't have to believe every thought.

Okay. Even that little realization, that little realization, I don't have to believe in every thought that comes into my mind is already the beginning of a liberation from your mind. Oh, I don't have to believe in every thought.

Interesting. Because that already implies that there's at least a minimum of awareness. It's not just the thought processes.

When you realize that you don't have to believe every thought in your mind, then that already implies that there's some awareness there from, because it's only from awareness, you can be aware of a thought. This is a very subtle thing. It's fundamental to understand this because your mind, your consciousness has another dimension.

There's a dimension of consciousness in you that we can call awareness or presence. And many people, most people still don't know that. And millions on our planet still are so identified with the mind, they have almost no awareness.

Some awareness occasionally arises, but they don't recognize it. In other words, there may be occasional moments when the mind subsides briefly. And that's a little bit of a liberation, but they don't really, they don't know, they don't recognize that and immediately the mind starts up again.

So you become aware of your thought processes. And then you realize how much of your

thinking is directed towards the future, how much it is creating a scenario that is fearful. And you realize the connection between what your mind is saying, the voice in the head, that says, it's partly, it may be, it's partly a voice in the head that thinks about, it could also be a visual images that arise to accompany the voice in the head.

There are visual images that arise. And when these visual images arise, then for example, you see yourself suddenly as a homeless person sitting on a bench. Oh my God.

You see yourself living in your car. Oh my God. And fear arises.

But the thing is, if you were actually living in your car for a while, some people are, and if you became present in that moment, it wouldn't actually, wouldn't be that bad. It actually, there were times, occasionally I spent, somebody once gave me an old car that was the first car I ever had. And that was shortly after I spent a period of homelessness.

And there were sometimes nights when I spent in that old car and I enjoyed it tremendously. It was just almost romantic to be in this little bubble. This is just a little anecdote.

What this is pointing to is really the present moment is never quite as bad as the mental projection of some future bad moment. And in the mental projection of some future bad moment, there's nothing you can do about it. But if you have something in the present moment, you can meet whatever arises with the power of your conscious presence.

This is what is. And you, so you become, you come into this moment and become aware of this moment and realize in this moment, there is no problem as such. That's a very strange realization.

It's not a denial. It's not a denial. It's, it takes you to a deeper level, a deeper consciousness, and that is presence or awareness.

So you realize coming into this moment, you've taken some attention out of your thinking mind and some attention now goes into sense perceptions. This is a very important part of becoming present. And in this moment, sense perception means you look around and you listen, whatever noise may be there.

And not just, you really give attention to whatever it is you're looking at or listening to. You become, come to your senses. If you come to your senses, look at the sky, trees, anything natural is the best thing to look at if you can, but it could be anything.

So you come to your senses means there's less mind activity, more presence. And then you become aware that the mind activity that you have been engaged in is ultimately not helpful. That the mind activity itself, the narrative, these unconscious scenarios that the mind created, they are not helpful.

You become aware that worrying is not helpful. And worrying, which is thinking in circles, thinking the same things in the same lines again, without any possibility of taking action right now. You're just, it's not only not helpful, it's actually destructive.

And when you become aware of that, you can more and more let go of unhelpful mind activity and replace it with aware presence in the now.

[Speaker 4] (2:02:14 - 2:02:24)

That state of spaciousness is already in you all the time.

[Speaker 1] (2:02:29 - 2:49:26)

There is an equivalent of dreamless sleep in our ordinary existence, but most people are not aware of that. And that is a dimension of consciousness that is possible for human beings that has certain similarities with dreamless sleep. And although spiritual teachers and so on have spoken about it and pointed to it for a long time, thousands of years, it still is not common knowledge that there's a potential in every human being for realizing within him or herself a state of consciousness that is deeper, infinitely deeper than the ordinary state of thinking and doing normal life.

I sometimes call that state spaciousness, inner spaciousness, or sometimes call it presence or stillness. In Indian spirituality, India, I mean India, they have a word for, they talk about, they have been talking about it, they have a term for this, they call it the fourth state of consciousness, Turiya, which is, I believe, you have dreamless sleep, you have the dream state, you have ordinary wakefulness, and then you have the fourth state, which most humans don't know that it's there for them. They don't know.

And that is the greatest, one could almost say, yes, tragedy of a human life is to miss that the possibility that there is in a human life to realize that fourth state of consciousness. There is an assumption by spiritual seekers, even in India, and anybody who hasn't realized it for themselves or even had glimpses of it, there's an assumption that that fourth state is extremely hard to attain and you need countless years of spiritual practice or countless lifetimes to finally achieve the fourth state of consciousness. And that belief actually prevents you from realizing it within yourself because that state of spaciousness is already in you all the time.

So if you have the belief that it's something that you need to achieve at some future point, that belief, that thought would continuously prevent you from realizing it now because you mentally will always project. And then you say, I'm going to meditate because I want to achieve at some point the fourth state. And that can be a great hindrance in your meditation because it prevents you from going deeper into the present moment where the fourth state is.

Or one could almost say, it's not just where the fourth state is, the present moment is

the fourth state of consciousness. The space of now, not what happens in the now, but the deeper, the space in which it happens, the background to your life is continuously there. And continuously also often seeps through one thought, in between two thoughts, you go, three seconds.

For three seconds, you are free of yourself. And you might look at something or whatever it is, or just experience a moment of peace and aliveness. And then of course, you get drawn back into thinking.

And then at another time, a little space comes in again when you're maybe all kinds of, when you're tasting something, perhaps there's just the perception of the taste without any mental interference, just an aware presence behind the sense perception. And then you notice that the state is always there. Every thought exists in that space, is only a wave movement in the space.

And so it's not something that you need to attain as if you didn't have it, but because it's already here, it is essentially who you are. It is intrinsically one with the essence of your being. And if you don't know that, then your life is very limited to just a little person with no transcendent dimension to your life whatsoever.

And so here we are in order to deepen our realization of inner spaciousness, that's all. It's so you realize something that is already here rather than needing to look for it. So why do you often not realize it?

Because you overlook it, just like the fish may overlook the fact that the fish is surrounded by water and starts looking for it. Where's the water? People keep talking about the water.

And the more the fish looks, the less likely that it will find the water. So that spaciousness is something that at first may appear in your life as a glimpse. And then, and at first in many people's lives, they don't know that that is spaciousness.

They experience it as a heightened aliveness or a deeper sense of peace or joy, an absence of problems for a little moment. So they don't know that this is a different dimension of consciousness that has suddenly arisen. They can still confuse it with something else as I did when the shift happened and that was a rare thing.

In my case, it didn't, it happened and then kind of stayed. For most people, it's a more gradual thing. It comes gradually, first in glimpses, and then suddenly it's there for a longer period of time or you go deeper into it.

And there's a gradual transformation of consciousness. Might be so gradual you don't even notice it. And when it happened to me, I didn't realize that there was spaciousness.

I didn't have the word spaciousness. I didn't know anything about the fourth state of

consciousness. I knew nothing about presence or even mindfulness.

I didn't realize even that my mind had subsided and become spacious. All I knew is suddenly life is very peaceful. It feels so, this moment feels so good.

That's all I knew. And where does this peace come from, I asked. Didn't know.

I didn't know it was the depths of who I am. Realizing the depths of who I am was joy and peace. But I didn't have a word for that.

I couldn't call it the depths of who I am. I just, why am I suddenly so peaceful? And I started keeping a diary which said, I don't know why I suddenly feel so peaceful.

I just want to write down my daily experience of peace in case it leaves me, then at least I can remember it. And I wrote, it's still somewhere. I don't know where it is locked away.

I don't need to look at it, but it's interesting that there was no understanding of where did this peace originate? What is this peace? How did it come about?

The understanding came later. So you too, you may, well, not you, but people in your life, anybody who is not totally, continuously unhappy, anxious, angry, fearful, or continuously upset, or continuously in a state of deep discontent. And there are people like that.

Don't know what the percentage of the population is. Not insignificant percentage of the population live in an almost continuous state of discontent in one form or another. There's always a residue of anger.

They're just waiting for the next thing to be angry about, to be upset about, or there's a continuous, whatever the state is. Certain percentage, yes, or they're totally unhappy and depressed and everything is just dreadful. Or they are approaching the borderline of what we conventionally call sanity and insanity.

And then they step beyond this borderline and then they're declared clinically, whatever, insane or what. And so there are many people in mental homes who are so obsessed with their minds, but no space whatsoever. And people are very unhappy, totally unhappy most of the time.

Also they experience virtually no relief from their mind. So no spaciousness at all creates, makes for very unhappy life. So, and that is the equivalent of somebody who cannot, if that were possible, who cannot go into dreamless sleep.

All you ever experience is your dreams and something prevents you from going into dreamless sleep. That would be awful. And of course you would go insane.

The same applies to ordinary wakeful state. Somebody who has absolutely no access to

the spaciousness within will be extremely unhappy in their ordinary wakeful state and will make others unhappy. Some become violent and create violence.

And then sometimes they are, sometimes people, of course, violent people are so unconscious and unhappy that they create, become violent. Often they attract, get attracted to each other. Then you have a group of people, thousands, hundreds, thousands, sometimes a million, millions who are violent, no spaciousness.

And then they create whatever, what we call genocide and so on. All these things, the most awful things created, life becomes a nightmare. They create a nightmare, either a collective nightmare or a personal nightmare in their personal lives.

So that is like somebody who has absolutely no access. Imagine you could only dream but never reach the dreamless state. You would go insane because you need the dreamless state.

Now, in ordinary wakefulness, you also need the spaciousness. And if you have absolutely no spaciousness, you go virtually insane. You switched off your cell phones, I hear.

And what about your minds? Not as easy because it's not just, well, it is a voice in the head, but over the years and centuries and millennia, it's more than just a voice. There's a kind of entity.

It has turned into a kind of entity. And me, not ultimately real, but seemingly real enough when you confuse who you are with the talking and reacting entity in the head, energized, amplified by emotions in a vicious circle. The emotions are created by whatever the entity is thinking and the energy of the emotion further amplifies the entity.

Ego, the ego. And the strength of that varies from person to person. In some way, we could say that the entity is an aspect of karma.

What is in the East is called karma. It's the patterns inside you, inherited patterns inside you that you confuse with who you are. Consciousness identifies with the patterns.

And in some humans, it's a very heavy entity, extremely dramatic or angry, or very heavy and sad, easily upset, always looking out for some perceived injury or slight, always ready to jump to its defense, even questioning somebody's viewpoint because you identify with the mind, which is ego. So any viewpoint is invested with a sense of self. The ego is in your viewpoint that you're expressing about this or that.

So even somebody questioning your viewpoint can lead to extreme defensive measures or aggression, as you can witness everywhere on television or in daily life. A peaceful discussion with that entity is not really possible because a peaceful discussion about

something implies that there's some degree of disidentification from that mind-made entity. There is at least a little bit of space in you and the other person, primarily in you.

That's the main thing is not to demand that there should be space in the other person, but to make sure that there's space in you when you're discussing something. And you can see if the other person is already getting upset. You can see why immediately.

Identification with a mental position, ego. The entity feels threatened and is barking back at you. Oh.

Oh. Some dogs do that also. But the same as in humans, even in vicious dogs, they are only vicious because of their past.

Underneath the viciousness in every dog, there is a goodness. And underneath the madness, of the egoic entity, there is also the truth of who you are or who that other human being is. So your task as you're confronted with these entities, and you are all the time, occasionally your own still takes over perhaps.

One or two of you may still experience it occasionally. But the task is to be there as the observer or witness of your mind. Then you're no longer in the grip of the egoic entity.

So ego then is the unobserved mind, complete lack of awareness. In other words, there is only mind. And that's the state of, one could call it hypnotic state or dreamlike state.

In which you dream up your life. And then things happen around you. Because in every human, every person's life, there are, you come into this world here and there are, you're surrounded by a certain situation.

Things happen to you. And then you react. The entity reacts without any awareness.

It reacts according to its aggressive, defensive conditioning. So it's completely at the mercy of what happens around it. And it perpetuates its own state.

So an event that for somebody who is relatively free of the ego, at least in that particular area of their lives, the same event happening to one person is relatively unimportant. Oh, Eckhart didn't reply to my email. To one person, that is, he must be very busy.

Or maybe he doesn't even read it. And that's just how it is. And the other person feels deeply offended.

I wrote to him three times. Nothing. Didn't even bother to reply to me.

And that's the beginning of the story. And that proliferates into how dreadful a person he is. And then you find other things that you can focus on.

And that's how the entity strengthens itself. It grows. It inflates itself by this reactivity.

So a relatively insignificant thing is this entity of course personalizes everything that happens. It's to do with me. They're trying to do something to me.

He's ignoring me. How dare he? And so it grows.

The next thing is the emails become angry and accusations or phone calls. I'll get you. That's how it grows.

Next time you walk out of your house, I'll be behind you. That's how it can grow. These are more extreme forms, but not uncommon.

So it doesn't matter to what extent it grows, but you can see the simple fact of somebody not replying becomes something dreadful that's happening to me and proliferates into a story. It can occupy a large section of your life. And another person said, well, that's how it is.

When the power of now first came out, some people suggested to me it would be a good idea to send a copy to Deepak Chopra. And I did because that maybe he'll read it and there was only, it was published in 3,000 copies the first edition, which had to be taken. I carried it to bookstores in a paper, in a plastic bag.

And so I signed it to him and nothing. As if it had disappeared into a hole. And now this is what happens when people send books to me, but now I know why.

Because you can't even read them all. You can't possibly read them all, the manuscripts and the books. But luckily that entity was no longer operating inside me so there was no complaining that Deepak had not, it just, there was no reply.

Well, that's just how it is. He must be busy. Maybe he read it, didn't like it.

Maybe he didn't read it. Who knows? The moment I interpret something, I'm projecting.

So it's futile to interpret something, you have no clue why. It's just, that's how it is. It's the simple isness of fact.

And of course the truth is, sure, he never even saw it because he gets too many books. It's impossible. By the way, later, when Power of Now was already doing very well, he did write an endorsement when it wasn't needed anymore, but it was, that was very nice.

But if I had sent him angry emails, I still have not heard from you after three months of sending 10 emails, you still neglected to inform me whether, et cetera, et cetera, then I don't think he would have written an endorsement. So your reaction determines also what happens next. So if your reaction is an egoic one, it's not simply the reaction to something that has happened in the present moment, it also determines how the events unfold from now on.

So if the egoic reaction is aggressive, negative, demanding, complaining, whatever the ego does to strengthen itself, to feel stronger, then that creates an echo in the external world. It's like you're shouting a particular sound, you're shouting it out into the world, and then it echoes back. So what you're putting out then as in your reaction, which comes to words and actions, then comes back at you.

People react to your reaction because they are not perhaps totally enlightened, in which case they wouldn't react to your reactions, but they are also, they have their egos, so they react to your reaction, and you create a whole train of reactivity, and this is how the drama develops and grows. And it's all taken for absolutely real, and that's how it is. You don't realize, the entity doesn't realize, it's creating the whole story.

And all it hears back is the echo of its own conditioning, coming back to you from the external, the outside world. And so, and of course that then serves as a very powerful confirmation that your initial interpretation of events was absolutely correct. So, because, as you see, his original intention was to deceive me to whatever, and then when I confronted him, he got angry because I was right, and so on and so on.

And if you have ever tried to argue with him, the egoic entity with someone, you can see the futility of it, it is impossible. You cannot convince this egoic entity of its own illusory nature, you can't. You only strengthen it.

Arguing with the ego is quite funny ultimately, but it's an absurd enterprise. On its own level, it will always win, and it will draw you, well, the moment you start arguing with the ego, you're already trapped in your own mind patterns. So the karma then, this being an aspect of karma, karma is what happens, usually people say karma is what happens to you, but more importantly, karma is how you react to what happens, because that is what perpetuates the conditioning, and that creates what you experience as your life, and it creates how other people react to you, so how you experience interactions.

Amazing. Amazing. So often I observe the futility of egoic reaction to nothing, to reacting to nothingness, and blowing it up like a huge soap bubble, talking about it for days on end, until finally reality confirms you were right all along.

It's quite a trap. So you need to, the heavier the egoic entity in you is, the more dense it is, because the density, we could call it that, I'm talking about ego, the emotional aspect of ego is a large part of the emotional aspect of ego is the pain bodies, pain body really is the emotional aspect of the egoic entity, and the density of the ego in you varies from person to person. There is probably nobody listening to this here or there, this is the wormhole of the camera through which the words are reaching out, and there's somebody at the other end.

Hi. Hi. Hi.

Not just somebody, far more people than sitting here, there's thousands of people at the other, through some, but there's nobody, people sitting here or at the other end of the wormhole whose ego is extraordinarily dense, or if they are, they won't stay here for very long, or they would switch off this screen saying, this is awful. There's nothing that the ego likes less than to hear about itself. So it is then not so likely that in you there is this great density of the ego and pain body, but you still encounter in your daily life, you will still encounter many humans who manifest extreme density of ego and pain body.

And of course, those people create suffering for themselves and others. That's their purpose in life. That's where they are at in their evolutionary journey.

They are here as spiritual teachers. They are creating suffering, which eventually will awaken them when they realize that the suffering they experience is self-created, but that could take a while before they realize that. In the meantime, they might attempt to create suffering for you at the same, it's because they go together.

And so they become your teachers because they force you into more intense presence, or they draw you into the egoic unconsciousness. So when you are confronted with dense egos, as one spiritual teacher in India called them ego Gs, G being a term of respect, so eat the ego Gs. There are still many around.

And they're here to teach you more presence, of course. They don't know that that's what they're doing, but within the totality, that's ultimately what their function is in the evolutionary journey of humanity. The greatest obstacle is probably when meditation comes out of a sense of lack or neediness.

So you feel you are deprived of something, be it money or a relationship or a living situation, and you feel there's a great lack in your life and you desperately want to get out of it. You desperately want this to change. And so you perhaps use manifestation in a way that is not likely to work.

When, for example, you use affirmations, such as I want a better job. I want a job with a good income and a life situation and a nice place. And I want this and I want that.

By making these statements, you're actually, by implication, saying that you don't have it. So you're also, by saying that you're, there's a reverse side to your statement, I want, and on the reverse side of the statement I want, there is the statement I don't have and I need. And similar things, please give me, if you pray to maybe God, maybe you pray to Jesus, maybe you pray to Buddha.

They do that in Buddhist countries. Maybe you pray to a saint or whatever it is, or you pray to the universe and say, please universe, please give me this, please give me that. That also doesn't work very well.

If it works, it could be accidentally, who knows, but usually that greatly diminishes your

power of manifestation because the manifestation practice arises out of a state of lack or neediness. So there's no powerful manifestation there. The secret of manifestation is expressed in one simple statement by Jesus, and that encapsulates all the books that have been written on manifestation and will ever be written on manifestation.

It's just one simple sentence. It says, when you pray for something, believe that you, that it has been given or that you already have it, and then you will receive it. So the important thing is he doesn't say, believe that you will receive it.

He says, believe that you have received it. So there, the secret is hiding in that statement, believe that you have received it. Now, the second obstacle to manifestation is, yes, people understand this statement, but they just cannot get themselves to believe that they have received something when they know fully well that they have not received it.

So it almost looks as if you had been asked to deny reality and you just cannot get yourself to deny reality. So that becomes the second obstacle to manifestation. And the reason why this is the obstacle is the people do not understand what it actually means, what is required for you to believe that you already have it.

How can you overlook external reality and believe that you already have it? And that, the answer to that takes us even deeper where you have to become into full alignment with the power of the present moment and go deep into yourself. That is the most fundamental practice where you discover who or what you are beyond the thinking mind and beyond the ego.

Discover that in essence, you are consciousness and consciousness is the unmanifested life that is the essence of all life, the source of all life and contains everything that could ever be manifested in external reality. I sometimes in a slightly humorous analogy compare that realization of your inner essence with having found the cream and all external reality is the skimmed milk that is a diluted version of the cream, which is the essence of all life that is within you as your deepest reality. So the very foundation for successful manifestation is finding who you are in your essence.

And once you've found that, that already contains everything that you could wish for on a feeling level. So you then, whatever you attain then comes out of the state of fullness, not out of a state of lack. So when you feel the fullness of life that is within you, that's inseparable from the present moment, it's inseparable from who you are in the depth of your being.

When you find the fullness of life, you virtually have everything already. Nothing that you could obtain, could possibly obtain, could improve upon this realization. So let's say you want to obtain great wealth or whatever it is, who knows?

How will you feel when you have it? Or you want to have some specific purpose. I want to create the most beautiful thing that helps millions of others.

How would you feel if you've had it right now? And this is exactly how you feel right now when you get in touch with the essence of who you are. And when you finally obtain it, you will feel no different.

So you feel already that fullness. Whatever else, whatever comes to you in the external is only a reflection, a distant reflection of what you have found within. And so the foundation for true manifestation, of course, lies in the present moment and discover the depths of the present moment.

That's the foundation. If you cannot come into alignment with the present moment and discover the secret of the present moment, that is inseparable from who you are, then no matter what you achieve, either through hard work or through manifestation practices will not satisfy you.

[Speaker 4] (2:49:27 - 2:49:31)

And your powers of manifestation will also be greatly diminished.

[Speaker 1] (2:49:47 - 3:01:37)

So it's when your surface reality, your surface reality becomes frustrating, that's the beginning of potentially finding the portal into the awakened state. But when your surface reality is relatively pleasant, by the way, it doesn't stay like that, but for the time being, let's say it's relatively pleasant, you're not really motivated into finding the deeper essence of who you are. Because why not?

Let's fly to Paris, we'll have a great meal there where you feel a little bit uncomfortable and discontent. Okay, let's go there, let's do this. Let's try this, more sensory experience.

You can buy any sensory experience. And then after a while you find being in your comfort zone, after a while it becomes your discomfort zone. And then finally you've made it.

And then finally there's a possibility of awakening. And so this is the challenges that we encounter in life. Many people have an attitude of resentment or a feeling that there's something very wrong with the world, or there's something very wrong with my life when they're being challenged by difficult situations, difficult people, loss of some kind, did I mention difficult people?

Oh, yes. You may find a lot of your suffering, unhappiness, strangely enough, comes from other people. They are so difficult.

And often the very people that were supposed to make you happy, suddenly they don't

fulfill their purpose anymore, and they make you unhappy. It's called the divorce court. And there's an implied belief that this shouldn't be happening.

Life should unfold beautifully without all that stuff going wrong. And to some extent, yes, to some extent, especially as you live more consciously and no longer totally in the grip of ego, you're beginning to awaken. There's an awareness.

You no longer create unnecessary suffering in your mind through reactivity. We are able to drop the unnecessary baggage of creating narratives and creating your own suffering through your narratives. You let go of that.

So it's a huge chunks of suffering begin to fall away. But challenges still come, even then challenges. And even then, it doesn't mean everything will now go totally as expected and as it should.

There's still loss happening from time. There's still, you still come across difficult people. How is that?

I don't want any more difficult. Yeah, but they're everywhere. As the famous French philosopher said, hell is other people.

He looked very unhappy by the way. Well, the only photo I ever saw of him, he looked unhappy, so I don't know. Jean-Paul Sartre.

Oh. It's true, other people are difficult. So your life improves immeasurably as you become more conscious, but it will still challenge you.

And it won't mean you will never experience loss again. It doesn't mean things may not go wrong still occasionally, not perhaps as drastically as before. You don't create your own mayhem and chaos anymore.

But challenges, yes, different kinds of challenges come. And if you no longer complain that a challenge shouldn't exist, difficulties shouldn't exist, obstacles shouldn't exist, things should not be canceled, they shouldn't go wrong. If you drop that expectation, then it's actually fine.

But be careful that if you still have an unspoken assumption that there's something wrong when challenges happen, that would draw you back into unhappiness. There's nothing wrong when challenges happen. We grow through them.

And if you hadn't had yours, you wouldn't be here. If I hadn't had mine, I wouldn't be here. So we wouldn't be here.

We would not be here without it. And so retrospectively, we can actually be grateful for the suffering that we've had, retrospectively. The question is, the challenges of life, when they come, do we transform them into unhappiness or are we able to just face

them and then go with it, go with them and do whatever action is possible or necessary or totally accepted at this moment, this is how it is.

So when you live more consciously, you no longer convert the difficulties of life, the inevitable difficulties and challenges of life, you no longer convert them into unhappiness, which means they don't contribute anymore to your unhappy personal identity. You're no longer becoming a more unhappy person. You'd be surprised how many people's main sense of identity in this world is unhappiness.

And they're just looking for the next thing to be unhappy about. And they always find something or to complain about, to be angry about. There's an expression that then you become a grievance looking for a cause.

And of course, you always find the causes. So important thing then to realize that if I'm sure there are some of you who have carried the burden of a very unhappy self for many years, and perhaps you're just beginning to step out of it. You're just perhaps beginning to transcend it.

And there are still millions in this world who carry the burden of an unhappy narrative in their minds, unhappy self. And that means my... And you think about then my life.

Why did it come to this? Why didn't my own... These are my expectations that I had when I was 20.

Why didn't they work out? Why did my marriage collapse? Why did I lose that job?

Why did I succeed and made millions and then I lost them? Why, why? Why did I work for nothing for 15 years and then the whole thing that I built up collapsed?

Why is it dreadful, dreadful? All this begins to dissolve because you realize you're unconsciously creating suffering and strengthening the egoic personality through that. And then my life then is just memories.

And you begin to realize, as I sometimes put it, or people find it a little weird, when I say my life isn't a correct way of putting it because you don't have a life. You don't have a life. Because if you have a life, there's you and life.

How can you be separate from life? So if you don't have a life, one could even say you can't even lose your life. You can only lose something that you have, but you are life, you don't have a life.

I am life and life and consciousness are synonymous. It doesn't mean that every form of life is conscious, but every form of life is, the way I see it, is matter, the table, a rock, mineral, it's like frozen consciousness. Plant life is like liquid consciousness.

It's an analogy. And the mind and thinking and beyond that, consciousness itself is like

vapor, mist, it rises, this isn't a water analogy. All life is manifestation of the one underlying life or consciousness in manifold forms.

So you are that, I am life is a wonderful realization. I am consciousness, I don't have a life. Yes, I have a history, but the history is not my life.

It's stuff, it's stuff in the mind, it's memories. And these are, all these things are wonderful that they happen to you because they have brought about your awakening. They all make sense if you now look back on all the things that happened, including, and not only including, but especially the so-called bad things.

They brought you to this point. They brought you, they pushed you into awakening.

[Speaker 3] (3:02:04 - 3:02:24)

Hello. As the now becomes more and more my experience, I started to question why be in a relationship with another. And I guess I want to know a little bit more about how things shift in what we're seeking in a relationship.

[Speaker 1] (3:02:36 - 3:18:07)

And again, through observing yourself in relationships, you can actually find the answers to your question or the answer to your question. Nevertheless, I will continue to speak. It's to ask, to find, try to find some mental conclusion about the function of relationships when you are present or awakened.

Actually, isn't that helpful? Although many people actually wanted to know the answer to your question. That's why you're here.

But you can observe yourself how relationships operate in your life and or how new relationships, if they come into your life, how they differ from the old relationships when you were not present. You may notice that when you're not present, you seek something from the other person. It may be a very subtle thing, or it may be not so subtle.

But when you're not yet connected to the source within yourself, which is the transcendent dimension, which is the stillness, which is consciousness, when you don't know yourself as the light of consciousness, as a living realization, which is not difficult, it's right here, but when that gets obscured, you seek, because that's the only source of true satisfaction and peace and aliveness. And then, but if that is blocked, you're unaware of it, then you seek it through something else. And often it's through another human being.

So you seek something that the other human being cannot really give you, nor any other situation can give you, because you may seek it through some imagined situation. I have to work out the right structure for my life, good income so that I don't have to worry

anymore, nice place to live, lovely relationship on top of it, and be able to travel, wouldn't that be great? And even that would not provide permanent satisfaction, it would provide short-lived satisfaction, always followed by dissatisfaction.

So you would be seeking something in the other human some kind of completion, make me complete, make me at home in the now, help me find myself through you. I will have a deal, I make you feel complete and you make me feel complete. It sounds good when you say it like that, but when you actually begin to live it, it doesn't work, not for long.

So you'd see in the old way of seeking relationships, there's the seeking, something through the relationship. It could be just physical pleasure, that is often the case, or it's, and then of course comes the psychological pleasure through the relationship, some kind of psychological completion through the other. And as long as there's the seeking for completion through the other, the relationship is doomed ultimately.

And as presence arises, the mind may still ask, well, would I still need a relationship or want a relationship? You don't need to find some kind of answer, abstract answer or arrive at some kind of conclusion about relationships and then live the rest of your life on the basis of it mentally derived at conclusion about relationships. The mind loves that, it says, I need to sort out my mind what relationship is all about and whether it's still needed when I'm present.

And once I have the answer to that, I can use that for the rest of my life. And build my life on that. Of course, you would be back in mind activity and that kind of conclusion is just a limitation you would impose on yourself.

So that, some mental conclusion about relationships doesn't help you. It's only the direct observation as relationships happen and relationships happen the moment you look at another human being. It's not just intimate relationships because that remains when you look at another human being who knows where it may lead.

But if you already have a conclusion in your mind that says, I don't need relationships anymore, for example, or whatever it is, or I only have relationships with highly evolved beings. And that's another conclusion in your mind. And then you would look through every human being on the basis of that conclusion, which really is mind stuff, and say, are you highly, sufficiently evolved for me?

And probably not. And that's the end of all relationships because every time, every person that comes in is, what's the biblical expression? Weighed and found wanting, for example.

So any kind of conclusion does not serve as a valid basis for your life. So you don't need to have an answer on that level whether relationships are still needed when you are present. Just start living the presence.

You live in presence and then find out how it goes when you look at another human being and you listen to another human being. And perhaps the words coming out of your mouth is, let's have a cup of tea. Without some kind of mental baggage about, I'm now entering a relationship.

Or even when you get, let's have a meal. And then, you know sometimes the person asks, is that a date? They want some kind of concept to fit that into the meal.

Is the meal a date or is it not a date? It's just a concept. We're having a meal together, that's all.

Is this a, does this relationship have a future? No, of course not, there is no future. There is no future.

In fact, it's probably best to let go of the whole idea of relationship and just relate in the present moment. Just, which means you look, you listen, you sense your presence, and then you find words come out of your mouth. You say something.

Or you may even touch the other person without saying, should I touch or not? It's just, there's a more, there's a flow to life when you're present, where you don't need to live from conclusions, but live out of that presence. So the answer, the real answer to your question comes as you bring presence into your contact, not calling it relationships now, bring presence into your contact with other humans.

And then you'll see how that evolves. Who knows where it'll lead? But an important thing is you begin to enjoy just simple relating, perhaps just looking and listening.

You enjoy the presence of the other because you enjoy your own presence. That's where the whole neediness disappears from relationships. When you enjoy the other's presence, you don't need it, you just enjoy it.

But you can only truly enjoy it if you enjoy yourself. And you can only enjoy yourself if you know yourself as consciousness, the light of consciousness, the aware, still, vibrantly alive presence. And you are then, primarily you are that.

In second place, you are still a person, of course. So that's the, and then it becomes a beautiful thing. And less and less do you need these mental judgments about what to do or what its place is.

So what the answer then is, enjoy relating in the present moment. And then whether or not there can still be a close relationship, an intimate relation or not, you have to find out. That's the adventure of it.

But it will be enjoyable. Thank you. Thank you.

So we are moving beyond thought, not back. We step beyond thought. This is humanity's

destiny.

And it's urgent now, not in the sense of, oh, we must get there. It's urgent in the sense that there is an intensity now to the arising consciousness. Because the madness that is the dysfunction of the old consciousness is also getting accelerating.

It gets worse. And at the same time, the new is already arising. The two movements, the old still not even having reached yet the end of its madness.

And the new arising at the same time. The old is still much more visible in this world. The madness of the old state of consciousness with its need for conflict and problems.

And the violence that arises out of that state. And the immeasurable suffering that humans inflict on each other and on themselves out of that state. That madness is continuing on the planet.

You only need to watch the news on TV or read the paper. That's a continuation of what we have seen in the 20th century and before that. And the new is arising, not so much visible on the surface of things yet.

Rarely mentioned in the media. Occasionally it is mentioned already here and there. This is why we are here.

Simply not to make it happen, but to allow it to happen. We are simply opening the door wider so that less and less, we're not offering resistance to that anymore. So your practice here is continuous, but don't make impossible demands upon yourself.

Of course you will get drawn even here, back into mind streams. Yes. You may reincarnate into a reactive mind stream.

And then a moment comes when suddenly there's an awakening out of that. Oh. Oh.

Oh. You can see how clear, how obvious the difference between the states of the awakened state. A moment ago, you were in that heaviness, that dense energy.

And suddenly you step out. And it's also like having left, when you're on the plane, it goes through the clouds and suddenly the clouds are underneath you. Oh.

And there's vast clear space, infinite. And so, and the clouds are still there, but you're not in them anymore.

[Speaker 7] (3:18:08 - 3:18:09)

Oh.

[Speaker 1] (3:18:23 - 3:44:54)

And so as you walk here through the gardens, along the river, see if you can be in that state where the sense perception does not absorb your attention entirely, nor the mental labels that arise to do with those sense perceptions or to do with something totally different. They don't absorb your attention totally. Attention remains free as the field of attention.

In other words, you perceive in and through stillness without needing to label everything immediately through the mind. Of course, you know you're looking at this flower. You know it's a flower without having to tell yourself that this is a flower.

You know it's beautiful without having to tell yourself that it's beautiful. And so you realize that there is vast knowing beyond mental labels and concepts. And then you know far more than you could ever know through labels or concepts, because you sense there is a depth to that which we call flower and an aliveness to that which we call flower, that mystery that is not explained by the label flower at all, that mystery that is covered up by the label flower and gives you the delusion that now you know what it is, just a sound.

You've made a sound that has come out of your mouth or you've uttered the sound in your mind, and that gives you the delusion that you know what that is. Children are told that when they learn a language, the delusion is reinforced every time you tell a child, that's called such and such. I have forgotten the names of flowers.

What's that? Gladioli. This is a gladioli, if that's what it is.

And the child will believe you, dreadful. So what can you do to, do you tell a child, don't call it anything, that doesn't work either. Yeah.

But you might say to a child, well, look at it, smell it, touch it. Look. And then as an afterthought, after thought, yeah, you can say, oh, by the way, we call it such and such instead of saying it is such and such.

Then that creates some distance from the label so that the child doesn't totally believe in that label because then you get more and more trapped in concepts and labels until you reach the age of, then finally at 18, you're totally impressive. You've been through the system that has done it even more to you. And you're totally impressive in a conceptualized reality of mental labels that concern both the world around you.

And they're all conditioning, all the surrounding culture has conditioned you with whatever mental labels they've put into you. And you inhabit a conceptualized reality, not knowing how dead your universe has become, how dead and deadened your reality has become. And you live in equally in a conceptualized sense of self.

You make yourself into mental concepts. And so this is the essence of not knowing who you are. That's the essence of this false self.

Once you have a false self, nothing is seen as it is. And everything is misinterpreted through that conditioning. Everything is distorted and deadened through that conditioning.

And that's how people live. And that is our entire civilization has come out of that. And is it surprising how mad the civilization is?

Of course, it's not surprising considering the state of consciousness out of which it has come. So we are stepping out of that, the compulsion to label continuously. And so you move here, you walk through the gardens and along the river.

And what arises is the state that is free of the need to label. And should a label arise in you as you walk, which is a thought, you recognize it as just a thought and not it. And then it arises and passes and you're back in just, and then perhaps another compulsive label comes.

Okay. Okay. And then somebody comes towards you on the path, walking.

And some mental judgment comes in concerning the form of this being. And you recognize it as a thought, no more. You no longer completely believe in it.

You're not completely in it anymore. You allow that to be also. And then, so gaps arise in which there are no labels, in which seemingly you no longer know anything.

And that's why it's a little bit frightening for some people to enter that realm because it seems at first as if you no longer knew. And how can I, I need to know what's going on here. I need to judge it in some way, classify it in some way.

No. And you see how beautiful, powerful, intelligent, and deep that state is of not labeling. And great intelligence operates here, but it is not the limited intelligence of the human mind.

It's only a small aspect of the vastness of intelligence that ultimately you are. This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

Just to remind you, as I'm sure everybody knows, the quick way of dropping out of thought is to take a conscious breath, which means in, and out. Conscious breath means what? Conscious breath means you observe the inflow and the outflow, not visually, but with your internal attention.

Some people may put their point of observation on the nostrils, but it's probably best to observe the inflow of the air. In other words, to feel it. So you feel yourself breathing.

You're doing it anyway, but usually it's unconscious. If you had to remember to breathe, of course you would die very quickly. Oh, I forgot.

Too late. So conscious means your attention is there. Your attention then follows the breath as it moves into the body, and you feel that.

And it follows the breath as it moves out. That is one conscious breath, in and out. And immediately your attention has disentangled itself from thought, consciousness.

So that's how you can discover inner space immediately. Even one conscious breath means one in, one out. That's one breath takes about, who knows how long it takes, 15 seconds, whatever, 10 seconds, 10, depends on the length of your breath.

You don't need to particularly make it very long or any different. The body is doing it anyway. So you're just observing what's happening anyway.

And you will find, if you're really there, if you're there with your attention at the beginning of the breath, and the middle of the breath, and the end of the breath, and again, the middle of the out-breath, and the end of the out-breath, you're not thinking. So if your attention is really there, you can't think at the same time. That's why it's such a wonderful meditation tool or method.

Of course, it's recommended as a meditation method. Some people practice it for an hour. I'm saying here, you can intersperse your life with many meditations, consisting of one or two conscious breaths.

Those are many meditations you can do anywhere, wherever you are. And that means every time that you do that, you're not thinking. If you're thinking, you're not observing your breath.

It's as simple as that. So, and it's an interesting thing to observe that in yourself when you are, when there is breath awareness, there's no thinking. When there's thinking, there's no breath awareness.

So it's a very simple way of, especially at night when your mind is telling me you absolutely need to think about your problems now, three o'clock in the morning. And if you don't think about your problems now, your life is going to collapse very soon. Don't believe every thought that comes into your head and then say, okay, let's say, let's take a conscious breath.

And then immediately you notice a shift in consciousness because you stepped out of thinking. And that will feel so good that you might want to take another one. And it's not a drug.

It's not another fix. A drug would mean, a drug usually quickly takes you below thinking, but the awareness that we talk about here takes you above thinking. It requires an alertness.

There are certain similarities, of course, between the state below thinking and the state above thinking, but there are huge differences too. So the state below thinking is the state of the, in human terms, a simpleton, a person who is so simple that his or her mind is not creating any problems yet. Just enjoying things as they come, just enjoy eating and drinking, and just like the hobbit in the, and they're lovely, lovable creatures.

They haven't got an ego yet, or just a very rudimentary ego because they haven't been totally absorbed by thinking. So they are in a deeper state of connectedness with being than the mind absorbed person. That's why they can perform important tasks that the more intelligent people cannot perform because the fool, this is the traditional mythological figure of the fool, very important in different mythologies, has certain powers that the more advanced people don't have.

So often the important task is given to the fool to perform because, and this of course is not made explicit, I'm saying it now, because there's an intuitive knowing that the fool is more deeply connected with the source of life and of being. He's not totally lost in thinking yet. But you don't want to become a fool again.

We're here as the awareness of thought means there's an alertness, you rise above thinking. There are some similarities. One is that you're not creating unnecessary problems anymore like the fool, but you've risen above.

There's a much deeper knowing there. There's a same state of connectedness, but you've been through thinking and you're still able to use the tool of thinking without being used by it. That's an enormous step forward in evolution.

But to an external observer, sometimes the fool and the so-called awakened human they can't tell the difference because they both look very simple, they go. And so there are stories about some Zen masters when they had visitors, occasionally they mistook them for, there was one visitor arrived to see a famous Zen master and there was a person working in the garden and he said, where's your master? And he said, in there in that room.

And when he got into that room, the same gardener was sitting on the chair of the master and said, what are you doing on his chair? And then it turned out that the gardener that looked so simple, he was the master. And often, a long time ago, there was this TV series about Kung Fu with Karen D, what?

Karen, David Karen D. That was very well done because the main character was often, and that was part of the attraction of watching it, the main character was often mistaken for somebody weak and totally ineffective because he always, he had no ego. So he moved in a very simple, he just had a bamboo flute or something he carried with him and he always kept, and then he met these huge egos.

He would visit tech places like Texas where they have, the egos are even bigger than, can be, not necessarily, but. And then the meeting of this person who took him to be a fool and only in moments when suddenly action was required, this fearful being would suddenly, enormous energy would flow into him and so to defeat the evil people, whoever they were, but the particular episode, and suddenly the energy would flow through his body and he would go. And then immediately he would go, there's no ego that said, I did it.

Not immediately, no identification with this action, immediately going back to a presence as if nothing had happened. So it's the person who did that, the director or script writer must have had some insights into the state of egolessness. So on conscious breath, out breath, and you rise above thinking, you don't become stupid.

Don't need to fear that. You don't become stupid when you're not thinking. You actually connect with a more powerful intelligence that can then use thought when it's needed.

You only become stupid when you're not thinking, when you're drifting off into sleep or unconsciousness. It's a state of relative torpor or whatever the word is. So when you get tired, a certain torpor, if that's the right word, comes over you and you would go to, and you're not thinking anymore.

That yes, there perhaps you're moving towards a certain state that could be called stupid, but this is very different. You rise above thinking and that is actually, you're connecting with that deeper intelligence that is consciousness itself, the unconditioned consciousness. And then as you make that your habitual place where you dwell, your mind can actually work more effectively because it can be used by that.

It's because you have developed it already. You've had, you developed it, it became an ego. And now you transcend it, which means you don't leave it behind completely.

It's still there to be used effectively, but you cannot use the mind effectively as long as the mind is using you. Then you have an imposter pretending to be you and thinking all kinds of thoughts according to its conditioning, which have nothing to do with you. They're the conditioned thoughts.

They're conditioned by your upbringing, by your environment, by the culture you grew up in. And so on. And so all this continuous stream of thinking that is invested with a sense of self takes over and pretends to be a person.

Well, basically that's what a so-called person kind of is. A conditioned thought activity that is, that has a sense of self in it. So the Buddha already explained all these things.

And that self is an illusion. It's the same self that Jesus tells us to deny, deny thyself, the illusory self that the Buddha said doesn't even exist. Anatta, no self.

I'll take a, so remember the breath many times during the day. And that may take you into also, you begin to feel your body more easily as you take a conscious breath or two, and you feel the inner aliveness in the body. You can take your attention also directly into the body.

It's another way related to breaths because breath takes your attention into the body, but you can focus on the body more. So that's another way of taking attention out of thought. So if you think you can't, your mind won't leave you alone.

I just cannot stop thinking. I must, this is not true. That's just another thought that tells you you can't do it.

So if you believe that thought, then that becomes true for you. But if you realize that thought, you can't do it, I have too much on my mind, or whatever expression you use, I have too much on my plate, which means your mind. Can't do it now, maybe a little later.

Or, of course, it never comes the moment when your mind tells you, okay, now you can stop thinking. But you can, so attention in the body. Immediately you step out.

It can be a choice. There's enough awareness in you to have the choice. There are still millions on the planet whose awareness is not developed enough to even have a choice as far as their inner state is concerned.

They are totally, totally run by their conditioning, totally conditioned entities. So to tell them that they have a choice would be wrong. They don't.

You need to come to a place where there's already a certain degree of awareness. There's already to a limited degree you have separated from thinking and realize there's an aware space and there's my thoughts. Then you begin to have a choice.

And ultimately, of course, everything you express in language is a limited perspective. It's never the entire truth. So whenever anybody says anything, it can never be the complete truth.

You always have to look at other perspectives too. When I say you have a choice, this is what it appears to be. And it's a useful and helpful perspective.

Ultimately, you are not separate from the totality of consciousness. So I might as well say then, consciousness chooses to express itself through you. But to you, it looks as if you had a choice, but you are consciousness.

Let's not confuse it too much because language can complicate things excessively. And don't demand some ultimate truth to be expressed through concepts. Concepts can only point.

The famous finger pointing to the moon, the Buddhists talk about the finger pointing to the moon. Now, usually your dog will think when you point somewhere, the dog will usually look at your finger. I've heard there are some dogs who are advanced enough to look beyond the finger.

I haven't met any yet. So when there's spiritual teaching, when you take a statement and believe in the statement rather than go to where the statement points, then that's mistaking the finger for the moon. There's still, for example, I say, the stillness is already in you.

It's just covered up by mental noise. And then somebody could come and say, I believe that the stillness is already in me. I believe that completely.

Yes, but have you tasted it? No, I just believe it. It's not enough.

That is mistaking the finger for the moon.

[Speaker 3] (3:45:14 - 3:45:50)

Thank you, Eckhart, for waking us all up. My question concerns the cultivation of virtue. I hear many traditions speak about cultivating loving kindness, cultivating compassion.

And in our previous session, I heard you say that loving kindness comes naturally out of presence. So can we cultivate virtues like you practice, and you become it?

[Speaker 1] (3:45:51 - 3:52:03)

Thanks. That term tends to be used a lot in Buddhist teachings, the term cultivate, cultivating virtues. And so in Buddhism, there's a list of nice things that you swallow.

I only know the essential Buddhism. I can't remember the long lists that you get in Buddhism of virtues and so on. I know the basic thing, which undoubtedly is what the Buddha taught is the origin of suffering and the way beyond suffering, that's the Buddha.

I think all the longer lists were compiled at a later stage by monks who wanted to make things more understandable and accessible to other monks, but they were not fully present when they did these long lists, but that's okay. So ultimately, of course, it is better that somebody should at least attempt to cultivate the various virtues, the primary one in Christianity would be, of course, love your neighbor as yourself. That's the primary.

And really, it all boils down to that. In Buddhism, metta, loving kindness towards others is important, but ultimately to cultivate this, it's a wonderful intention and it's better than not trying to cultivate it, but ultimately you won't really succeed unless there's a shift in consciousness in you that is primary. Once there is that shift in consciousness, and this is what our gathering is all about, it's virtually impossible to sustain the virtues for very

long from the old state of consciousness because the old state of consciousness is dominated by ego.

And if you want to cultivate the virtues, it's very often a desire of the ego to improve one's self-image, not only for others, but for oneself too, because one wants to feel virtuous. And so the ego feels better if it can convert its sometimes negative self-image into a good one. And so the ego decides, okay, I'm doing this, I'm virtuous now.

But in Christianity, this for hundreds, thousands, 2,000 years, Christians have tried to live, well, not all, many haven't even tried, but to love your neighbor as yourself. Not that many succeeded because I don't believe that Jesus actually said, love your neighbor as yourself. I believe that they took, that was taken out of context.

He said, the kingdom of heaven, which I translate it, as you may remember, as the dimension of formlessness or the dimension of spaciousness is within you. And there's only one thing that matters. There's only one thing that of primary, it was of primary importance.

There may be many other things that are important, but there's only one thing that is of primary importance. And that is to find within you that dimension of consciousness and then live from that dimension of consciousness. And if you live from that dimension of consciousness, then naturally you will love your neighbor as yourself because you recognize your neighbor as essentially one with who you are.

And then you will also love God as yourself because you will then recognize essentially that God is the source of your very being. That's what he said. But perhaps people who wrote it down, they got to the bottom of the page where it said about the kingdom of heaven.

And if you enter the kingdom of heaven, if that's the dimension of consciousness, turn over the page, then you love your neighbor as yourself. And then at some point, the two pages got separated. And so all the virtues arise naturally out of that state of connectedness with being, which is presence, love, benevolence, goodwill towards other human beings, which is all aspects of love.

And whatever else, whatever other virtues, really it all comes down to no longer feeling that acute sense of separation between yourself and other human beings and between yourself and the source of who you are, the source of all life. So as God being the source of all life, the unmanifested source of all life. I'm not, when I use the word God, I'm not speaking of an authority figure, a controlling authority figure, but the source of all life.

So your question was good. I had selected your question. I saw it on a piece of paper and it had been selected for an answer too, but I'm glad you asked it.

[Speaker 7] (3:52:03 - 3:52:03)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (3:52:12 - 3:52:29)

This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

[Speaker 4] (3:53:00 - 3:53:02)

This applies in many cases.

[Speaker 1] (3:53:03 - 3:59:13)

People have, let's say you might feel a sense of lack of something meaningful in your life, or you might feel a sense of lack of feeling that you are not good enough. You are not enough in this world. And some people then come up with, what is it that I want?

And the ego, so I might say, in many young people you have that, you might say, I want to be a famous this or that. I want to be, if you ask young people, because they're always online and doing things in the virtual world, I want to be a famous YouTuber. I want to be a famous, okay.

Now what, let's say somebody says, I want to be a famous YouTuber. That is not good. That is not enough.

You can sit down and then you imagine, I'm a famous YouTuber. And even if you feel the power of beingness, there's still something missing. And what is missing is in the dimension of doing.

Let's say you have the dimension of being. You're rooted in the being and you feel the fullness of life. And then you say, okay, I am, if I meant, I am an influential and famous YouTuber.

I am influential. But what are you doing? Do you have anything to convey to people on YouTube?

Is there anything that you are enthusiastic about? Is there anything that people would love to hear from you or people would find helpful? It's not enough.

The foundation, yes. The foundation is to be rooted in the dimension of being. So that this sense of fullness of life within you here and now.

But then for many things, maybe not for all things, but for many things, you need to also address the dimension of doing. You have the being dimension, but that's the foundation. The doing dimension is, okay, let's come back to the famous.

I want to be a famous YouTuber. Do you have something that you feel enthusiastic about that perhaps other people would appreciate and it would help them? What could it be?

Is it music or singing or information, conveying information or entertaining? Whatever it is. And then you focus on that, develop technical skills because putting things on YouTube, you have skills of editing and cameras, producing videos and enjoy the doing of it.

When you're engaged in the doing of it, this enjoyment of being flows into the doing. And again, do not be attached too much to the outcome. That's very important, but enjoy the doing of it so that the being flows into the being dimension, flows into the doing dimension too.

So you enjoy learning how to produce videos, learning editing, video editing, learning. And then whatever subject matter you have that you feel enthusiastic about that would help the world and other people, then you will learn more about it or you go more deeply into it. And then you begin to practice and it's all a wonderful thing.

And you're not attached to the outcome, but from time to time, then you're able to, from time to time, you go within and you imagine yourself as a famous YouTuber that's reaching hundreds of thousands or millions of people who are being helped or you contribute something to other people's lives by doing whatever it is you're doing. And by doing that, you are a famous YouTuber. Then it's more powerful if you feel that this is already the case.

It's already, I'm already a famous YouTuber. Perhaps for the time being, you only get 20 views per video. It's, that's fine.

That's at the moment, that's all that, that's fine. But even that, you appreciate those 20 views. Great, I've reached 20 people.

And then you go within and again, you feel you're already a famous YouTuber and you're helping. It's not just this image of me as a famous YouTuber. There must be another dimension to it that relates to the world.

How does that affect the world? Whatever you want to achieve, that can be, that empowers you. What does, how do you help?

What does the universe want to manifest through me? When I say universe, I mean the intelligence that pervades the universe, that's behind it all. The universe or the intelligence behind it all.

The divine intelligence behind the phenomenal world. What does it want from me? And maybe it wants me to become a famous YouTuber.

But the most important thing is not the famous.

[Speaker 4] (3:59:13 - 3:59:20)

It's just, what is it that's the energy that's flowing through me?

[Speaker 1] (3:59:28 - 4:14:27)

So you can look at the world wars. You can look at all the terrorism and all the other mad wars that are being fought as just, it's just a question of degrees of unconsciousness. Not different.

So when you go into that state of unconsciousness, it takes you over, you lose it. Basically then, that is the same energy field that has created what we see as the madness of human history and what we see of the madness of the so-called world news. The same energy.

So don't complain about all these violent people who are doing all these dreadful things. All that it is, is human unconsciousness in a more pronounced form than yours or your partners. And so that helps a little bit to find perhaps almost some compassion towards all these crazy people that are doing such crazy things and creating such terrible suffering.

Now, if you become compassionate towards them, don't worry. It doesn't mean that they will not experience the consequences of their unconsciousness. That still happens.

You jump by being compassionate to another human being, you don't necessarily remove the karmic consequences of their action, but you yourself become free from being drawn into the karmic cycle. So the act of forgiveness does not mean that this person is not going to suffer the consequences, but life makes sure in whatever form that they do suffer the consequences of the suffering that they inflict on other human beings. It's a karmic law.

But if you don't want to be part of that anymore, if you want to step out of the karmic law, the first step out of the, and the most important step out of the karmic law is forgiveness. Then you do not feed it, you don't become part of it. That's why traditionally in spiritual teachings of various traditions, forgiveness is always emphasized.

It must be real though. It's, there are many forms of superficial forgiveness when just the mind is, okay, I forgive you. It's not deep, it's not real yet.

The mind is trying to forgive, but you can only forgive if you realize that whatever actions have been perpetrated are the effects of human unconsciousness. In other words, what Jesus said on the cross or is reported to have said, forgive them for they know not what they do. Very profound statement.

It is a profound statement that can be applied to any act of violence perpetrated against other humans or life forms. Forgive them for they know not what they do. Not knowing what they do, of course, means they are unconscious.

The word unconscious probably in that sense wasn't used at the time. So he said, they don't know what they do. Karmic law still operates, but without you.

And you can notice karmic law when you see a movie, some movies like to manipulate your emotions. And so there are particular types of movies where they first, they build up the tension by showing you some very evil person. And this evil person is killing all these people or hurting all these people.

And then you're being manipulated to feel that incredible pull that this person should suffer for what he or she has done. That's the manipulation. And the audience loves that.

They love watching things like that. So then the emotion builds up. And finally, there are even some movies like the movies about vigilantes who take justice in their own hands because the justice system doesn't deal with the criminals anymore.

So finally you have this guy who goes out and kills all the bad guys. And your emotions have been manipulated so much that the audience says, yes, yes, he must die. Not realize, no, what you are feeling this incredible, it might also happen if you read about some dreadful crime that somebody has committed.

And then if you read it on the internet, you can read on some news websites, you can read the comment section. And in the comment section, every other comment says, we should have the death penalty. He needs to sit in electric chair.

He needs to be done to what he did, they should do to him and all these. And this is an enormous pressure that people feel inside. And this is connected to karmic law because there's a compensatory factor in karmic law.

And you can feel that as the pressure inside you, but it keeps you trapped in karma. So in that sense, watching these movies is not helpful because it keeps you trapped in that wheel of karma. So they don't teach forgiveness there.

So this is, we are talking about something very important and that is dealing with human unconsciousness and what looks like evil. So there are many things that are quite dreadful. So how do we, how does that affect our state of consciousness?

And what role does our state of consciousness play in this whole scenario? It does have a role to play. So it's for us important that we are no longer part of action and reaction because the definition of karma is action.

Karma means action and reaction. And it goes on and on. And as you can see in certain

societies and so on, the karmic thing goes back centuries and centuries, the same grievance transmitted from one generation to the next and the next and the next, and they are all asleep.

This is why spiritual teachings say you are asleep. They are all so unconscious, they get taken over by the collective mental emotional pattern and the mental story. They just inherit it from their parents and then they pass it on to their children.

And then they, and each generation suffers. They suffer, they call much suffering great for each other. And at some point, the suffering becomes almost unbearable for certain people within that society.

And that's beginning of a shift when it gets too much. So suffering drives humans to a point of awakening. That's a strange paradox here is the suffering is created by the unconsciousness in humans, but in some strange way, eventually it wakes you up, it awakens you.

That's the redeeming feature behind the suffering that humans create for each other. Eventually it leads to a spiritual awakening. So it all is a good thing to realize it all comes down to your state of consciousness and how you relate to the people around you.

And that spreads, that is what creates the world. And even how you react to when you listen to the world news has certain influence because all human minds are connected at a deeper level. So the way in which you react to what you hear on the world news contributes either to the unconsciousness.

If you get on your computer or the iPad and you type in, this guy does not deserve to live. He should die slowly and they should torture him. Then you become part of the same karma.

If you've ever done that, please forgive yourself. And if you enjoy reading those comments, also forgive yourself. This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive.

To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. The greatest mystery of the universe is not out in outer space, the mysteries of the galaxies, the mysteries of the black holes, the billions of galaxies that exist, that it is phenomenal, it's unbelievable. And the greatest mystery is not on the atomic level, which is also unbelievable, the world that is there, the atomic and subatomic level that scientists explore, which we only understand a tiny fragment of, just as we only understand the tiniest of fragments of what is out there.

So you have the two realms, the two mysteries, the outer space, and then the macrocosm, and you have the microcosm. And people write books, great scientists write books about the mysteries of the universe. And the amazing thing is, many of these

books, very good books, fail to mention one word.

They explore the mysteries of the universe, but there's one word, you can have a whole book on the mysteries of the universe, either the macrocosm or the microcosm or the two together. The one word that's not mentioned is consciousness, which is the foremost fundamental mystery, the fact that the universe is conscious. That is the most amazing miracle.

How do I know that the universe is conscious? Well, I am conscious, you are conscious. The universe is conscious in us.

The universe is experiencing itself for a brief moment as a human being. It's also experiencing itself for brief moments as a plant or an animal. And that's an amazing thing.

Now, scientists are probably never going to figure out what consciousness is, if it's even possible to figure out what consciousness is, because scientists is concerned with looking out there. You can either look out into outer space or you look into the most, the innermost of matter. But what scientists don't look at is their own consciousness, which is the universe looking at itself.

Oh. Oh. Oh.

[Speaker 7] (4:14:33 - 4:14:33)

Oh.

[Speaker 3] (4:15:22 - 4:15:25)

I am, I go to bed with you at night.

[Speaker 7] (4:15:32 - 4:15:35)

It's very nice to see you here in person.

[Speaker 3] (4:15:39 - 4:16:19)

So I'm here asking a question for several people. We were all praying that I would get chosen so I could ask this question. We're just curious.

Do you still experience moments of losing, losing it, losing consciousness? For example, if someone cuts you off in traffic, the person who called you or said, slow driver, the story you gave, bad driver. Do you ever still experience yourself losing it and what is that like for you and calling yourself back?

[Speaker 1] (4:16:20 - 4:19:31)

No, in those cases I don't. I'm just fine, it doesn't affect me at all. But sometimes I don't, there are emotions.

They can come when I see violence inflicted on humans or animals. I can experience weeping. There are, sometimes when I see human suffering, there is an emotion.

It doesn't last very long, it passes through. But there's no reaction to those things, traffic or humans. I think people who have worked with me can probably tell me if I'm wrong because when you work with somebody, then you get to know them, especially when things need to get done.

So there's a fairly constant sense of presence, but it's not always the same intensity of presence. The intensity of presence varies. It can be, it sometimes recedes into the background, and then more of my attention is taken up with the foreground.

I have to deal with this and this and this, and the attention goes there, and there's just this kind of background presence, like a humming, like an alm in the background, and here things happen. But then times, because I love doing nothing, and I do that quite often. And then sometimes presence comes completely, so the person is virtually obliterated, and there's just consciousness.

In teaching situations, for lack of a better word, like this, the person is not really here. It's not the person who is teaching. It's consciousness.

It's using the vehicle of the person. It's using the mind of the person in order to manifest this. So in a teaching situation, there is just consciousness.

Eckhart is only the frame or the window frame, but the light comes from somewhere else, the light that comes through the window. Yes, there are degrees of intensity of presence, but it's always there, either obliterating Eckhart or in the background, and then the person deals with things as best he can.

[Speaker 3] (4:19:32 - 4:19:41)

And did that come after you had your experience of awakening? Was it like that from the very beginning, or did that come with your practice?

[Speaker 1] (4:19:43 - 4:41:38)

Well, the peace was there, has been there since then, but there has been an integration of that into life that took longer so that it went into every aspect of my life. I was still deluded in some ways, even after the shift happened, because the personality was still working, and I still thought at that point my destiny was to be in the academic world, and I continued to pursue a PhD, not knowing that it was no longer what I was meant to do. The personality still had a momentum, and went on with that for a few years.

There were also times after that when a few times I could feel the pull of suffering in the form of the mind tugging me, like occasionally went like, come this way, come and suffer. And what that did was, there was an intensification of presence suddenly when that happened, so then it went, so I'm not going that way. And so suddenly the light went up, and then a few more times it happened, and, come, be unhappy.

You have so many reasons to be unhappy, don't you remember? Now, if you, any mind can, if you want to remember reasons for being unhappy, I'm sure everybody here could do that. I could, even now I could.

Reasons for being unhappy, anybody can do that if you allow that kind of thought to take over your mind, and then confuse it with reality, a story, a sad story in the head. So a few times the mind tried, but didn't get very far. And then another shift came to a deeper level when I started to work with people, because that required a further deepening.

Working with people required a further deepening, especially people who were in suffering. And I noticed that when I started seeing individuals who came, often very unhappy people or suffering people, or people who were suffering from serious illness or had great loss, and I noticed whenever I sat in front of these people and listened to their story, I would go into a very deep state of presence, deeper than I'd experienced before, very deep and intense presence. And some of those people, if they were sensitive enough, it happened several times, they stopped and said, what, you're doing something.

I wasn't doing anything. Yeah, you're doing something. One lady said she was a former nun in the Catholic monasteries and became, after 15 years, became very unhappy because she hadn't found God.

And so then she came to me looking for God, but of course she was looking for herself, the deepest source of her being. And I was sitting, listening to her, and then she said, oh, you're doing healing. You're healing me.

I said, oh, because I didn't know that I was doing that. And for a while, because I didn't, at the time I wasn't, didn't fully understand the consciousness and the process, it just was there, but I didn't understand it. I thought I was a healer suddenly.

And then she sent me some people who wanted just physical healing. But I noticed when people who just wanted physical healing, I didn't go that deep at all. It's only people who are ready for a deeper transformation, then I would go very deep.

And then when groups happened again, a deepening happened again of a different kind, because a group is a different energy field again. So there was a deepening there that was somewhat different kinds, it's hard to describe. But my great learning was with

individual people, spiritual counseling, also the words that came out of that deep state of connectedness, surprised me many times.

I know that some of you have already had similar experiences when people came to you with problems and you were able to just be still and listen. And then you found yourself saying some words that were just right. But there are always two parts of that.

One is the words and one is the energy field that's behind the words. And sometimes words are not even necessary in a situation like that. So there was a process, and then later the teachings became a book.

And there itself, the writing of the book was another way of connecting with presence and allowing presence to use this mind to express itself through. It's a long adventure of ways in which presence manifests it through this vehicle as it is for you. Nobody can predict in what ways presence will flow through you and manifest through you, but it is doing it already and it will.

Who knows what situations you go into and become a healing influence in those situations. You are meant to do that, to be there, because the universe needs that. The evolutionary impulse behind the universe is behind you.

It wants you to go through that transformation and then be the agent for transformation in this world. So that is our common destiny. Thank you.

This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. When you go out into nature and you see something extraordinarily beautiful like a sunset, and it's a moment of intense aliveness and you feel that was such a beautiful moment.

Why? Because that freed you from the incessant stream of thinking. I don't know if you're familiar with the famous Zen story that the, I mean, everybody knows a bit about Zen.

Well, for many people, Zen means simplicity of interior design or whatever. But that's not what Zen is. It was not created by an interior designer.

There was a story about a man comes to the Zen master and he's a university professor who has studied all the Zen scriptures and all the other Buddhist scriptures. And so he comes to the famous master and the master says, sit down, please. And the professor says, well, I've started it all, but I want to hear from you also what really Zen is.

Can you explain the essence to me? And the master was making tea. So the master was, there was the cup, the professor's cup, and the master took a teapot and started pouring tea into his cup.

And he didn't stop pouring. And then the tea overflowed and the professor was looking and saying, stop, stop, can't you see the cup is overflowing? And the master said, well, just like this overflowing cup, you are full of your opinions, viewpoints, knowledge, and speculations.

How can I teach you Zen unless you first empty your cup? That was his main lesson. How can I teach you Zen unless you first empty your cup?

So the cup here stands for the full cup, the cup that's overflowing with stuff refers to the clutter of your mind, the incessant thought stream of your mind, the accumulated clutter, the incessant repetitive thought stream. And that and the personality that I talk about, the personal identity and the thought stream are really go together. So you are familiar with that.

Now the difference between you and a unawakened person is that you know that there's a voice in your head. There's still millions of people out there who don't know that there's a voice in their head that never stops speaking because they are so identified with the voice that they have become it. There is no separation.

There is no awareness. There is no presence. Their entire consciousness is trapped in thought.

And that is the state of being trapped in your personality. So every thought that comes into your head immediately grabs you and possesses you and you're so identified with it that you believe in every thought that comes into your head and that's how it is. The simplest thing, the simplest thing, you don't see it clearly.

You see it through the thinking, veil of thinking, which is conditioned by your past, your culture, your upbringing, the country you grew up in, the culture, the society, the family, your personal circumstances, your collective circumstances determines the type of thinking that has you in its grip that varies from person to person and culture to culture. But the basic mechanism behind it is the same. They are all in the grip of the unobserved mind that is invested with a sense of self.

Every thought has a sense of self in it. This is what the word identify means. You identify with every thought that comes into your head and you believe in every thought that comes into your head.

This is the case if there's no awareness whatsoever, then that is your fate. Then awareness is the dormant faculty, presence, awareness, whatever you want to call it. That's the dormant faculty in you.

It's still dormant. And as long as it's completely dormant, you're totally in the grip of your conditioned personality and your conditioned mind. You are basically possessed.

It thinks through you. It acts through you. It is an energy field that has you in its grip and you don't even know it because you think you are it.

And for many, the beginning of spiritual awakening is to realize that there is this stream of continuous commentary in their minds. And that is the thing. Oh, that's interesting.

That's a thought, of course. But before the thought, that's interesting. There's the recognition.

It's the voice in the head. And the recognition is not the voice in the head, although you might say it after the recognition. But in the moment of recognizing there's a voice in the head, that's not a thought.

The recognition of thought is not a thought. The recognition of thought comes through awareness or presence. And awareness or presence is the higher consciousness, the arising new consciousness.

Wow. So that is really the meaning of spiritual awakening. By the way, in this first half of our gathering, I will be talking more about it.

In the second half, we will do more experiential. But even while I talk about it here, I would hope that if it works for you, there's already also an experiential realization of what it is I'm talking about. So there's the voice.

There's the voice in the head. And people say things like, I think. They don't think, because thinking is not a voluntary action for them.

So it's a delusion to even say, I think. You don't think. You are being thought by thought.

You are created by thought. There's that energy field. It's amazing.

So the master said, how can I teach you Zen unless you first empty your cup? Now that's a huge demand. If I'm full of clutter, mental clutter, how am I going to empty my cup?

I would immediately be enlightened if I could empty my cup. But the teaching points to something. It points to the word empty.

And that's interesting. That is an important word in Buddhism. And I don't think it's a good translation.

Who first came up with it? I don't know. In the 19th century, the Europeans started to translate ancient texts from Sanskrit.

And one person came up with a translation, probably of the Sanskrit terms sunyata, and translated it as emptiness. That doesn't sound so nice. It sounds like something missing or something like that.

So I have an alternative translation for the Buddhist term emptiness. So that empty is an important word. So remember, the Zen master said, how can I teach you Zen unless you first empty your cup?

Empty. Emptiness, my alternative translation for that is spaciousness. Spaciousness is a dimension of consciousness in you.

And that is what we could call the spiritual dimension of consciousness, the deeper or the higher consciousness, just words, doesn't matter. And that is, in every human, it's there. Many don't know that it's there because the clutter is so dense that they have no realization of the underlying spaciousness.

And that is why I say, in millions of humans, that is still a dormant faculty, so to speak. So the most important realization in your life, much more important than what you have achieved on the level of the world, whether your life in worldly terms is regarded as a huge success or a dismal failure, or for most of you, probably something in between. That's normal.

Sometimes you fail. Sometimes you succeed. Sometimes you move from gaining, losing, high, low, up and down.

That's the identity for most. So the clutter of your mind is there, but there are moments in your life when you become aware of something spacious underneath it. But you may not call it that.

You may not call it anything. It may arise, for example, in many humans who may never have heard of anything spiritual. They're still out there.

They don't know that a little bit of that is in them. But they don't know it. Little glances come occasionally into their lives of that dimension.

It's not enough to actually say that the spiritual dimension has awakened in them, but little flashes come up now and then into their lives. And that is enough. Those little flashes from that dimension come into their lives, and that is enough to keep many people sane.

And those flashes can come when they're... You might think when you go out into nature and you see something extraordinarily beautiful like a sunset, for a moment you go, ah, or the vastness of the ocean, or the sky, or the elements, the wind, the storm, and for a moment you go, ah, and it's a moment of intense aliveness and you feel, and then you may remember that moment a little later, that it was such a beautiful moment. Why was it?

Yes, maybe what you perceived was beautiful, but you felt something in that moment. You felt a heightened sense of aliveness and a deep peace and connectedness with

being, so to speak. Why?

Because that moment of sense perception of something vast or beautiful freed you for a moment from the incessant stream of thinking. So the incessant stream of thinking, let's say you see this vast, this incredible sunset or whatever, and for a moment you give it your complete attention, and for a moment you're not thinking about yourself, your problems, your problematic life history, or your even more problematic future. Actually, you're not thinking about anything.

For a moment, the stream of thinking subsides, and it goes, and that is without knowing it, you have a little flash that's come up from that dimension, and then the next moment, it may come up a few days later again, when you look into the eyes of a baby, one year old, maybe just in the street or in a cafe, and the baby looks at you, and the baby is one year old, and the eyes are like the baby's. And you know instinctively that the baby is not thinking about you, because thinking hasn't started yet. The words have not accumulated yet, the thoughts haven't started yet, and yet there's a consciousness there, and you can see very clearly there's an intense consciousness that's looking through those eyes at you, without judging you in any way.

And in that moment, for just a few seconds, you feel so good.

[Speaker 7] (4:41:40 - 4:41:41)

And you say, ahhh.

[Speaker 1] (4:41:43 - 4:42:53)

Why do you feel so good? Because at that moment, the baby liberated you from your stream of thinking. And again, a little bit of spaciousness opened up inside you.

For those few seconds when you looked into the eyes of the baby, you were not thinking. And the baby wasn't thinking. So through the baby, you are able to be in that dimension, and it felt so good.

And yet, spontaneously, they can arise. They're not recognized by people as ultimately spiritual, but they are. And so, many people, there are millions of people who experience those things briefly, but that's enough to give you a sense still of life is worth living.

And then there are others who are so burdened by their minds, they cannot even communicate with the baby. They cannot even perceive the beauty of nature anymore, because their mind is so noisy that they never... There's a total veil.

So they don't look at the baby like... They look at the baby, oh, that's a nice baby. They don't really see the baby.

[Speaker 4] (4:42:54 - 4:42:56)

Immediately, it's labeled.

[Speaker 1] (4:43:21 - 5:11:41)

Keith Baker asks, I have owned the audio version of The Power of Now for over 10 years, but I feel that I still get stuck around my pain body. There must be something very seductive about it, as I feel like I spend a lot of time in negative thoughts, like, what's the point? And, you'll never get past this, so why even try?

Which can lead to feelings of hopelessness and depression. I've read that emotions generate chemical compounds in the brain, which can be addictive, like drugs, so that it's possible to be addicted to negative thinking in a sense, and I think I suffer from that addiction. Do you have any insights as to how to break free and above the summary of the process for dealing with a pain body on page 33 of your book?

Laughter Laughter Laughter Let me just visualize my book. Laughter Laughter It's not working. Laughter Laughter It is true that negative thinking can be very addictive.

From my point of view, it is not caused by the chemical that's generated in the brain, although I do not deny that the chemicals in the body very often reflect certain things that happen on the mental-emotional level, but what comes first, the chicken or the egg? So if you become very angry, of course there are certain chemicals that are released in the body, and if you become peaceful, then they go. The addiction is not in the chemical, although I don't deny that there is a chemical component to emotional states, but it is the addiction to negative thinking, and the addiction to negative thinking is usually connected to the pain body, which is the emotional field that feels fed, fueled by the negative thinking.

So addiction means it feels, on some level, it feels good. If you're addicted to something, on some level, it feels good. If you're addicted to alcohol, the drinking feels good while you drink, not afterwards, but while you drink.

So if you're addicted, to whom does it feel good? Not to you, not to the physical body, because the physical body suffers through it, but to the pain body. This emotion loves to get more of the same energy by generating further negative thinking in your mind, and it feeds on it, because it doesn't get enough food through the drama in your relationship.

Either you don't have one, or your partner doesn't cooperate enough. So how this you are aware of these negative thoughts that you mentioned that are repetitive and happen frequently. You give two examples.

One is you'll never get past this, so why even try? And what's the point? That's another one.

And there are probably others. So you are aware of these thoughts, but it seems that

you are not aware in the moment that these thoughts arise. You are aware retrospectively.

After the thoughts, you realize, oh, there was that thought again. The question is whether there's enough presence in you to be aware in the moment, or immediately after, a thought of that kind arises to notice it, to notice also its futility, to notice its repetitiveness, to notice its pointlessness, its untruths, to notice that you don't want it, because you don't want it. When you notice it, you are the awareness, and you as the awareness don't want it.

The pain body wants it. So the awareness has to come in so that you break the link between your pain body and your thought processes. That is the key, is to sever the link between your thought processes and the pain body.

In order to sever the link between those, there needs to be enough awareness, presence. Only the presence can sever the link. The presence comes in, and so you no longer, the emotion is no longer controlling your thought activity.

That's the key. And that's the beginning of the end of that vicious circle that otherwise will take over your life. So, what is needed is for you to be there in the moment these thoughts occur, or immediately after.

And then immediately look at the thought and say, there it's again. And do not believe it. You know, some of you, or many of you might know, Byron Katie's work, and Byron Katie's work questions your thoughts, and that's a wonderful thing, so that you no longer believe every thought that comes into your head.

What's the point if you believe it? So what's the point? It's not working anyway.

Nothing works in my life. It's never, never has anything worked in my life. I remember these thoughts I used to have in my 20s, and even in my teenage years, for a long many years.

One of my favorite thoughts was bad things always happen to me, of course. Bound to happen to me. It's always to me.

Always bad things happen to me. And the strange thing is, they always did. There was one, my early awakening, an awakening, not the real awakening, an episode, an awakening episode I had, which actually to some extent already transformed my life in my teenage years, when I was 17.

And already, in my 20s I was unhappier even, especially the second half, but well, first half too. But But in my teenage years I was still, I had such thoughts like, of course bad things always happen to you. And there was a lot of anger and resentment about life.

And the first awakening came when a woman, we were living in, I was living in Spain with my dad, and a woman left some books with us. She was going back to her country. German books.

And she said, can I leave these with you? I'll pick them up again next year when I come back. She never came back.

And so we had these books. We didn't have many books. I started reading them.

And they were books by a spiritual teacher in a German, Swiss German, or German spiritual teacher. And for the first time I read that your thoughts have something to do with what you create in your life. And that was almost, my mouth opened in astonishment.

And at the time I was teaching myself to type on a typewriter. Of course there were no computers. So I had this old typewriter and I used his texts, the most important parts I copied as part of my typing practice, how your thinking, you manifest through your thinking, you manifest outer reality and how you can change outer reality through changing your thinking.

And I practiced it and it worked. My greatest desire was to leave home. And a year later an opportunity opened up for me to go to England.

And it would never have happened if I had not I know it was the result of practicing changing my thoughts. So that was one wonderful opening. And then I was fine for a while and then gradually I forgot about it and for other reasons more and more happiness, unhappiness, accumulated again.

But that was a temporary breakthrough, amazing realization. So be there when the thoughts happen, recognize they're pointless, they're futile, they're painful, I don't want them, I don't need them, they have no purpose whatsoever. So Byron Katie approaches thoughts by asking, is it true?

So whatever people say is that true? And in most cases say, well, do you know it to be true? There's no point.

Is that true? Yeah, it's true. Do you really know it to be true?

No, I don't know if there's no point or not. So it kind of diffuses the power of thought over you by asking the question it kind of it's like taking the valve out of an inflatable toy by asking, do I really know the thought is and you pull out the stopper and it goes Do I really know this to be true? No, not really.

So You and Krishnamurti both talk about the importance of choiceless awareness directly confronting what is without judgment. You also talk about the primacy of presence as

the way to transcend thought the improper use of which is the cause of our suffering. Another teaching respected by many celebrates thought and desire as being responsible for our evolution and the expansion of the universe.

While both teachings have much in common this appears to be an important point of departure that I cannot reconcile. Can you help clarify? Is that the same Jeff who asked the previous question?

Anyway doesn't matter. It's only one consciousness so So there seems to be basically two teachings he says and many people have asked similar question. One is accept what is choiceless awareness, presence the other one is using thought to create to manifest to transform Are they separate?

Can they be reconciled? As I mentioned the other day the two represent the two movements of the universe. One is into creation multiplicity increasing complexity of life forms.

It experiences itself as that It loves to create that's for sure because if you look around even on this planet alone how many life forms there are all perceiving the universe in a different way or saying the universe, the one consciousness perceiving itself through all these different forms in different ways. You could call it a dream, you could call it reality it doesn't matter. These are just words and so and then the universe also wants to know its own source and that's the return movement.

First there's the outbound movement and then there's the return movement. This might correspond to the big bang what scientists call which the universe came out of nothing nobody knows what that is it started from nothing and suddenly it expanded and went into creativity and my forms began to multiply over billions of years and then the story goes some scientists say and even in ancient Hindu mythology and others there's a story that eventually it will come together again and return to the one.

In that case it would be like the in-breath and the out-breath of God the entire universe God breathes out and the and then it all returns back to the source for some reason that we could not even fathom and even if we even start thinking about it what might the reason be you would never find it through the conceptual mind but that seems to correspond to what we do because we have a heart that also goes and we also breathe in and breathe out and we also wake up in the morning and do all our activities and at night time we go and then we go now everything is reflected on every level you are a microcosm of the entire universe so if you observe yourself you observe how the heart works, how the breathing operates how the sleep and wakefulness dreamless sleep dream state the so-called wakeful state which is not that wakeful for most people but here we have similar there may be certainly is a similar pattern everywhere so I'm talking about this because this is how the two movements are reconciled the universe needs both it needs the creativity it needs also the stillness and for humans it's not

enough to go unconsciously to the source it's our destiny because it's the destiny of the universe to consciously unite with source, source consciousness and that's why we are here so your life needs to be a balance a dance between creating and not getting lost in your creations what is the motivation for creation if you are already accepting of the present moment if you feel completely at one with the is-ness of the present moment there are two two reasons why you take action here one may be as a response to a situation that requires action so certain situations somebody may need help you can be, you can sit at ease contemplating nature and suddenly there is a human being who says oh help me do you sit there and say no I'm too at ease in the present moment laughter so a situation you respond to whatever the situation the present moment requires you to do you respond from within I was in the lucky position when I was a teenager we lived in I lived with my dad in Spain for a few years and he had gone to Spain to drop out and lead an alternative life and then he ran out of money and then when I was there we had so little money we had not even a fridge I mean almost everybody had a fridge but there in the hot summer in Spain no fridge, no radio no television of course you wouldn't even think of it laughter so basically just the minimum and I wasn't dreadfully unhappy because of that to some extent I accepted it because I was still young enough children find it perhaps easier to accept situations that they go into but normally if I lived in a place like that now I have no fridge I have only basic things to live with, things get I can't buy anything in advance I have to go shopping everyday because everything goes off immediately I'd rather move than be here and you can be you can accept that this is where I am right now it can still be fine but you would start looking I'd like to live somewhere else you see this situation has certain it can have a preference and why not have a preference everybody has a preference some buddhists might talk to you about or some masters say I have no preference whatsoever but they live in an ashram so they'd rather be in an ashram than be on wall street and work there so there must be some preference so this is one thing dealing with responding to situation and having preferences and then taking action another one is bringing about something entirely new into this world and that comes when you are able to become still enough so that you know what the universe or the one consciousness wants you to do if it wants you to do something it may take a while before you know that I lived for years doing relatively little except doing occasional counseling sessions sometimes only two a week and the years passed and I was just continuously just in presence on my bicycle chopping wood carrying water and the years passed and I spent hours in thoughtless awareness in London sitting on a hamstead heath three hours later I go home having a little salad and then having a counseling session at five could live on one person a day one counseling session a day and I wondered, my mind wondered sometimes there must be something else that I'm supposed to do and there was even slight moments of what am I doing here but there was nothing else to do than be present and just be go back to hamstead heath sit there again but there were long periods also of incredibly blissful states that people noticed even people who were not tuned into spirituality particularly say I can feel something, what is that there were great states emanation of peace but I wasn't doing

anything it was just that emanation sometimes waiters and waitresses occasionally went to little restaurants they felt something but still nothing, the universe still wasn't telling me what I was supposed to do and I believe the decisive change came perhaps I should have thought of that earlier there was a I was in I had moved out of London to Somerset and lived in Glastonbury the spiritual mecca that attracts all kinds of weird people including myself and just outside there was a village just a few miles out of Glastonbury I would sometimes go there like the English villages they have their ancient church sometimes a thousand years old a few houses around it there was an oak tree I would go to an ancient oak tree in the middle of the field magnificent and I had a wonderful relationship with that tree but that church that was always empty I went into that church and one day I went in and suddenly I had this impulse to say I want acceleration now I want I knew there was something for me to do I clearly demanded acceleration of my life purpose and then I went home again and for maybe three months two or three months nothing happened I'd forgotten about it already and then one day it came it came when I woke up and I suddenly I knew as a thought and a deeper knowing I have to move to the west coast of North America why? I don't know it wasn't just one day it stayed the next day it was still there the next week it was still there and then finally I had to leave couldn't not leave if I had not left I would have died so that was the first step in writing The Power of Now because I needed to be in the energy field of the west coast for some reason to write it and that's how the book started a few weeks after arriving on the west coast it started and then the acceleration it came more and more and then it became so much that I almost wanted to put the brake on but it was the power just grew and grew but it came because for years I went so deep within that eventually the outer movement into creation the outward creation reflected the depths of years of going within into just into stillness and deep into stillness so the outward creation reflected the inward movement it was as powerful out there as it was the power that was in the inward movement so you too will find that the more you align yourself with the essence the stillness within the unconditioned consciousness the more the power will there might be a time gap but hopefully not as many years as in my case there may be a time gap but the power that is within you that you sense when you become aware of yourself as the consciousness then flows through you and that is what creates through you not the little ego anymore so you don't create because you think when I achieve this or that I'm going to be happy and fulfilled no the happiness something deeper than happiness the fulfillment is already here now the true creation cannot come out of a neediness that's egoic creation that doesn't make you happy whatever you create eventually either will not satisfy you or make you unhappy that comes out of a neediness the egoic creation believes I need to attract something to me I need to attract that into my life the non-egoic creation that consciousness uses you as an instrument uses this form as an instrument comes out of the inner fullness so the creation comes from within to without it creates the outward from within rather than needing to attract something from the outside although in language you might sometimes express it that way you might say I attracted this or that person into my life but really it's the other way around you can only

create out of this fullness that you sense when you are in touch with presence so if you discover within yourself that a lot of the time you are in a state of lack of insufficiency, of not enough and you feel that the answer to the remedy is to be active in this world and achieve and do as much as possible then you'll probably find that ultimately that is not the answer to your state of lack in order to transcend, to go beyond your state of lack, of neediness, of not enough spiritual practice and spiritual realization is necessary focus on the realization of being it's only there that you can go beyond that state of lack which is ego go within and discover who or what you are beyond the person

[Speaker 4] (5:12:07 - 5:12:09)

so if you focus on

[Speaker 1] (5:12:09 - 5:41:48)

the awakening whether you are conscious at any moment, the important thing in any situation that you encounter in your life is the state of consciousness with which you meet that situation what is the state of consciousness in which you face whatever situation arises in the present moment that determines the next thing, how it's going to go on in the next moment, in the next, how do you what is, how do you perceive react to this, whatever is arising in this moment so whatever is arising in this moment the situation that arises they come and go, different situations arise is always maybe important, but it's of secondary importance, more important is your state of consciousness now if you could remember only that and live that that's really all you need so whenever you encounter any situation realize what's my state of consciousness right now, and there's a situation that perhaps you need to deal with, perhaps you need to take action right now, perhaps there's nothing you can do and you have to leave it alone, we don't know, but what is your state of consciousness in the present moment, vital question and in order to answer that question, and it doesn't really have a conceptual answer because you immediately know whether you are present or not that question can help you become present what is my state of consciousness right now maybe are there certain thoughts that are happening, that are telling you that something is very wrong emotions that are telling you that something is wrong there are certain thoughts that tell you you'd rather be somewhere else very common thing it's so common people don't realize it, some people live almost continuously as if they were longing to be somewhere else, but not here and now to get away from here and now this isn't right there's something not right never, and occasionally it seems right, ah I have arrived whatever it is that makes it right for a moment, it's an illusion I'm in love this is the completion of my life I've fallen in love there's a person who's going to complete me when you go to a restaurant and observe other people sitting at various tables you can tell if they're a couple sitting at a table you can tell whether their relationship is relatively recent they haven't known each other for very long they're in that state that they call falling in love the way they interact is very different from those who have been

in a relationship for longer or are married the ones that have just met have fallen in love, they are in a kind of state of delusion you can see it in their eyes everybody's playing their part it's a theatrical performance but they don't know it that comes to an end the latest when they start living together then the essence of all this is awakening the awakened state of consciousness and as I mentioned earlier not surprisingly this term awakening has been used over thousands of years since the time of the Buddha and before the essence of the teaching of the Buddha is to awaken the word Buddha itself means to be awake, the one who is awake the Sanskrit root of the word is to be awake Buddha is not a name of a person it describes a state of consciousness and then go to Jesus and there are quite a few parables that talk about not going to sleep about staying awake and these are not these are parables they are not to be taken literally obviously you cannot tell a person stay awake because eventually of course he will go to sleep so we are just using this analogy of awake and asleep in order to point to something that most humans are not yet familiar with to quote Jesus again from one of the gospels he said and this is quite a bit of what we read about Jesus teaching may not be quite what he said or distorted but a few things I can sense are absolutely literally what he said a few things here and there for example he said and what I say to you I say to all stay awake was that the Buddha or Jesus? no it was Jesus oh no he is not talking about the normal state of wakefulness nobody could stay awake for that long because there is something that pulls you into sleep so we are not talking about that we are using that as an analogy everybody knows what it means to awaken in the morning when you have been asleep which is a particular state of consciousness you are asleep and in sleep you have dream state and you have dreamless sleep you have those two and then you wake up you awaken in the morning and there is a huge difference between the state of sleep and the state of being awake everybody experiences that every morning suddenly you open your eyes oh completely different world you have just awakened it is a different state of consciousness so this analogy is used because there is something in ordinary consciousness normal human consciousness which really should be called unconsciousness normal human consciousness could also be described as a kind of sleep because it is totally conditioned by the past are there specific suggestions for cerebral helpers physicians, therapists etc.

to help us become present and stop thinking to listen better just prior to encounter taking deep breath prior to entering patient room perhaps so what suggestions for cerebral helpers I mentioned, I talked about that a little bit couple of days ago people who use a lot of knowledge in their work with others so if you are a certain type of spiritual healer then you would most probably not apply your conceptual mind in the healing situation but if you are physician then you have to apply your knowledge to the healing situation acquired over many years and so just to remind you what I said a couple of days ago or three days ago you need to be able to still use whatever modality you use your knowledge, apply it but see if you can also have your, the application of your knowledge interspersed with little spaces of aware presence sometimes that

happens when you listen to whatever the patient is telling you sometimes it may happen when you look at the patient sometimes it may happen when you place attention on a particular symptom and you might notice before you come to a conclusion about whatever the condition of this patient may be there is a moment when you are looking at the patient or at the presenting symptoms and there is a moment perhaps of three seconds when there is no thinking yet anybody to look at something first, in the first moment of looking at something you are not yet thinking most people miss that completely they don't realize that for the first two or three seconds when you are looking at a patient, let's call him a patient, client, whatever you are looking and before the before the mind begins to, the application of its knowledge to the situation there is a space of just aware looking and that many people do that without knowing it at all it's a natural thing to do, there is a moment of space but if you are aware of that moment of space of looking then it becomes a little deeper and longer it goes and that is you become aware of what already you are doing naturally without knowing it when you become aware of it it actually deepens and it might get a little bit longer instead of looking for three seconds you might look for five seconds before the mind comes in and that's ok, this is what this person needs and I need to do this, this, this and this is interesting whenever you encounter a new situation and not just let's take it beyond the therapeutic situation whenever you encounter a new person, comes into your field of vision, you are walking you are going around a corner a new vista opens up anything somebody is knocking at your door you open the door and then you look who is standing there and for the first two seconds there is no thinking, you need to take it in fast you need to take in the sense perception so naturally in daily life people have the tiniest moments when they are not thinking and there is always something something new arises in your field of consciousness and in the first few moments or in the first moment there is not yet an interpretation of it, there is only an absorbing it if you find you are particularly peaceful or at ease then you find there are longer periods when you are out in nature then you spend longer periods perhaps five seconds looking at a tree before your mind says anything and you go oh, this is so nice be aware in your daily life of the first, whenever something new comes into your field of vision there will be a moment when you are just aware of it and usually the mind tries to come in as quickly as possible because it does not like the specific mind does not like to be in a state of not knowing what is going on it needs to adopt some kind of position towards what you are seeing what you are perceiving so as quickly as possible it wants to come in with some kind of judgment or interpretation I need to know if you become aware of these naturally arising moments of presence that are very very brief then you can they will be there consciously and if they are there consciously they naturally become a little bit longer and there is a deeper awareness so catch those things in your daily life they will be there every time something new arises you need to look first and there is that space before the mind steps in and if you are a deep person so to speak then that space that precedes thinking is longer then you become a deeper human being if that space is incredibly short almost non-existent in some people then they are superficial they might have two PhDs but they

are superficial there is no depth to them well there is a depth but it is as if it wasn't there because it's totally covered up so a deep human being has longer spaces of no thinking before that person replies or that person this is a natural thing you can't you can make it into a practice, yes, too as long as the ego doesn't get in there and say I want to appear I want to be a deep person so I'm going to take a long time in answering any questions from now on so in the therapeutic situation also be aware of this so bring in the spaces and observe the spaces that occur naturally in that situation they will be brief in addition to the spaces that occur naturally in the situation bring in these spaces for example when listening to the patient just listen when you may also occasionally be aware of your breathing as you do so any way you can bring in little spaces give fullest attention to whatever you're doing you're preparing something, perhaps you're going to administer something to the patient if you're a physician you're preparing something in that moment there's another opportunity for absolute presence so it's an art to have your knowledge not completely obliterating these little moments of spaciousness in you it's an art that needs to be practiced otherwise you the effect that it has on you after many years of being completely absorbed only in your knowledge when you work with people then you live in a world complete conceptualization and you will no longer be able to see the human being you will see a patient you will not relate to a human being anymore you will relate to a patient or you will only relate to a symptom in a patient and some doctors unfortunately have gone that way because nobody has told them that another way is possible so perhaps many of you have experienced being with certain doctors who actually don't see you as a human, they see you as a patient or they're only interested in the symptom some doctors even hardly look at you, of course there's pressure of work, they have a few minutes to see you but all those physicians and other cerebral as the questioner says practitioners of course obviously you are here because you have already gone beyond that to some extent so you're not totally burdened by the acquired knowledge so that it obliterates everything else interspersed, so what applies to the therapeutic situation applies to anybody's daily life too you must have your daily life interspersed with presence otherwise it's just the human mind dragging you along this mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation now what you neglect then and what you continuously overlook is all the small things that actually make up the vast percentage of your life is all the little things that before are relegated to the periphery of your life what are those little things? well whatever, for example things that you handle in your life, things that you pick up and put there and objects around you the world around you walking, breathing looking at the sky looking at a tree seeing, breathing in the air, looking at another human being sensing their deeper aliveness all the little things that constitute life even if you are a so called VIP in the eyes of the world which is pretty meaningless, it's just a narrative and you go from one significant thing to another but all the steps that you take even if you get picked up in a limo as I sometimes do when I go for a talk, the organizers send a limo well a big car, a big room in the back, that's a limo and you can stretch your legs so then it's just very

little things you walk to the car and you breathe and then you get in and you sit okay well it's just you're sitting somewhere and breathing and looking you're looking out of the window and then you arrive at a venue and you take a few steps into the car and you sit again and then you walk onto the stage it's all little things and even if you're the pope or the president of a huge corporation or the president of a country, it's still the same life consists of small things all the things that look at just your relationship with objects, this is usually overlooked because every object is treated as a means to an end but if you live in a way that is more present then the objects may still be a means to an end but they are also giving just short attention just picking up a glass there is pleasure in enjoyment in even just looking at a glass and the water and drinking and to realize that most people realize that for the first time if ever when they take certain types of drugs like acid because it amplifies your sense perception and it shuts off your thinking mind and then for the first time you pick up a glass of water and you go oh wow so amazing so amazing I can't believe it and it is and then you drink and the taste is so incredible it's water, it's amazing it's liquid, alive it's alive, it's liquid no I haven't taken acid before coming here and it's just giving it your fullest attention without interference of thinking just awareness and all this the background then to that state of inner peace or contentment is all the aliveness of everything around you when you you pick up something put it in your suitcase pick up something else it's unfolded it's a nice thing to do taking a fruit maybe peeling it or biting into it the present moment in its richness that is usually overlooked because you're looking for something more significant but even the most significant thing, let's say you got the Nobel Prize can come to Oslo I think there's one Nobel Prize that goes from people come to Norway for that's peace so and then you stand on the balcony of that hotel that overlooks the square where the parliament is, I think apparently that's where they go and there you are I have made it you're just standing on a balcony looking and breathing and unless you live through and for a narrative in your mind that you completely believe in and that becomes a conceptual sense of identity I am such and such a person who has achieved this and that and this is all the story and that's me and a big narrative that gives you your sense of identity thought movement and then you feel bigger while you stand on this balcony and then you feel deflated when you step off the balcony or let's say you're a pop star what's the word that a rock star that's millions of people say wow, wouldn't be great especially youngsters wouldn't it be great to be a rock star you can do anything and people and of course they experience this in a magnified way, they are on stage and energy moves through them and then they walk off stage and they are regarded as gods by all these by the audience let me only touch you, I hope nobody does that to me but but let me only may I just touch you they say to the rock star and to the rock star then having in most cases not that much awareness they feel they are more and more like a god because they believe in the narrative that all these unconscious people have mentally manufactured for them and then they begin to believe in it and then there comes the huge conflict or discrepancy when they go off the stage and they sit in the green room or somewhere where am I now and then they have to take drugs because what happens,

there's a sense of a lack returns much more strongly than ever before, a sense of lack and insufficiency so I need another fix a drug or I mean to smash up my hotel suite that's what they do rock stars apparently and that enhances their sense of self a little bit more so people many people live for something that's going to happen in the future and of course you may succeed in your endeavors, this is a nice thing but it's not going to give you long-lasting and ultimate fulfillment or tell you who you actually are it's fine to achieve things, especially if they are beneficial but for humanity and the totality on the planet it's lovely to have that but even that doesn't make up your identity

[Speaker 4] (5:42:18 - 5:42:19)

most people derive

[Speaker 1] (5:42:19 - 6:13:34)

their sense of identity their sense of who they are from the movement of thought in their head thought identifies with certain things as you begin to grow up it identifies with the first possessions that you have the toys it identifies with the name that you are given that's me, your parents tell you that's you then the beginning of identification is the name that becomes the receptacle for all other identifications, possessions toys and you can see how painful it is once you have identified with something when it's taken away from you the child will scream if a toy is taken away because the identification has already happened with something and five minutes later the child might lose interest in the toy completely but when somebody takes it away it is extremely painful because already at that stage the child experiences the beginning of ego identity and how painful it is when the ego identity is injured or something is removed from it it hurts on a psychological level as if you had sometimes even more than a physical injury the pain you would experience with a physical injury and then come, the child goes up more and more identifications come people that you know, relationships you identify with your knowledge you identify with your physical strength your ability, look what I can do you can't do that but I can do that look what I know, I know that but you don't know that let me tell you, this is how it is opinions, you accumulate opinions about this and that and nothing wrong, everybody has opinions but the opinions become part of your sense of self, you identify with these thoughts that constitute those opinions so the opinions which are thought forms are imbued with a sense of self, there is a self in them, a me and you can notice that when somebody starts to question your opinion you get defensive or upset or aggressive or fearful you might even well not you but a very unconscious person may even become violent, physical aggression why? because somebody questioned my opinions even the entire religions that would in the past it's been like that in the middle ages Christianity was like, they will kill you if you disagree with the conventional beliefs what, you don't believe what I believe or we believe okay let's kill you ego, egoic identity with a personal or collective ego they are the two aspects of ego but ego is always identification with something and identification means it

gives you your sense of self, this is why for people it is so precious and they hang on to it and they defend it with their life it's that's all they know, that's me and it's a totally normal it's been like that for thousands of years ego in the past ego and in certain societies even nowadays the predominant ego is collective still whereas in western societies ego tends to be more individualized it started of course thousands of years ago with tribal egos, every, you had tribes and you identified with this particular tribe and you were nice to the people in your tribe but not very nice to the people outside of your tribe because there were less than you, all these were primitive rudimentary manifestations of ego but whatever it is, ego means you have a bundle of thoughts, predominant thoughts as I said, opinions likes, dislikes the story of who I am, what people did to me what I did, what I've achieved what I know, what I can do, what I possess and these are all really thought forms and they give you your sense of self, it's very normal and you cannot stop a child from developing that kind of identity it's a normal progression you can't tell a child do not, there's no such thing as possession, don't identify with that toy, it's not yours stop, stop, don't but one can as you begin to awaken you begin to see in yourself that you carry an ego you might see for example, that you become defensive or when somebody disagrees with your opinions you can even have an ego around the city you live in, the team sports team that you identify with, these are rudimentary ego forms if you have little else, you can a huge part of the identity can be your football team and then the others are your enemies who identify with another football team and then you fight it out on Sunday afternoons so you have different manifestations of ego but it's ego, it's a sense of self, you can have a spiritual ego some of you might remember that before you went beyond that you had a spiritual ego and spiritual ego means you have a sense of self that begins to form in your head, a self image of yourself as a more spiritual person than most others very subtle ego you can have an ego of yourself as egoless a self image that says I am one of the most egoless humans on the planet and it's hidden it doesn't necessarily explicitly say I am the most egoless person on the planet well it might do but usually it's more hidden, it's implied you look down on others who still have their egos whereas I I'm free of it and these are more subtle forms, it's this ego, it's more a more subtle form of ego than the person who gets into a fight against the opposing fans of the other football team soccer team whatever it is but it's the same the same mechanism is behind it and ego also you always recognize it when that it compares itself with others the moment you meet somebody or even just you see somebody in the street the ego goes into comparison mode and usually the result of comparison mode of the ego is it comes to the conclusion that you are either inferior or superior to the other of course it wants to be superior if it can but some it just doesn't work sometimes so the ego tends to select the thing that is most that is your strong point that's what it will then focus on in my case for example the ego that I could not develop an ego around a strong physical physique a person who is good at sports or whatever because I was a little guy who got bullied at school so the ego said what can I do what can I identify with and wasn't particularly good looking so it couldn't say but I'm better looking than you ok that doesn't work either so eventually it

sought refuge in trying to be more knowledgeable and educated than others so I started reading books and then in discussions I could suddenly show off my knowledge and show that you don't know that let me tell you about that ok that worked for a while physical appearance is a very common thing for comparison do I look better than the other woman, man whatever it is and then you look in the mirror and this is greatly enhanced these days by the technology that's available to us through facebook and selfies the original in Greek mythology the original story that shows the development, the beginning of ego was in the midst of Narcissus who was a young man of course at that time there were no mirrors but he happened to look into a pool of water one day this young man and he saw that he was so beautiful and he fell in love with himself that's where the word narcissism comes from so he fell in love with himself, there was an image of himself that he saw there, he fell in love with the image which to me means he identified with the image this is a pictorial representation of an inner process the image formation that gives you your sense of self which is ego so that was the beginning of Narcissus now you don't need a pool of water anymore you have not only mirrors more importantly you have your smartphone and you can go and then you send it out into the world you're not confined anymore to one person looking at you or two people you send it out into the world and hundreds of people suddenly see you and then you're waiting for your egoic feedback which usually comes in the form of little comments like cool I like it and if it's not you, you take a picture of the rest, you're in a restaurant and you're eating this lovely meal I am eating this meal me look how great this meal is that I am eating and of course many people who look at other people's posts feel diminished a little bit because their life is so interesting and then what you do, you have to also pretend that your life is interesting and select all those things that make your life look interesting in other words, and this especially young people, you begin to your life merges with a fiction a fictional image which is available to the public and you don't know it this is an extension of egoic identity that has become possible through technology very seductive but also extremely limiting it's a huge trap the ego of course is never satisfied not for long, it always is in a seeking mode because it doesn't feel fulfilled, it doesn't feel I am enough, it doesn't, it feels I am lacking in something which may be either money or knowledge or looks or relationship significant relationship all kinds of things I'm lacking in, not enough it's in seeking mode but as it's pointed out in this book called The Cause in Miracles it says the dictum of the ego is seek but do not find so it's always seeking because it's always seeking for the next thing which implies the future is extremely important for the ego it looks to the next thing there's a continuous reaching out an inability to be present here and now that's all part of the unconsciousness that I call unconsciousness is in this terminology complete identification with the mind and this is where the ego resides, it resides in your mind it is a mental formation, it is a kind of fiction that every human being creates for themselves and of course you get a lot of feedback the particular fiction that you create for yourself depends to a large extent on the culture that you grew up in the people you grew up with they will tell you who you are as a child and then you become conditioned by your

surroundings, the surrounding culture and your family and so on this mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation I only have one thing to show you or teach you, it's not teaching teaching would mean giving knowledge to your mind so the only real reason is to find the spaciousness within who you are beyond the person what could be more important than that all the ancient teachings pointed to it using different words and yet humans only a few people here and there never ever got it the history of humanity but now it's happening on a wider scale thank you I'm grateful for that so now let's just experience a little bit spaciousness for example now don't need to think here's the space here's the thinking and here's the space some people find it helpful to be aware of their breathing one conscious breath a breath consists of the in breath and the out breath and a conscious breath means as you breathe in and out your awareness is there on the breath breath is formless, relatively formless so it gets you closer to the formless consciousness to be aware of your breath this is the ancient breath meditation but I often say just one conscious breath brings some space or helps you realize some space inside you your attention follows the breath as it moves into the body and out and while it does that you are not thinking, you can't because then you are not following the breath with your attention and while you are following the breath with your attention in and out you become spacious so one conscious breath is a mini meditation nobody can tell me that they don't have time during the day to take one conscious breath from time to time everybody has time for that the busiest person and two is even better let's make it three and you went to a doctor for physical treatment not a single question about what about, how do you feel what is your mental state your emotional state, how do you feel no question just look at the symptoms and those traditional doctors would say oh no, there is no connection first question here is does the mind create a physical problem to distract us from emotional pain it is often the case that emotional pain that is not recognized when there is not enough awareness the emotional pain exists beneath your level of awareness and it can come out as certain kinds of reactivity in daily life so you are taken over by reactions to certain things that trigger that type of emotional pain that is in you that you are completely unaware of and emotional pain that is in total unawareness can very easily become a physical symptom it is transferred into the physical realm any kind of prolonged negative mental states which produce corresponding negative emotions affect the functioning of the physical organism and even research has been done on this and been confirmed that negative states mental emotional states affect in the long term affect the physical organism you can verify it for yourself if you are in a state of anxiety, thinking thoughts thoughts that create anxiety fearful thoughts usually not about the present moment the present moment is fine but about some imagined future moment then that affects the body, your breathing becomes shallow, your heart beat increases your entire energy field contracts all kinds of physical symptoms appear so there is no doubt that what goes on in the mind affects the body and again for a long time doctors completely ignored that, they actually denied it and you went to a doctor for physical treatment not a single question about

what about, how do you feel what is your mental state your emotional state, how do you feel no question just look at the symptoms and those traditional doctors would say oh no, there is no connection of course there is you can teach your child that there is a connection between their mind and the body and immediately think of imagine you are biting into a lemon close your eyes and imagine you are biting into a lemon and taste it and immediately you feel saliva accumulating in your mouth and there is no lemon there was just the thought of a lemon, so the thought creates a physical response in the body it's just a tiny example and then we have another thing that is totally almost completely ignored by conventional mainstream medicine, the so called placebo effect and all the drug companies when they test their drugs a certain number of test subjects when the drugs are given to humans are just sugar pills or whatever, they are placebos, they contain nothing but the test subject is not told the test subject is told that this is a new powerful drug and always there is a significant percentage of people who become cured or if not cured whose symptoms improve significantly after taking these placebo pills, in all clinical trials they have these results, not all of them, and sometimes the placebo is very close to helps as many people as the actual new powerful drug but this is dismissed, oh this is a placebo, so let's not look at that, because we are only interested in what this drug does, so all these placebo results are discarded and nobody seems to really ask, wow there is the most powerful healing agent here people heal themselves if they believe that they are being healed but they have to believe it completely, so you can see how powerful the mind how powerfully the mind can impact the body and if we could explore a little bit more what placebo means and whether this could become in some way replace conventional replace the taking of drugs and how to do that of course that moves into the realm of what spiritual healing but there are vast possibilities there for healing there are other factors that can bring about disease, not all diseases are caused by mental negativity or dysfunctional thinking anger sadness and so on all kinds of negative emotions, envy regret, guilt they all impact the body there are other factors that we live in a world that is full of poisonous substances created by the clever human mind, so we ingest poisonous substances all the time and there are all kinds of we are bombarded by all kinds of man-made radiations there may be certain genetic factors also but the fact remains that there is a very strong correlation between how well the physical vehicle functions and how harmonious or disharmonious the mind operates so it's everybody's responsibility of course to become aware of their the negativity that they harbor inside and of course as part of this teaching is to recognize your identification with thinking which creates those structures and you step out of that and many people will experience an improvement in their health surrender and presence often is also associated with the complete healing of physical symptoms surrender here means a space of acceptance of what is not acceptance of a disease there's a huge difference between accepting a disease which is not a good thing but accepting what is in the present moment what's the difference the disease is a conceptual form, a concept in the mind whatever it may be, let's say it's a serious disease multiple sclerosis do I have to accept that I've been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and I need to accept that I have

this disease called multiple sclerosis no, that's a concept all when we talk of acceptance all that is required is accepting whatever arises at this moment so if the something arises at this moment that you can feel that it's some form of disability or pain or weakness that's what you surrender to not an idea of illness just what arises at this moment and when you bring that surrender to it, then often healing happens because the energy of presence burns up one could say a large amount of karma of old stuff inside you, whether physical physical manifestations of it or mental or emotional manifestations in the presence of presence the past gets burned up so often surrender makes healing much easier, it makes it easier for the body to heal itself because healing no doctor heals you when healing happens it's always the intelligence that inhabits the body produces the healing and that can function more powerfully when you surrender to life and surrender to life is in the now so never to the idea of illness but just what is now

[Speaker 5] (6:14:04 - 6:15:53)

I wrote you a note in which I explained a dark night of the soul experience that I'd had a number of years ago in which really culminated in a catastrophic breakdown of sorts for me maybe sort of similar to what I read in your book The Power of Now and during that there was a cathartic release I was in the fetal position on the floor crying frankly and there was an utter and complete surrender this is sort of a humbling story but after that happened I was sitting in an empty room in a chair and there was this unbelievable post cathartic stillness that took over me and there was complete silence and then the strangest thing started happening I began witnessing my thoughts and as I witnessed my thoughts I had this unbelievably simple awareness that if I'm witnessing my thoughts, what am I?

and that completely changed my life. I can't even begin to tell you what happened after that awareness happened and then one thing led to another and then there was a point where I started realizing that what I am I couldn't find a boundary for and so I was sort of interested because in your book you talked about this in The Power of Now about the dark night of the soul experience but I'm sort of wondering about your journey from there through the process of realizing that this awareness that I am is not personal it's intimate but it's not personal and that seems to be the toughest part of it all to really get a handle on so if you could walk me through that I would appreciate it

[Speaker 1] (6:16:02 - 6:27:29)

It seems that I will comment but the most important thing it seems that what your mind is trying to do is to understand awareness and you can't really the mind can't so you cannot really come to a satisfying conclusion about the nature of awareness it's only awareness itself really in awareness awareness is known but awareness as an object or thought is not it and that's why the Tao Te Ching starts with the line the Tao that can be spoken of is not the true Tao so all that language can do is use pointers to point you in

the direction of awareness or language can point out the obstacles, the likely or possible obstacles in yourself to the state of awareness so that these two kinds of pointers, one is points, the pointers to the moon awareness being the moon so the words there's only this moment and so on, it all points to the same whatever I talk about is really they're all pointers they're either pointers towards awareness or they are pointers that look at the obstacles that may arise in yourself in a human being so that you recognize them when they happen so that the obstacles in the form of certain mind patterns don't take you over and obscure the arising awareness, but once awareness has arisen the mind is not useful anymore and you don't need further pointers in order to, the mind will continue wanting to understand a bit more about awareness but really this is where conceptual understanding comes to an end and I can call awareness personal and I can call it impersonal, it's not personal in the usual sense everybody everybody has a certain sense of I'll just say a few words about it but we're not trying to understand awareness we can't everybody has a sense of I-ness of identity everybody has the sense of him or herself as a hard to describe the sense of I now usually the sense of I is mixed up with certain mind movements thought patterns which you could also call stories they're thought patterns that hang together as a story and so your sense of I gets mixed up with a story thoughts in your mind and that is called the personal sense of self but the story really is nothing they're just thought forms, temporary thought forms, the real sense of I is the awareness inside the thought forms without which the thought forms could not even be there so the true sense of I is the awareness that got mixed up with the story or the thoughts so most people have a sense of identity that is of that mixed kind where consciousness or awareness has become entangled in thinking and then people only know themselves through thinking, they believe they are what their mind tells them they are and their memories and so on and that's called the personal sense of self but even there the real, the substance behind it and in it is the consciousness, it's not the story, that's where the sense of the preciousness that everybody feels that I am and where the mind says I don't want to lose that, I don't want to die this is what people are scared of they might lose themselves, they might lose that preciousness, everybody deep down feels that preciousness inside even people who are unhappy they're still here, they haven't jumped off the bridge yet they feel a preciousness still inside, hiding somewhere and that that preciousness is consciousness itself, it's not your story now that consciousness is not personal it really only becomes personal when it gets mixed up with memories and a story or expectations and memories so if you're dis- what happened to you then was the disentanglement happens spontaneously and so there was the realization of that which is there when consciousness is no longer entangled in form because the consciousness is the formless it's the unconditioned consciousness so that is called then self-realization in some traditions or it's called awakening in other traditions whatever you call it that's the realization of the formless essence of who you are and so the mind of course continues but there's no longer investment in it, some consciousness still flows into mind activity but the important thing is there is no longer a self in the mind activity and so because the self is realized as essentially formless and timeless so that's a beautiful thing now,

the fact that mind activity still continues means that occasionally the mind is wandering about consciousness and awareness and so the mind needs to then see that it is futile and since there's no self in it anymore it won't be too difficult the mind just needs to be told that it cannot you cannot come to any kind of satisfying or satisfactory conclusion about the nature of awareness or further conceptual understanding of what awareness is all about the mind would like that but there's a vastness in awareness and awareness begins to operate through your mind without needing your mind to understand more about it, because that's what the mind always says, I need to understand more you can understand a lot more about the things of this world, there's many things that you can still study, everybody can, there are many books you can still read things you can still learn there's always the possibility of acquiring more in this world, it's fine nothing wrong with that but as far as self-realization is concerned, there's no more, there may be a deepening or the aware state may express itself more and more fully through your mind your mind may have your mind becoming the servant of awareness can take a bit of adjustment from a self-serving mind to becoming aligned with the aware state may take a while, I'm speaking from my own experience not that I ever could explain awareness, you can't explain emptiness but the ability to say things, to point to give pointers to other people the ability to understand even what had happened to me when the shift happened that took several years to understand for example to understand that my mind had mind activity had become reduced after the shift by perhaps 80% in other words, I was spending long stretches from the external point of view of time I was spending long stretches in the timeless paradox paradox here because you have the outer and the inner and this was the reason why I felt so peaceful but I didn't know that my mind wasn't saying much anymore because it wasn't saying, I'm not saying much and all I knew was there was a deep sense of peace and aliveness and I was looking through, perceiving things through the sense of peace and aliveness so that even the traffic became peaceful and there was nothing wrong with the traffic and there was, or whatever and things that before I had resented having to live in the, I had little money, so living in a little room which in England is called a bedsitter where you have a little stove in a corner and then you have your bed and you have a seating area and then you share the bathroom with I think eight or nine people in different rooms and so before I didn't like where I was and suddenly it was great, it was fine because there was this beautiful light shining through the window the little objects on the table were full of aliveness and even waiting for the bathroom wasn't that problematic anymore except occasionally I had developed constipation because of the waiting but that in itself wasn't a problem either it was the same, or I had complained about going, having to go by tube or underground which is the subway in London can be very unpleasant at times and again there were blissful states traveling in the subway waiting for the train wow but it wasn't in the world of form, the form was perceived through the awareness but understanding, very little all I could have said suddenly I'm so peaceful, I don't know what happened that was all, that was my limit for two years approximately that was the limit of my understanding and so that's how it is, so what does take then perhaps time

from our external viewpoint is the alignment of your mind with the aware state and then gradually it can flow into the mind structures and you can speak about opening yourself up to awareness and many other things pointers will arise that may be helpful for others you may write a book but not too soon it's often the case that people write books too soon laughter laughter laughter so just let it mature and the one thing that you won't get much further in this conceptual understanding of awareness itself

[Speaker 4] (6:27:30 - 6:27:31)

and that's the answer

[Speaker 7] (6:27:32 - 6:27:33)

laughter

[Speaker 4] (6:27:52 - 6:27:54)

this ability to

[Speaker 1] (6:27:55 - 6:31:32)

look at things or listen to things or with other senses smell taste, touch as the awareness rather than the interpreting mind practice that in your daily life it's a primordial spiritual practice if that's your only spiritual practice it would be quite enough so innocent perception requires awareness it requires an alertness in the background of your perception without the alertness thinking will always overpower you the alertness keeps thinking at bay you remember the story I wrote about in the New Earth it's an ancient Zen story where the disciple and the Zen master are walking on a long journey through the mountains and then they stop for a little picnic and then the disciple who is still having problems understanding what Zen is all about he's only been there for 10 years laughter he asks the master I don't quite get it yet how do I enter Zen, meaning how do I enter the state of consciousness that is Zen, how do I and the master looks at him and says can you hear the sound of that mountain stream and the disciple no, I can't hear it the master says see if you can listen, see if you can hear it and that this is the point of the master to the disciple to to become more alert the master associates the alertness with the auditory perception there so the alertness flows into the auditory perception and as the master tells him you have to listen more carefully to hear that mountain stream and then the disciple at that moment the alertness, the awareness in the disciple rises and he goes and of course at that very moment while he's in that intense listening he's no longer thinking or trying to figure out what Zen is all about he's just and then he can hear in the far distance there's a tiny mountain stream that makes a sound and suddenly he can hear it and he says yes I can hear it and the master says that's it enter Zen from there

[Speaker 7] (6:31:32 - 6:31:33)

oh

[Speaker 1] (6:31:38 - 6:38:51)

this is a practical to show by means of practical example what that means, that alertness Jesus talks about it too, he says be so awake as if you were he gives the parable of a servant waiting for the master he doesn't know when the master comes he may come in very silently so you have to be alert don't go to sleep, be alert and wait for the master so the servant is sitting in that house the door maybe is in my version of the story the servant is on the upper floor and the master could come in any moment the master is very quiet so you go so the servant basically would be in continuous presence, otherwise he might miss the master again it's an example to show what that state of consciousness is, again using the analogy with associating awareness with the auditory perception you can associate it with other perceptions too, or with all perception or with no perception and there's no stress or strain in that alertness, there isn't a willfulness behind it, that's not it, you can't hold your breath and make yourself be more alert you can't I still can't hear the mountain stream you have to it's a relaxed alertness I'll sometimes use the expression vibrational frequency and there is a truth behind it, whether or not it's scientific I don't care by the way I can sense when, because I also experience fluctuations there's always a certain alertness in the background but sometimes there's an increase in alertness and sometimes it's just, it recedes it's in the background the awareness, and then the awareness the light gets lit, like a dimmer switch it goes and then it goes and it's still there according to the situation now the the so-called enlightened state which is the destiny of each human to reach although many won't reach it in this lifetime but that's okay that would mean there's a continuous background awareness Indian continuous and you many of you already have it sporadically and there may be some of you who already have it continuously in the background the only reason why you're here, because it's enjoyable but there's no point in asking oh, when is it going to be continuous for me? irrelevant question the only true question is is it there now?

that's the only place where it can be now whether it's going to be there ten minutes from now, who knows is it going to be there next week when I get home? who knows but when you get home it's now so the only relevant question is am I aware now? and if you even remember to ask that question which is a powerful pointer to awareness very easily you can step from the question which is still a thought I call it a pointer certain thoughts are pointers that point beyond thought so that says, am I aware now?

it's a powerful pointer and after that you're yes that can immediately bring you to that alert heightened alertness am I aware now? let me just check and that checking creates a rise in the vibrational frequency you can feel that and you can observe you can learn to observe in people it's not judgmental, it's a simple fact you can look at a person and to some extent you can see what degree of awareness is there there are many humans

who might never have heard of any spiritual teaching who have some awareness in their life they don't know what it is but it's there I can very often I don't like to be stopped and recognized in the street all the time but it does happen a lot and when it happens it's lovely so it's a paradox I try to wear sometimes sunglasses and a baseball cap a funny incident I was in a supermarket and I was wearing dark sunglasses and a baseball cap and just looking at the shelves and a man came up to me and said Hi Ekan Mir, shake your hands do people recognize you a lot? now I am saying this is quite but not infrequently I know a few seconds I look at a person a few seconds before they recognize me I recognize them I've never seen them before but I recognize them I know there is a fairly strong presence there and then I know this person and this is not a thought it's just a realization this person is going to recognize me and most of the time

[Speaker 4] (6:38:51 - 6:39:23)

I'm right reality itself

[Speaker 1] (6:39:23 - 6:44:25)

as you perceive it goes through the filter of your mental emotional conditioning from the past the non-conceptual dimension of consciousness as we could call it is already emerging in most of you and that is about the most important thing that could happen in a person's life which is the emergence of a deeper dimension of consciousness I would say that this is what Jesus referred to when he was talking to Mary in the parable of Mary and Martha and just to quote one brief sentence of just a few words he said to Martha only one thing is needed only one thing is needed my translation of that is there is only one thing in life that is of absolute importance and everything else may also be important but it is of relative importance so all the things that happen in your life and in the world may all be important some more important than others, your entire life situation everybody has one and everybody's life situation is somewhat if not very problematic you know, you're not the only one so there's that there is all the things that happen your financial situation, your health situation your relationship situation your work situation, your living situation yes these things matter relatively speaking, but there's one thing that is more important that matters absolutely and that is your state of consciousness and whether or not you have awakened to what we could call it sounds a little abstract but it's not, we could call the transcendent dimension of consciousness in you the transcendent dimension of consciousness now, I'm not going to immediately define what that means because actually it cannot be defined it can be pointed to, this is what these words are for but these words are not a substitute for it the words point famous phrase in Buddhism it's the finger pointing to the moon but the finger is not the moon so there's nothing that I say tonight that you need to believe on a conceptual level I'm not asking you to believe anything whatsoever there is what I sometimes call the two levels of consciousness the conceptual I sometimes call that object consciousness these are all the things that happen in your perceptual field and in your mental field thoughts,

thinking emotions, sense perceptions things arise things pass away things come and go sense perceptions, ideas, thoughts opinions, feelings, emotions all belong to object consciousness one object after another happens you perceive things and then thought objects arise it's continuously a stream of thoughts

[Speaker 7] (6:44:25 - 6:44:26)

now

[Speaker 1] (6:44:27 - 6:57:03)

for most people the stream of thoughts is such a gravitational pull that they get completely dragged along by this continuously proliferating stream of mental activity I sometimes call it the voice in the head it never stops speaking it continuously comments on where you are, what you are doing or takes you somewhere completely different in the so-called past or the so-called future one thing after another one damn thing after another, to paraphrase Churchill Churchill was talking about history history is one damn thing after another and that's true but for many people their conditioned mind the experience of their conditioned mind is just one damn thing after another because it never leaves you alone it goes so most humans who are not awakened or even awakening are completely trapped in their object consciousness they are confined by it and not only that they are completely identified with all the arising thoughts and emotions that continuously go through their mind and there's no separation between the thoughts and the emotions that accompany the thoughts and you, you don't you're not even there when you're totally identified with the voice in the head you are spiritually speaking asleep or another word for it is unconscious so an unconscious person in ordinary usage, unconscious means of course, you've completely lost, you don't know what's going on and this is unconscious in conventional usage, unconscious means in spiritual usage unconscious means completely and continuously identified with a stream of thinking and the emotions that go with the stream of thinking what does it mean to be identified?

it means you derive your sense of who you are from the stream of thinking every thought is imbued with a sense of self so you're identified it has you in its grasp and therefore if people conventionally say, I think, I think what do you think? as if thinking for most people were a voluntary activity, whereas for most, not you but those who are not awakening yet which is the majority of the population still on the planet for most that is, they are completely identified with the stream of thinking they are spiritually speaking unconscious and that is a terrible thing because then everything that you perceive reality itself, as you perceive it, goes through the filter of your mental emotional conditioning from the past so you never see anything as it is perceive anything clearly and most importantly there is never a sense of inner true inner peace, spaciousness joy sense of aliveness sense of connectedness with something that is deeper than your

historical person you are always at the mercy of what goes on out there and the reactive patterns of your mind so you are completely unaware of the possibility of realizing the other dimension of consciousness, which is not object consciousness but space consciousness I call it sometimes space consciousness now, what is space consciousness?

you cannot define it because it's beyond concepts you can know what space consciousness is in this very moment by becoming aware of the gaps between words when I speak I'm just slowing down a little bit so instead of being totally interested in the words you're also interested, although that's probably not the right word you're also giving attention to the empty spaces between the words because they are needed without the spaces there could be no sounds the sound needs the space to exist now that's interesting to be aware of the gaps between words or in this room, in this hall to be aware not only of the objects in this room the objects that make up this room what's in it the bodies, the objects that which confines and defines the room the ceiling, the walls, the floor this is the room you're not only aware of that that would be in this analogy object consciousness you're also aware of the space in this room now the space isn't something that you say oh it's there, or it's there but it is the most important part of this room is the space and it's a wonderful space but you cannot define it it has no actual you can't even say that space exists because exist means to manifest, to stand out exist, x means out, in Latin exist means to be manifested but space doesn't manifest it enables everything to manifest in the physical realm without space these things could not be here, so space is prior to existence space is prior to manifestation and that's very interesting so there is something in you which I sometimes call space consciousness that is prior to who you are as a person your personality and you can know it, not conceptually but immediately and experientially by becoming aware, either of the spaciousness outside of you or becoming aware of spaces between sounds spaces between words now how do you do that? how do you become aware of a space between two words there is no how because it's too simple for how, quite simply there is an attention in you, a field of alert attention and this field of alert attention is aware of the space between words and you notice that silent space what does it mean?

to notice that silent space it means in this brief moment of noticing or noticing the space in this room in this brief moment you're not thinking you're just aware thinking through thinking you cannot be aware of those spaces between words because thinking is object consciousness the space between words takes you to space consciousness so the entire secret of our gathering here of all spirituality is just one thing now amazingly I'm going to talk about this one thing for hours laughter I'm sometimes asked and I think I even wrote it somewhere what is the most effective spiritual practice in daily life or if I only had one spiritual practice what would it be?

what would be the most highly recommended spiritual practice and I would say observe your breath that would if you spent a lot of time in your spare moments and so on that

would bring about an enormous influx of presence into your life and so that's very quite simple another thing that happens as you follow the breath with your attention your attention moves out of the mind into the body and as the breath enters the body you also become aware almost inevitably of the inner energy field of the body I hope that well I don't hope anything but it would be great if as I talk about this you could feel what it is that I'm talking about so if I'm talking about verify in this moment what it is that I'm talking about when I say, when I talk about follow your breath then follow your breath you can still listen and be aware of your breathing at the same time it's quite pleasant and then you can sense as the breath moves in there's also a sense of aliveness in your body hard to describe you feel that the body is alive it may start with the area here because that's where the breath moves and if you follow the breath with your attention your attention may move a little deeper than the actual breath it may move into the abdomen so you become aware of an energy field down here and so the abdomen falls and rises

[Speaker 4] (6:57:05 - 6:57:19)

as you breathe in it rises and then it shrinks and you feel at first a very subtle

[Speaker 1] (6:57:19 - 7:04:59)

feeling of energy that pervades the inner we call it the inner body inner body awareness and there's an energy field that then it's not just here it pervades your arms and legs it's everywhere you can feel that the body is actually alive, you feel the life of the body from the inside so what is that? it is the animating presence in the body it is that the organizing principle that in a miraculous way keeps the body alive every moment, coordinating countless highly complicated functions of the body all the organs the chemical laboratories the unbelievable complexity there's an intelligence behind it that temporarily organizes the molecules and atoms in that way you are not doing it, it's happening so you you connect with that intelligence it becomes conscious and you feel you're not only aware of your breathing you're also aware of the entire inner body and it's not really the body it's something that's beyond the body it's a portal into something deeper but let's call it inner body it's invisible and so breath awareness if it can lead you into and become combined with inner body awareness and that's a beautiful, very powerful meditation that can take you out of any turmoil situation even if you several times you lose yourself in the mind again you bring it back to the breath and body and as you sit here and listen to me you may be able to be aware not only of auditory perception which is the words you're hearing but at the same time you're aware of the inner body so what is that it is the presence that pervades the entire body, presence isn't just a head phenomenon, presence is experienced with the entire body and then after as it becomes more deeper and more intense presence you're almost you begin to feel also that you are surrounded by a presence, that's a strange thing and that the space that is around you, we mentioned space briefly yesterday the space that is around

you is something very, very mysterious very mysterious and you can sense that there is this is a mystical thing I'm saying, no you don't need to believe it, you can sense that that space that's all around you is there, there's something to it that you cannot define it's not just nothing well it is nothing in the sense that it is no thing it is not a thing it is not an object but it's not just nothing there is a presence all around you and so don't want to talk about it too much it becomes too mystical for many people, but I'm suggesting this as to experience first of all the inner the aliveness of the inner, the presence that pervades the inner body, that is the inner body and then you can sense that the world around you also is becoming more alive especially the space around you, actually there is an alive presence in which you live that surrounds you and that presence is both within and without and when you sit in your room or here now you sense this invisible presence all around you what did Ralph Waldo Emerson the American, I would say spiritual teacher, 19th century he said we live in the lap of immense intelligence great great teacher by the way I highly recommend Emerson we live in the lap of immense intelligence we are surrounded by this intense this vast intelligence and if you know that there is a difference between just not knowing it and living completely unconsciously as a little misperceiving yourself as an entity a separate entity there is me and there is the rest of the universe no you don't end here you are you are extended into the vastness of the universe in this dimension of space so because there is outer space and there is inner space and first you become aware of that inner space when thinking subsides you become aware of that spaciousness within consciousness without the content of consciousness just the space you could describe it as like a room and you remove all the objects in the room and all that remains is the space that is the equivalent of when you come to a cessation of thinking but you are not falling asleep at all to stop thinking here means to rise above thinking we are not talking about falling below thinking falling below thinking you do that every night when you go to sleep or when you here when you are suffering from serious dead lag you begin to fall below thinking or when you drink alcohol the tendency is for you to take you below thinking or any most other substances I haven't tried all that I have tried very few substances you cannot pronounce doesn't on all substances but some substances take you below thinking it can be very comfortable for a while at least you're not being tortured by your mind for a while and so you puff away so good feel so good what are your problems I don't remember what my problems are it's and it's also funny sometimes

[Speaker 4] (7:04:59 - 7:05:15)

falling below could be mistaken for a state of enlightenment but then this is not the way we are going we're not regressing although

[Speaker 1] (7:05:15 - 7:06:18)

there is a desire for in every human being to become free of the self an unconscious

desire in every human being to become free of the self what the Buddha calls the self the egoic entity the problem making heavy person personality that heaviness I want to be free of that there's so much suffering that goes with it want to be free and so the drug taking these days is enormous in youngsters a terrible epidemic of drug taking this and because the truth is not being taught vital knowledge is we live in a society in a civilization the entire global civilization almost totally ignorant of what really matters we have knowledge a lot of knowledge but absolutely no knowing totally ignorant

[Speaker 4] (7:06:18 - 7:06:33)

of what matters and has lost touch with the with the source God if you like don't

[Speaker 1] (7:06:34 - 7:06:38)

always people misunderstand what that is

[Speaker 4] (7:06:38 - 7:07:09)

so presence within and without when I grew up

[Speaker 1] (7:07:09 - 7:18:54)

was a Methodist teaching and was sort of dry yet there was this prayer Lord forgive us our trespasses and forgive us those who trespass against us and when you open the door last time to the course of miracles and I came across that principle of the forgiveness and I had a question on that what is forgiveness is it different from compassion is it different from the Buddhist concept of bodhicitta and I don't know thank you thank you and again it comes back to the state of connectedness with being it's only from that state of connectedness with a deeper dimension of who you are from there it becomes easier to forgive because forgive means there was something that was done on the level of form by one life form to you perhaps another life form pain was inflicted or whatever it may be treat whatever the transgression is and it's only from there that you can see the relative nature of what was done because you are in touch with a space within you that was never hurt by that that dimension in you is beyond what can be injured it's only the form can be injured the psychological form somebody might have insulted you deeply the psychological form of who you are can be can feel pain or the physical form of who you are can feel pain and somebody inflicted that out of unconsciousness then recognizing the first step in forgiving is to recognize that this was an act of unconsciousness and you do not equate what this person did with who that person is and it's only from the place of connectedness with being that you can say no longer hold a grievance about that because you are in touch with that inside you that is beyond what can be injured if you are not in touch with that space then you're still it's hard to forgive forgiving means not to harbor grievance or resentment or any negative feeling about it and really that's only possible when you are connected with the formless

in yourself as Cause and Miracle says nothing real can be threatened nothing unreal exists herein lies the peace of God nothing real can be threatened means what is ultimately real cannot be threatened but what is ultimately real is not the form it's that which is deeper than the form that cannot be threatened nothing real can be threatened nothing unreal ultimately exists it just seems to herein lies the peace of God means in the knowing of that lies the peace of God but it needs to be not conceptual knowing but a knowing on the level of the depth of your being and then from there you can look at anything anybody did to you and say it's almost as if it didn't happen for a while, for example I harbored grievances against my father for many years because he was he suffered from enormous amount of bottled up anger and living with him as a child was like living with a powder keg or an unexploded bomb somewhere in the house and everybody knew that at any moment this slightest thing somebody said and usually it was my mother the slightest thing somebody said and this bomb would explode and the entire house would be filled with destructive energy and for a sensitive child, and any child is sensitive a young child, it's a terrible thing to live in constant anguish and an explosion could be happening at any moment whenever he's in the house so I had the ambivalent feelings of fearing his return home after work and wanting him to come home divided and that was expressed once in a dream that I had as a child and in the dream I had cut my father up into little pieces and put in a plastic or some kind of sack and hidden under the bed and after I had done that in the dream, my father arrived home and I greeted him and loved him and of course all this resulted even after, when I was an adult already, resulted in quite a bit of grievance towards him because my childhood was fearful and unpleasant as a result and it was only when a transformation happened inside me and there was suddenly that deep inner peace that I realized he did what he did according to the way in which life had conditioned him he had, when he was a child, he had an enormous amount of resentment against his family because of, and of course the story can go on many generations he was the seventh child his father died when he was fifteen and they took him out of the school they had to pay for school, boarding school they took him out of boarding school because they said we can't afford it anymore, but his sisters were still kept in boarding school and then he had to do menial jobs and every day his anger was growing and growing and growing he carried it the rest of his life there was not enough consciousness in him to disidentify from the anger he was the anger was using him it lived in him as an energy field and he could come up any time he was as much a victim as I was and I saw that after I had gone through the transformation and found inner peace I could see that he did he was a victim of his own circumstances, there was not enough consciousness in him to see what he was doing and immediately forgiveness happened, I didn't even have to say I have to try to forgive he never did, it was as if he had never done anything to me because basically he hadn't he wasn't even there, there was only the unconsciousness in him acting up and then as he grew older some of that anger dissipated remnants of it remained he also came into touch with some spiritual teachings especially the power of now that helped to some extent and so his ego grew less not didn't quite disappear but it grew less when I

was a child his ego was gigantic and it was continuously fueled by anger and an angry ego is something it's the the incredible hulk that and that so forgiveness happened naturally and very often you see that when an injury happens very often there's a mental judgment of a situation and actually beyond that mental judgment not that much happened, let's take a simple example um you arrange to meet somebody or somebody he says I'm going to help you with your moving, I'm going to help you move house, I'll be there at five o'clock to help you move with my car and he doesn't turn up and that just is as it is, now your mind then comes in and says he let me down he or he betrayed me or he was whatever the judgment of the mind is uh and it is very often it is the judgment of the situation that creates the emotion that feels injured if you can just be with oh he you said he would come but he didn't turn up, that's a fact whatever your mind wants to add to it gives you the sense of injury and strengthens the ego so if you can just be with the pure facts this is why all that stuff when people are talking about other people what they failed to do or what they did what he did to me he betrayed me well what did he do well he went off with another woman or man he betrayed me, betrayed me is an interpretation and the more you have that thought that he betrayed me the more you feel the emotion that goes with that thought and you feel who is it that feels that emotion the ego itself feels betrayed because who you deeply are, who you are in your essence doesn't feel betrayed the fact is he went off with another woman that's what he did is that all yeah that's what he did if you refrain from adding a story to it then you don't experience the this may not be this comes easy when you are connected with who you truly are then it is easy to let go of the unnecessary imposition of stories upon events the event is neutral the story interpretation of it is what creates the anguish

[Speaker 7] (7:18:56 - 7:19:07)

music music music music music

[Speaker 4] (7:19:08 - 7:19:25)

music reactive is karmic action karma actually means

[Speaker 1] (7:19:25 - 7:30:07)

action so when you react to a situation to a person whatever in whatever way you react then you produce in eastern terms you produce more karma so it's in any situation then what really matters is not the situation but your state of consciousness that you bring to it and that's important to remember because the world otherwise will seduce you into believing that what matters is the situation itself and then you react to that so that requires then a vigilance on your part which of course implies that there is already a certain degree of awareness in you otherwise there cannot be a vigilance so we are already taking for granted we assume all those of you who are here and listening to this in you there is already a degree of awareness and that enables you to be vigilant as to your inner state in any given situation so that your primary vigilance is towards ok from

second nature you become aware of primarily of your response to the situation and you pay more attention to that than whatever it is that you do with regard to the situation and so you realize attention so you bring yourself to attention and there it is and then everything changes as you bring that precious gift into this world it's amazing the world is and you become one with the entire evolutionary impulse of the universe which is towards consciousness and then you actually when you become one with that evolutionary impulse then you actually find things unfold in your life with greater ease because you become one with that vast movement something that wants to come into this world and you transcend the personal the merely personal so you can say that anything that arises in your life any so called problem or challenge whether to do with finances, relationships health living situation, job I think that's about it that's where the problems arise other people, a lot to do with the problems in your life probably large percentage of problems come through other people dreadful other people hell is other people example that's from the egoic point of view that can easily happen so all those things whatever is the main problem, so called problem area in your life the main limitation in your life health finance relationships job and so on meet it with that state of in that state of attention instead of the reactive mind that identified state and then look at the problem from there and then you may find that sometimes almost miraculously it shifts it may dissolve something negative may, you may see suddenly a positive side of it you may find helpful factors suddenly coming in and you didn't know how it happened or you may find that internally you transcend it completely so your inner state is no longer dependent on the external condition that is perhaps what is sometimes called detachment through you are free internally from the situation it may not have changed but your state of consciousness has changed although it does as I just said very often as attention arises that presence arises shifts happen much more easily or there may be a time gap at first nothing happens and that could be for a while and then suddenly the shift happens so external shifts happen more easily that way but also if they don't happen you transcend internally or action, the impulse to take action arises suddenly and because you know exactly what it is that is needed suddenly in this situation and then you change it through your action but the action was not a reaction the action didn't come from the reactive mind, it came from a deeper place, it is not reactive reactive is karmic action, karma actually means action so when you react to a situation, to a person whatever in whatever way you react then you produce in eastern terms you produce more karma when you are free of reaction you do not produce more karma which is unconsciousness you do not produce more unconsciousness in this world which in other words you do not contribute to the problem making that all other humans who are not giving the consciousness to this world they contribute to the problem making even those who have good intentions because there are many humans who have good intentions but whatever they, whatever endeavor they undertake you will find things happen that they hadn't foreseen and the good intentions turn into something else you can see it collectively, good intentions without a shift in consciousness just because the mind says wouldn't it be nice to have a more peaceful world yes, of course but a fair

world where everybody is nobody people are actually equal and wouldn't it be nice to bring that about says the mind don't people don't accumulate possessions anymore wouldn't that be nice and then exploitation comes to the end of wealthy people exploiting all the poor wouldn't that be nice let's create a society that does that ok, how can we do that ok let's work out some philosophical system how it all fits in and then we have a book called Das Kapital and then let's create a society on the basis of those philosophical assumptions it looks all great at the beginning and then as you get into it before you know it you've created another hell on earth and it all started with good intentions two wonderful books that of course I'm talking about the arising of Soviet communism and so on two wonderful books that show you how things go wrong in that way George Orwell Animal Farm and another less known novel, Arthur Koestler, Darkness at Noon tells the story of how wrong things can go and of course we have the famous expression the road to hell is paved with good intentions ha ha ha so there needs to be all these things are true the world where exploitation no longer happens but for this world to come into being there needs to be a shift in consciousness and this is why we are here

[Speaker 4] (7:30:32 - 7:30:34)

manifesting doesn't always mean

[Speaker 1] (7:30:34 - 7:35:29)

that you have a clear vision of what it is that you want to achieve sometimes that is fine and works but to be in a state of appreciation of life in deep alignment with the present moment in so that you do not you're not in an antagonistic relationship with the present moment anymore, you're just deeply aligned with the flow of life in the now and you appreciate all, everything that is and the things you do, the things you do you do them fully you give your fullest attention to what you do, that's another obstacle for many people, they somehow are not able to give themselves fully, they're not, there's something holding back, there's something that's holding them back you can sometimes see it with people on stage or sometimes singers or musicians, you can sometimes see they're not the full, there's not the full energy is not there for some reason perhaps they're afraid for some reason of they may be afraid of giving themselves fully, to be fully in what you're doing to give your fullest attention to what you're doing in the present moment is a very powerful way of manifesting but whether or not you have a vision that you project and you feel it's already happening the vision can only work if you continue giving your fullest attention to the present moment and to enjoy the energy of what it is that you are producing in the present moment that empowers the vision the vision is always, the point of power is always in the present moment a great obstacle for achieving a vision or any success is to be, and this almost sounds paradoxical at first until you begin to understand it is to have an excessive attachment to the outcome that's a huge hindrance, now you might think well if I have a vision of what it is I want to

achieve, would it not be natural for me to be attached to the outcome that I want to get there I want to reach millions of people with my music and I want millions of people to feel better by listening to my music, perhaps to get a glimpse of presence by listening to my music so you that's a great vision but the the the mastery of this lies in not attaching yourself to the vision so that you lose you lose consciousness in what you are doing and it gets dissipated into the vision which ultimately is a mental thing the point of power is always in the present moment, excessive attachment to the outcome, one could almost say any real attachment to the outcome weakens your ability to manifest so you can hold an outcome in your mind and then return to I give the example of a pilgrimage, let's say you're on a pilgrimage, life could be regarded as a pilgrimage or journey and you know where you're going, you want to go to whatever it is, your pilgrimage to a holy site, in medieval times there were pilgrimages to Rome and other sacred places, your pilgrimage to Mecca, pilgrimage in Spain, you can go on this pilgrim trail in northern Spain to Santiago de Compostela and you walk for many many days now the very purpose of pilgrimage is to bring about a transformation of who you are, transformation of consciousness the arriving is relatively unimportant, arriving at your destination is just a short moment and there you are but the journey is how conscious are you of the step you're taking at this moment if you're excessively attached to the outcome which in this case would be your destination then you're mentally you already want to be there, that takes away from the quality of your step at this moment now the step it's an analogy for whatever it is you're doing at this moment

[Speaker 4] (7:35:29 - 7:35:35)

and quality means how much consciousness flows into what you're doing in this moment

[Speaker 1] (7:35:46 - 7:45:47)

welcome to our gathering meditation talk as you may know I spent a little bit of time with the Dalai Lama recently and one of the most impressive things he said and he said it several times during those days when people ask him all kinds of questions complicated questions the impact of technology on the economy and the economic and this and that and several times I heard him say I don't know now you can look upon this as something a superficial thing, I don't know or something that's actually very significant because it points to a certain state of consciousness in which the realm of conceptual thinking isn't that important anymore and I could actually feel that many people felt love towards him deepening when he said I don't know people laughed and he laughed and there was an opening which would not have been there if he had given a very clever answer and sometimes after he said I don't know actually he said something that was meaningful and deep at other times he didn't but it started whether or not something came out of that not knowing the point of departure the foundation is that state in which you don't need to know conceptually and once you realize that it's a kind of denial of the self the mind made self because the mind made self lives on taking up

positions of knowing opinions, viewpoints judgments and the more one is identified with opinions, viewpoints judgments, reactions the stronger the self which already the Buddha discovered a long time ago that sense of me-ness, the me that's ultimately illusory and creates all kinds of trouble and problems for yourself and for others if that's all you know if that's the only dimension that you move in the mind created self then you will create suffering for yourself and others so to come to a position of, not a position a place of not knowing it is an act that from the point of view of the self looks almost I could say negative, it looks like a kind of suicide self annihilation who am I if I don't know if I don't have a position some mental position that I identify with, what's left of me so we come to the denial of the absolute reality of the form of me we don't need to go as far as some teachings do, some spiritual traditions they proclaim that to be, the whole thing is totally illusion they say and from a certain perspective you could say that, the whole thing of egos walking around this world going through their drama and then dissolving and then other egos coming back up and going through the same kind of drama and dissolving and the same kind of drama and dissolving so you are born and then you go through a little bit of turmoil here and there into one or two little happinesses and then that's the end but mostly of course while you are in between the birth and the death you are waiting for the end of problems and while you wait for the end of problems you are creating problems for yourself and others that's ordinary existence normal existence and so this act of self annihilation this is one way of putting it it sounds a little bit frightening self annihilation but all that's annihilated wasn't real anyway not in absolute terms it was relatively real one could say the fact that we are here is relatively real but it won't last for very long so was it ever really real?

if it dissolves like a dream if the whole story of me dissolves like a dream very soon in that sense it's very fleeting like a cloud so the vital question then is do you assert the self or do you deny the self can you live in a balance where the self is still there but you don't realize it not as ultimately who you are so when the Dalai Lama says I don't know and of course everybody projects something onto him he is the Dalai Lama so they give him a strong identity now his challenge is not to fall into that same illusion in other words people believe that he is a mountain and he knows his deeper reality is that he is a valley and that's your job to know that for yourself not the illusory self, the essence of who you are this mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation

[Speaker 4] (7:46:18 - 7:46:19)

now

[Speaker 1] (7:46:25 - 7:56:49)

when you read what Jesus said when you have faith faith is faith in the terms that Jesus

used is to be connected with the the power within you that is inseparable from the source consciousness when you have faith you can tell a mountain move from here to there and it will happen now there could be a kind of parable or analogy or some people might want to take it literally he also said as you know I've said before the one statement that encapsulates the entire secret about manifestation Jesus said when you ask for something believe that you have received it and it will be yours believe that you have received it, I've spoken about that at length in other sessions to believe that you have received it is to feel connected with the the essence of being where you anything else is that's the cream, everything else is the skimmed milk, so if you have the cream you can manifest anything in the realm of the skimmed milk now that would mean that you can entirely change if the statement about the mountain is to be taken literally then it would be saying that it is possible to completely change external reality, so called physical reality simply by the power of your mind and I believe that is the destiny of humans eventually humans will be able to simply manifest through the mind if that were at the moment to some you can manifest quite a bit not immediately you always need a little bit of time mostly, there is a lot you can do and even sometimes things that you think might be almost impossible, that is too far, that is possible to manifest, but there are limitations, you are absolutely right to what you need to recognize those limitations so that you are not engaged in completely useless manifestation practice aiming at something that is not within the realm of possibility for example, let's say I suddenly got it into my mind that I am going to participate in whatever capacity in the Olympic Games the next Olympic Games whenever they are going to be and I am going to win a gold medal in boxing or whatever or jumping or whatever it is and no matter how powerful my manifestation is that is not going to happen so I know that is an impossibility, or let's say I got it into my mind, I want to become the world's greatest ballet dancer ok now if I had been 10 years old it might have worked but it's not going to happen, that's for sure no matter how powerful my manifestation practice is so there are now these things are kind of obvious, that there are physical limitations to what you can do or what your body can do there may also be mental manifestations sometimes people have an image in their mind of what they want to be but I remember watching years ago when we still had cable television American Idol American Idol is all these people who perform, they want to be chosen as the next American Idol in all kinds of singing and dancing and so on and one is sometimes amazed at the discrepancy between what people thought of themselves how good they were at singing or dancing and how bad they actually were when they performed it's just, the discrepancy was just incredible they thought they were they were the potential greatest singer but they were just awful just, everybody could see they can, now that's now that could be that they haven't practiced enough, it could be that they haven't, that they forgot that in order to achieve mastery in anything you have to focus your mind and you have to enjoy what you're doing for quite some time before power flows into what you do so they have just a mental projection I'm going to be a rock star but then all this, the practice you have to live it, you have to live the music you have to live or you compose the music and you live it every day and you live

your instrument becomes part of your your very being and you live it and you enjoy it and then you go into the subway and you play there for a year or two and then you go somewhere else to a little bar and you play there, so many great stars have started and then you leave, and there was this book I can't remember the title he found it and he looked at various great musicians and dancers who had achieved great things he calculated that they had 10,000 hours of practice before mastery was achieved and something was able to flow through them that made them great, with the Beatles for example he examined how many years the Beatles performed in just little bars in Liverpool and in Hamburg they were performing in little beer cellars and tiny bars and he calculated and he came to the average figure of 10,000 hours 10,000 hours of practice and that's so very often the people don't achieve the heaven, the goal may not be totally unrealistic, it may be within the realm of possibility but what they miss is the intervening the journey towards the goal and they don't enjoy the journey and they don't want to the energy is not there to practice every day to do every day so that the power increases and flows through them now quite a few of those people they never they never consciously manifested something, the Beatles I'm sure it just was a gradual evolutionary process for them before they, what they created was very deeply inspiring I mean the songs are relatively simple but they have an essence, there's something there that makes them, they'll still be around in 200 or 300 years time there's something there that suddenly came and it wasn't there initially so are you able to enjoy the doing, the present moment really comes back to the present moment do you enjoy the journey towards it or let's say you want to become a a people have an image of what they want to become but are not able to give it attention in the continuous, in the present moment so that the journey must be joyful to be empowered so many things are possible now even people who seem to have a very bad voice, let's say this person could never sing, that's not necessarily true, if this person continues, it could happen that something will become through, look at somebody like who was this jazz singer, very famous african-american very famous jazz singer, who had this deep croaky voice the name escaped me right now, one of the most famous Louis Armstrong I think, was he a jazz singer? Was he? I think he was

[Speaker 7] (7:56:53 - 7:56:54)

and you would say

[Speaker 1] (7:56:54 - 8:02:39)

how could this person ever have a singing career, it's totally impossible but the strange thing is everybody would have said there's no chance for you, just do something else when he did, eventually something happened it didn't matter anymore that this wasn't normally regarded as a good singing voice there was an essence that came through him that used the voice and touched everybody so that was incredible if this person had asked anybody I want to be a singer, and they said of course what you can do please

think of something else so often it is the case and I don't know, I haven't read his biography I don't know what his past was, what his journey was but it's amazing that somebody who has such a bad singing voice can create such wonderful songs quite amazing so there are incredible possibilities that the mind would exclude by saying prematurely so many things are possible but some things are not possible often involving as the examples I gave for myself I think to get a medal in the Olympic Games there may be one or two disciplines that I could still be good at, who knows one could be the favourite Canadian discipline called curling where you push that thing on the ice it doesn't require too much physical strength so there might be a chance for me participating in the Canadian team of curling but I doubt it that's a little aside yes, knowing what is possible but without limiting yourself as in the example of Louis Armstrong he would have done if he had listened to others and said probably told him your voice is no good, if he had listened to others and he didn't fortunately and when I was writing The Power of Now people sometimes asked me what do you do and I said I'm writing a book spiritual book and they said what about I said it's about present moment, living in the present moment and several times people said oh forget about it, it's been done so many times this is something that's already been overdone, you should think of something else possibly present moment is old hat, just don't do it there's no point, you're wasting your time somebody actually told me literally he had read many spiritual books and said if you are writing another book about the present moment, you're wasting your time and I was writing The Power of Now I didn't listen to him I knew I wasn't wasting, I loved the process, it was an empowerment that happened, it didn't matter to me very much whether the book would be successful or not which was very much secondary I knew the book had to be, if I had not written it I would have become ill and I would have died that's how strong the energy flow was, if I had not responded to it I would have died or become seriously ill so don't necessarily listen to others, but yes it is true on the one hand there are things that are not possible for example physical flying right now is not yet possible, at least not in this dimension, you can probably fly in the astral dimension when you dream you might travel to the astral dimension and experience as I sometimes do that you actually lift off and you can, there you go but in this dimension I would not step off my balcony and jump off or start practicing flying I don't recommend it certain things are impossible and you need to just use your discrimination and look at it without limiting yourself unduly because many things that other people might tell you are impossible are actually within the realm of possibility and even certain things that your mind will tell you are impossible may be within the realm of possibility and again there's a fine line there important thing is make sure that you enjoy the doing of it and then you can, you focus on your destination but enjoy the doing in the present moment and then whether or not you even arrive at your destination becomes secondary

[Speaker 4] (8:02:39 - 8:02:43)

because there's such deep enjoyment in the present moment

[Speaker 1] (8:02:51 - 8:22:24)

I'm going to make a cup of tea and again this is just a little example or illustration of performing an action consciously rather than reducing it to a means to an end so the water has already boiled a little bit let's see if I can bring it back to boil you may have heard of the Japanese tea ceremony that's been practiced in Japan for centuries under the influence of Zen and the Japanese tea ceremony is to be conscious acutely conscious at every step of the action of making the tea so it's been perfected it's a little work of art the making of the tea is not a means to an end it's become a work of art now it doesn't have to be every time you make a cup of tea you don't have to perform necessarily the tea ceremony but to bring some consciousness into the doing into something that is actually a very simple but enjoyable action that is extremely helpful I'm bringing the kettle here I've got this interesting tea here, it's green tea and apparently it opens up in the form of a flower when you pour hot water over it and now we wait a little now in ordinary life you may perhaps while you wait perhaps be engaged in other things but if you can this little waiting period itself can be a meditation another thing they practice in Japan again under the influence of Zen is flower arrangements that you might have heard of this is to place flowers artfully into the vase it's very slow conscious movements it's done intuitively if it's performed by a master it's done intuitively so it's one could call that consecrated action consecrated action that's actually a term used in the Bhagavad Gita there's also a kind of almost say respect that you have for the objects that you handle you treat them with respect it's a strange thing perhaps for some people because for many people most of the objects that they handle are just a means to an end they wouldn't really give attention to the object itself but you treat the object with respect even the way you put it down there's even a way of placing something on the table consciously and their way of placing it unconsciously I have observed I'm talking a little while we wait for the tea oh yes I have observed in some in restaurants some waiters they just they put their plates on the plate on the table occasionally you find a waiter who actually does it consciously who places the waiter there's care in which the waiter places the plate on the table and it's always very enjoyable when that happens it goes like carefully like this consciously it's a high quality I call it high quality action now if you want to create something that is not an egoic thing but is something something you realize from the depth of your being that something wants to be created through you whatever it may be maybe you want to you're writing a write a book open a hairdressing salon create a retreat center or a conscious business or whatever you want to create and the vision comes to you or you may want to create it's not necessarily selfish a better place to live a place that is externally more peaceful than where you are now or warmer you may have a vision of what it is that you want to achieve and then you focus on that vision and the most powerful way to manifest as you probably know I don't usually talk about that too much because other things are more important I talk about the

foundation for your life but manifesting is a secondary thing that can be significant in your life and to manifest the most important secret to use that word I'm not specifically referring to a book called the secret but that's the but there's helpful things in there too as long as you don't believe that certain things that you want to manifest are going to make you happy the the power to manifest is in experiencing the the fullness of the present moment the undifferentiated fullness what Jesus called life in its fullness in one of the translations I want you to have life in its fullness he said and that is not stuff he's not referring to things life in its fullness is an inner state of being it is to experience, to know, to realize the beingness within you, the I am which is consciousness itself that is life that is the fullness of life in the words of Jesus the fullness of life is to realize that so that once you realize that, and it is consciousness you know yourself as consciousness once you know that then no future moment can possibly be better anything that can happen in the future isn't adding on to so if you bring together if you have a vision in your mind of what it is you want to achieve or create or manifest and you bring this vision into this sense of still fullness that you sense now and you bring that together that is the most powerful creative tool, the way that it's usually expressed, Jesus expressed it too, he said when you pray for something believe that you already have it but I think he probably used actually slightly different words but that's how it was written down he said he probably said feel that you already have it whatever it is that you want to have, that you think is going to be you need to feel already the feeling now how do you do that? by feeling that which is beyond the world of phenomena out of which everything arises which is consciousness so when you know yourself as consciousness that's already the fulfillment, let's say even an insignificant thing let's say you want to have a nice house let's just say if I had a nice house out in nature then I would be really happy I want to have a nice house in nature next to a little forest and then there's a lake there and I can walk to the lake and then how would you feel? okay I would feel exactly the way I'm feeling now so I want to live in Hawaii and have a deck behind my house with a very comfortable chair and then I would sit in there every day and contemplate the ocean well good luck how would you feel? what would you feel?

I would feel the fullness of life okay and you can't feel it now no, why can't you feel it now? because I'm not sitting in this deck chair and I'm not looking at the ocean and it's not sunny that's why I can't feel the fullness I don't have a house behind me that I say is mine so I can't feel the fullness of life now okay then do you think you're going to feel it when you finally sit in the deck chair? no, if you can't feel it now you can't feel it then because you will be again dissatisfied in your deck chair behind the house because you will get very bored and stung by mosquitoes and it's too hot anyway, I should have gotten a house higher up because down here by the beach it's just too hot why didn't I get a house higher up because there's a mountain just behind me, it would be cooler when you sell your house get one higher up, but then the nights are too cold, you can't sit outside anymore if you're not if you cannot feel the fullness of life on your bicycle and enjoy that moment tremendously of being on your bicycle you will not feel the fullness of

life when you're sitting in your Rolls Royce or Bentley or Ferrari Testarossa there's an over overvaluing of things around you that I need things to be in a certain way around me to be happy and content that doesn't mean that you cannot change the environment around you you can take steps towards changing it because you may have certain preferences that's fine, everybody has preferences, preference there's some spiritual teachers who say I don't know who I can't remember, but there are some who say I have no preference well they live somewhere, but not somewhere else so you must have a preference for being there unless somebody picks them up and puts them somewhere so you can have a preference for living here rather than there, yes this country rather than that country but while you're not there you can be be in touch with the fullness of life within yourself now and then it's much more likely that your external surroundings will reflect your state of consciousness as you might have noticed it always takes a while before I start to speak I often say it's good to start with a moment of stillness and it is but the main reason is that I don't know what to say and that could be a very uncomfortable place or situation to be in some people have nightmares like that you're on stage curtain opens and suddenly you're facing the audience and you've forgotten your lines but I don't have any lines so here's the secret it's becoming comfortable with the state of not knowing otherwise it would be awful what can I say now would be terrible and of course that is a kind of trust which I suggested the other day as a better word for faith trust and that's incredibly important to become comfortable with not knowing but what you do when you become comfortable with not knowing you enter the state of non-conceptual knowing but you have to be comfortable with not knowing anything on a conceptual level thinking in other words so another way of putting it is to say that when I come on here and then I sit I don't think because that's the state

[Speaker 4] (8:22:24 - 8:22:25)

of not knowing

[Speaker 1] (8:22:37 - 8:31:40)

and in the gaps between sentences or words I also don't think rather than there's no next sentence or word being prepared it just comes and that's for you I'm saying that because that also is a state of consciousness that you can enter and you're doing it to some extent when you don't label things when you step back from thought become comfortable with just being present and all these questions of things like self-esteem which apparently is a problem for many people either they have low self-esteem or they have exaggerated self-esteem or it fluctuates and books written about how you can improve your self-esteem and probably workshops I don't know what they teach you, maybe it's good maybe not but the simple thing is that in that state of no thought but alert presence all these questions about self-esteem resolve themselves into nothingness because you're no longer looking for some perceived value in a conceptual sense of self the personality and you can sense the power that is within you that is

nothing to do with the person and that's where your self-esteem comes from and it's not comparative in the normal state of consciousness self-esteem is always comparative how do I rate myself relative to this person and that person and that and what on what level external appearance strength, knowledge beauty, possessions status and of course there's always you're always inferior to some in one or two or three areas and you may be superior to some in another one or two areas but that's the power of stillness that's another way of putting it the power of inner stillness that is the true seed of self-esteem and you can't really call it self-esteem anymore but you realize the infinite value that you not possess but are because that is the essence that underlies the entire universe it is the light of the world and you don't compare yourself to others anymore you feel neither inferior nor superior the ego is always either inferior or superior so you might be surprised if I tell you I'm a small guy even if I'm standing next to a big muscular guy towering above me with a big ego I'm not thinking of anybody in particular at the moment but it has happened in the past I don't feel inferior just nor do I feel superior you might have a big body and muscles but I'm the spiritual guy laughter laughter laughter laughter of course it's the ego talking laughter this is a very interesting strategy of the ego the spiritual ego can come in and without you knowing it you still have a conceptual sense of self but it's turned spiritual it's a trap some spiritual teachers fall into too and you know it when they make certain pronouncements we touched on this before and that is they explain that they are superior to any other teacher for example either any other teacher alive now or I've seen one or two spiritual teachers or read about them who actually claimed that they are superior to any spiritual teacher that ever lived or ever will live laughter well that should cover it laughter laughter here or any other galaxy laughter laughter so the most important practice on your journey spiritual journey into the present moment the journey without distance is to become comfortable with not knowing which means to become comfortable with not thinking you don't need to demand that there should be long periods when you're not thinking just moments when you're simply looking, listening, perceiving or being and you don't know anything in that moment not conceptually but you access the source of all knowledge of all knowing and that is a way for the ego to gradually become weaker just gradually subside no longer runs your life which is what is the ego the unobserved mind it may still come in here and there it probably will

[Speaker 7] (8:31:45 - 8:31:46)

that's fine

[Speaker 1] (8:31:55 - 8:57:13)

so part of this is of course to be give more attention to the present moment because the more you think the more future you generate and the more attention you give to the present moment the less thinking because to be really present you don't think about it you just are with it give it attention I recommend the little things of life to be more

attentive to all the little things that make up every hour of every day every minute, every hour and give them more attention so let's start with some very basic things to enter that meditative state of consciousness because that's what it is all about meditation is about a shift in consciousness away from concern with doing and thinking and becoming aware really directly aware of the present moment and that's perhaps the easiest and most accessible starting point for most people to enter the state of presence which is the aim of meditation is to get you into that state of absolute presence in this moment and that's being becoming aware of being most people are always engaged in doing that includes thinking continuously and a lot of the thinking that people do is not very uplifting a lot of the thinking that happens compulsively creates negative feelings and a lot of the thinking is actually harmful and dysfunctional it doesn't serve any useful purpose but you just can't stop it or you think you can't but you can and that's of course what meditation is about to realize there is in you a deeper dimension of consciousness deeper or higher you could call it depending from where you look at it deeper or higher than thinking and that is the state of presence in the now so it's an amazing realization for most people that they can actually easily access that state of presence by bringing their attention into the present moment like now so I'm kind of although I'm talking my aim is to talk you so to speak into that state of meditation and it helps if while I talk you can become conscious or aware of the small gaps between words as I talk so you're just aware not only of the words of course you hear the words you take them in but you're also aware that there are little spaces between the words you just acknowledge that these are little meditative gaps so to speak and in order to be really aware of the meditative gaps you can't be thinking you're just aware of that space there is what does it mean aware there is a presence in that awareness you know in that awareness like now you know that you are here as a conscious presence without any thought telling you that in other words you become aware of yourself not as a person because to be a person you need to be thinking about you and your life and your problems and so on but there's a deeper dimension in you deeper than the person and this is what we are here to access so you become aware that really on the surface of your life there is the person with a past and a future and all the thinking and the emotions that keep the person going of course and so you're happy one day unhappy the next happy one day unhappy the fluctuations of the person it's quite normal and the person is always concerned with doing and thinking and the next thing or the past the future the past is never really present when you become present like now you realize that there is a deeper part in you there is a deeper dimension to who you are where you are more than a person where you are a presence, a conscious presence the question is can you sense feel or be aware of yourself at this moment as a conscious presence without which there couldn't even be a person so it's almost like saying the person is the surface of the ocean or the ripples or the waves on the surface of the ocean but you are not just the ripples or waves on the surface of the ocean you are the ocean so there is a deeper presence in you and to access that and to sense that in yourself to sense yourself as the presence a presence that is what liberates you from being completely trapped and limited in an exclusively

personal identity in other words there is more to you than meets the eye you are deeper than you ever knew by thinking about yourself and it's not difficult to access that dimension in yourself can one describe it?

one can give a few pointers let's see if that makes sense the pointers I'm giving you now let's see if they make sense in your own experience at this moment sensing yourself as a presence there is a peacefulness there that is really the essence of what is sometimes called inner peace the person the surface of the ocean the waves and the ripples of the ocean cannot be at peace for long it fluctuates, occasionally things happen to go well or yeah, I'm happy but it never lasts for very long and then the storm comes and big waves come or little irritated waves, whatever then you are unhappy but there is a deeper if let's say you are a ripple on the surface of the ocean with a name and a date of birth and a past and a future and problems and suddenly the ripple realizes there is more to me and realizes oh, I'm actually much deeper and vaster, I'm the ocean manifesting as the ripple and so you are the universe or the consciousness that underlies the sense perceived universe manifesting temporarily as a person you are the universe becoming conscious of itself at this moment in your life as a person you are not separate from the totality of the universe you are the universe the universe has or the consciousness that underlies the universe has given form to who you are temporarily in order to experience itself as a person it's an amazing thing and the universe here is in the process of becoming more conscious that's what the entire evolution of the universe is about it's consciousness so your life is part of the evolutionary impulse towards greater consciousness and if your life is not primarily about greater consciousness which actually you can build into whatever you do it doesn't mean you stop doing all I'm interested in is consciousness no, it needs to flow into what you do if that if your life purpose is not aligned with the evolving consciousness of the universe then what is the point of it all and then sooner or later you get very frustrated and things become pointless so you are here to become more conscious because that's what the universe has put you here for instead of universe you can use other terms you are more comfortable with them the universal intelligence God so right now in addition to being a person which right now is not important it becomes important again when we finish our meditation I'm sure but right now something else is more important that's realizing yourself as the presence coming into the present moment and feeling just being aware right now that you are conscious if you were not conscious you wouldn't be able to hear hear, see, perceive anything the fact that you can perceive things the fact that you can think the fact that you can have emotions all implies that you are conscious the meditative state is becoming aware directly of that consciousness sometimes the word that is used also is stillness right now you become still you become aware of just being of being that presence and that feels energizing you don't go to sleep you are actually alert and still at the same time and now you access an intelligence that is deeper than the thinking mind by entering that state of alert presence and then when you think again you are connected with a source of all intelligence with creativity you become empowered your

thinking and your doing and your actions are then aligned with a deeper purpose of the universe not just little egoic desires so all this is so terribly important and aligning your life with that presence so you need to during your normal day I'll give you a few hints how to invite that presence into your life which by invite I mean direct your attention to it because it's always there that really is what supports you in life and if you can be aware of that fear anxiety happen less and less in your life because you can feel supported by that vast presence which is not just your own presence it is the universal presence of consciousness you connect with that you are that that so on a day normal day you go to work or whatever you do as much as you can become aware of just brief moments of yourself as the presence in addition to being a person so one of the things I recommend is it sounds almost too simple but from time to time look at the sky for a few seconds you look up it doesn't matter whether it's blue or cloudy today today here is the early afternoon happens to be a sunny day look at the sky for a moment you are looking but not thinking you could do that with anything but sky is easier because there is this vast expanse that has some correlation with the presence of stillness within you so you look and for a moment there is just there is the sky and you can sense yourself as the presence that is perceiving and you are not thinking so there is a brief moment of not thinking but not going to sleep alertness without thinking that's the key to bring that into your life more often and don't believe when your mind tells you that you need to think and think and think all the time bring in gaps of just alert presence that's the being the rest is the doing the two need to be there needs to be a balance in your life between being and doing otherwise you go mad and a civilization that completely loses touch with the being dimension is going to self destruct and a person who completely loses touch with the being dimension is going to be very unhappy unfulfilled always anxious depressed or always stressed what does many people live in continuous stress what does that mean they are always focused on the next thing and the next thing pulls them away from where they are here and now and always there is the promise when I reach that point I will be okay but of course the reaching that point is always very brief and then they realize oh I'm not okay I need to reach another point it's a great thing of course to have goals in life but if the goal takes up so much of your attention continuously where you need to get to that you continuously miss the present moment which after all is all there ever is then your life is completely out of balance the balance is yes having goals you know where you're going that's good and but you are aware of the step you're taking at this moment and you're aware of the flowers the sky the trees life that continuously unfolds around you you acknowledge you honor the present moment and on a deeper level you are aware of yourself as

[Speaker 4] (8:57:14 - 8:57:16)

the presence

[Speaker 1] (8:57:43 - 9:25:05)

this question requires only a brief answer but it's maybe helpful I would like to know if the thought watching meditation vipassana would be useful in increasing my presence and diminishing my identification with the ego if so could you or Kim provide an example of meditation I won't provide an example of meditation but Kim wants to do it at some point of vipassana it would take quite a while vipassana is a buddhist originally associated with buddhism but there's nothing particularly buddhist about it it's directing your attention into the body basically in a very structured way and it's a good meditation it's basically inner body awareness and it's for some people it's an excellent meditation it's inner body awareness in a much more structured way than I do it when I point out the possibility of having your attention inside the body it definitely takes your attention away from thinking and so you connect with being vipassana retreats tend to be boot camps for meditation where you spend many many hours each day sitting in meditation and it can be quite an ordeal but that could be helpful too because either you can't stand it anymore and run away or you surrender completely it's not as pleasant initially as our retreat but it can take you deep it's not for everybody it's fine not one way is for everybody and it may well be as the vipassana teachers claim that that was one of the original meditations taught by the Buddha I wouldn't be surprised if that was including also breast meditation I would say that that was also related that is also original meditation breast meditation may even precede the Buddha nobody really knows I believe unless there's some extremely knowledgeable expert here and says I know so that meditation is called vipassana vipassana ultimately their opinion they are beginning to defend their identity sense of identity is derived from the movement of thought and so whenever somebody questions something that's connected with your thinking it is regarded as an attack on your identity why not start with a good spiritual practice especially for people in the back rows and it may sound a little bit funny but it's actually a very powerful spiritual practice and that is to become aligned with the present moment obviously this is I'm Mr. Now so I'm talking about the present moment become aligned with the present moment and refrain from complaining for example that you are too far away mentally a very powerful spiritual practice so then you become okay with the is-ness of things and the is-ness of things happens always in the present moment you might have noticed nothing ever happens that's not now one could almost say the word happen must imply present moment and most people completely underestimate the incredible importance of the present moment and of living in a harmonious relationship with the present moment and you would be surprised how many people in this world live almost constantly in an antagonistic relationship with the present moment and that of course causes a lot of unnecessary suffering and unhappiness so one of the most important things in life to be aware of is your relationship so to speak with the present moment and this is now of course is the present moment welcomed or appreciated or at least accepted for the way it is because it already is the way it is that's the weird thing about the present moment it's already the way it is no matter how you argue in their mind with it the is-ness of things is already the case and that's all there ever is in your entire life your entire life this is not something to just understand intellectually but to

grasp at a deeper level your entire life unfolds in the present moment that's all there ever is that's all there ever is is this moment and most people live as if some future moment whether it's a minute from now or tomorrow or next year they live as if some future moment were always more important than this moment that is implied they don't tell themselves the next moment is more important than this one no, it's an assumption, an underlying assumption it's a mindset and that mindset is a form of conditioning cultural conditioning that mindset by implication, if not literally always says there's something more important coming and I'm on my way to it and that is a dysfunctional way to live because you're never fully alive you never feel at home you're always looking for your home in some future moment or when you get old enough and you realize there's little future left then you think about the past more than the next moment which is why many old people talk continuously about the past so coming into alignment with the present moment brings about a shift in consciousness and this is so simple and yet so profound now this shift in consciousness is what our evening here together is all about it is about a transformation of consciousness in you and the reason why you're here most of you is that this transformation of consciousness is already happening it's a process for most people it's already happening in you and you're here because you know that this or you hope that this is an opportunity for deepening this shift in consciousness or accelerating the shift in consciousness there are other terms we could use we could say it is about an awakening of consciousness it is about a spiritual awakening and this is a term that in several spiritual traditions is used and has been used for a long time the term of awaken which implies that the ordinary the normal state of consciousness of most human beings is a kind of dream like state it is a kind of sleep but people if you tell that to somebody says what are you talking about dream I'm completely awake this is just nonsense and then I might say have you noticed that there is a voice in your head that almost never stops talking and commenting and analyzing and interpreting and judging and liking and disliking and all the time it talks and talks it is in your head and if it talks out loud and there is nobody there then you are crazy but it is in your head it talks about you about other people it has comments about things a lot about the future sometimes totally imaginary things that are going to go wrong especially at 3 o'clock in the morning when you are in a warm bed you can start thinking about all the things that are going to go wrong in your life and that is the voice in the head and most people are so identified with the voice that they become the voice they become the compulsive almost obsessive thoughts that continuously roll through their heads and if I say to somebody you are not awake they say what the hell are you talking about and I say that is it, that is the voice that keeps you asleep identification with that voice is a kind of hypnotic trance that you live in on a daily basis what the voice says varies from person to person from culture to culture it is the conditioned mind and the way the mind has been conditioned depends on the surrounding culture that you grow up in if you had grown up in a totally different part of the world somewhere in Africa or in Asia or Saudi Arabia or South America you would have different types of thought not all of them would be different but there is a different type of conditioning that goes with that particular

culture but what everybody has in common no matter what the voice says is that they are identified with the voice which means apart from the voice they are not there apart they are the voice they are their mental positions you notice it for example when you start discussing something with someone and you have a disagreement which happens very quickly of course when you start talking to somebody and then quickly you find something to disagree with and you then might notice in the other person it's always easier to notice the unconscious in the other person you might notice in the other person defensiveness and aggression arising and emotion arises they're getting upset because you are questioning their opinion, their viewpoint which they don't even know it's a viewpoint to them it's the truth that's how it is and you question it they are beginning to defend not ultimately their opinion they are beginning to defend their identity because identity is bound up with thought identity sense of identity is derived from the movement of thought that's and so whenever somebody questions something that's connected with your thinking very quickly it is regarded unconsciously of course this is why we call that the unconscious state it is regarded as an attack on your identity it's almost as if somebody was physically attacking you and of course in some cases in very unconscious people even a disagreement can lead to physical violence incredible so the voice in the head is what most people derive their sense of self from all the people who are not yet at least beginning to awaken out of that voice and so that is in the larger context for this is that the evolution of human beings and the evolution of the consciousness of human beings has not come to an end humans are not yet a finished product they are a work in progress if they were a finished product that would be very sad and a terrible tragedy if you look at human history up to now is that the best you can do it would be a tragic thing then you say well god must have made a huge mistake to create beings that create so much unnecessary suffering for themselves and for other human beings that they kill each other by the millions millions and millions just read the first history of the first half of the 20th century it's insane and that is the manifestation of the unconscious state on a collective level and then you have the manifestation of the unconscious state of consciousness on a personal level so on a collective it might manifest as violence between nations and so on but the same mechanism is at work when two people are having an argument and they are beginning to hate each other because they have different opinions you'd be surprised how many people when somebody expresses an opinion that conflicts with theirs whether it's political or religious whatever kind political is a good example somebody questions their viewpoint and immediately they have an emotional meltdown and the other is no longer a human being the other becomes the enemy and this has been going on for thousands of years but of course now with the miraculous arrival of advanced technology called the internet this dysfunction that is in every human being that makes other human beings into enemies because they hold different mental positions now you can get on your keyboard and send out your hatred towards all these dreadful people who have different opinions from yours and then you feel satisfied and you don't know that you are completely unconscious spiritually speaking unconscious is that complete identification with a

conditioned mind and the emotions that accompany the conditioned mind and it's the now complete identification with the conditioned mind is what in spiritual terms we call the ego the ego is a very simple definition the unobserved mind complete identification with the mind is your egoic identity and for millions of people on the planet that is who they, not who they are but who they think they are now that's an amazing thing so that has been an evolutionary development in human consciousness the ability to think was an amazing development in human consciousness it's of course bound up with the arising of language the ability to think it was not a mistake it was an incredible step forward in the evolution of human consciousness and has created civilizations and so on but there is a heavy price to pay as there always is in this world of polarities there's a heavy, very heavy price to pay for the power to think, the ability to think and that is that gradually your entire sense of self your sense of who you are becomes bound up with thinking and this happened over a long period of time at first humans started to think from time to time they were surprised, some anthropologists believe that when humans first started to think and use language, they do happen at the same time they were surprised that suddenly there was a voice in their heads talking and they thought a god, some god was talking to them and so they heard this voice go and kill these dreadful people in the other tribe okay and so but you may have, you may know that in many ancient cultures there's a mythological tale of called the Golden Age, you have it in India, you have it in the beginning of the Old Testament, the Garden of Eden and other cultures, as if there were some distant memory in human consciousness, in the collective consciousness of something a state a long, long time ago that was lost and that is the myth of the Golden Age and this of course some people say that's a complete fantasy, that's something humans are longing or some people might say, oh it's a longing to return to the womb before you were born and so on or it could be as I believe the actual distant memory of a state that humans lost and that was the state of connectedness with the totality connectedness with being to have the ability to be rooted in the being of yourself and that is of course how everything in nature still has that when you look at a tree if you can really look at a tree, really sense the presence of the tree the beingness of the tree then you can sense that the tree is not only rooted in the soil but the tree also rests in itself it is very still when you really give yourself a moment and contemplate a tree without formulating words about it, concepts about it, just be with it then you can sense that the tree exists in this field of deep stillness, it just is if the tree could speak it would probably just utter the ancient sound of ancient India which is

[Speaker 7] (9:25:06 - 9:25:06)

om

[Speaker 1] (9:25:13 - 9:26:03)

that's the Oh, by the way, just a little aside. As you know, the languages that we speak in Europe are called Indo-European languages.

And there's a link with Sanskrit, the ancient language of India. And it is my personal theory that the English word home is related to the om sound. And because home, the deepest meaning of home is not your external home.

The deepest meaning of home is to be rooted in the being of yourself.

[Speaker 6] (9:26:28 - 9:27:41)

My question's probably been answered three times. So, and frankly, I can't remember exactly what I wrote. So I'll sort of speak from the cuff.

Talk about the honest no, talk about giving and receiving the honest no in terms of exchanges. I just finished business school and thank God this is a totally different learning experience than what I learned in the classroom. So perhaps talk about exchange and how to give and receive an honest no in business dealings and maybe romantic relationships also.

So the actual question is, what, is there anything in this world that I ought to associate with an exchange the way that economics and business and profit making sort of teaching tells us that that like business, any sort of exchange in business, profiting. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (9:27:43 - 9:27:44)

Whether there's anything wrong with it.

[Speaker 6] (9:27:45 - 9:27:54)

Right. How to deal with an exchange perhaps without being in a business dealing without being taken advantage of or exploited.

[Speaker 1] (9:27:54 - 9:29:35)

Yes. Whether it's business or something else, the question is always whether, what I sometimes call the transcendent dimension is still operating in your life while in the background of your life, while in the foreground, you talk about business dealings with another person or whatever it may be. If the transcendent dimension is not there, then it becomes very problematic and all kinds of psychological self-seeking and so on comes in and interferes with what could be a much more efficient way of even doing business.

It's through self-seeking and seeking something, seeking some advantage through the other that a lot of dysfunction comes into business. So there are always two levels. It's probably easier to give an actual example.

Let's say you want to sell something to somebody, whatever it may be, whether big or small. Maybe you're selling a...

[Speaker 6] (9:29:35 - 9:29:39)

I work in the hospital business. Hospital services, for example.

[Speaker 1] (9:29:39 - 9:48:33)

Yes, yes. So you're always relating, there will be another human being there. You were talking about whatever it is on a practical level that needs to be discussed.

You explain what you have to offer and the other person listens or asks questions. You explain more. Can you, the question is then, can you sense, where's the word, empathy?

Meaning feeling your way into the other human being to feel or to sense the consciousness that is that which animates the other human being. The consciousness behind the words, not what the person says, but the consciousness that enables those words to be articulated. In other words, the essence of that other person.

Can you feel the essence of that person? But you can only feel that if you can feel it in yourself. So while you explain the practical side of it, you're also, there is an awareness behind, at the back of you, of this other human being and you sense the shared consciousness of you and the other.

That sounds perhaps a little bit abstract, but it's actually quite easy. For example, it just means you become very still when you listen to that person because that person will occasionally speak and then you're alert and still. And you begin to sense and acknowledge the aliveness of that human being beyond the function of that human being.

Because on the function level, you have this particular function, a role that you play, and this person has a particular function, a role that he or she plays. Two roles. And people kind of slip into their roles and they act out their roles and that's fine.

There's nothing wrong with that, except that is that all there is? If you are, if the other person is a client, here already we have a role, because the moment you say, my client, you've already, of course, put that person into that role and that person sees him or herself as a client. So he or she accepts the role and you have another word for yourself as this or that, another role.

If there's only that, then you really, the other person becomes to you a means to an end. And if it doesn't work out on the level of your respective roles, not infrequently, there is negative feelings. You see that with many people when the deal is not going to be reached, they get angry and negative.

And suddenly, before they gave you all kinds of things and now suddenly they become angry towards you just because the deal is not being reached, that they wanted, they

wanted something from you. They were never interested in you as a being, they were only interested in you as the role because through that they were seeking something to enhance their role. But those that are very good at, that are very successful even in business, tend to be those who are not primarily interested in the outcome of their particular role playing, but are truly interested in the human being.

They enjoy being with the other. That's perhaps how they perceive it, but what that really means, you can only enjoy being with the other when you transcend the limitations of your person, personal selfhood. In other words, the transcendent dimension.

Now that's in any relationship, whether it's an intimate relationship, business relationship, any relationship, is the transcendent dimension there? That is the question. I have occasionally met people who are so in business who want to sell you something and you say, no, not really, after listening to them, no, I'm not really, and they truly don't mind because they love interacting with other humans.

And it's often they that finally, people actually come back to them. They say, no, I'm not interested, I'm going to look at some other of your competitors. Fine, yeah, that's fine.

Why do you have a look around? And they enjoy the interaction in the present moment without making you into a means to an end. So that's the question, bring the transcendent dimension into the relationship and also then the fear that they might cheat you isn't there anymore because that's only, again, as we talked about earlier, the mind projecting itself and being suspicious is an important part of the egoic sense of self.

Suspect what are his motivations? What does he really want? Whereas if you live in presence, you don't even question people's motivations.

You just look and you speak. You don't care what their motivations are. I'm always surprised when people talk about people's motivation, I've never seen that.

Maybe they're right, but I don't see it. Don't want to see it. So in any human interaction, the two dimensions need to be present.

You as the person playing a role, yes, but you are not confined, your consciousness is not confined to that role alone. There is some free consciousness left, so to speak, the unconditioned in the background and you sense that and then that is you beyond the role, you as presence rather than you as a person and also the other. There's the other as a person with his role and then there's the other as consciousness.

So whenever you look at a human being, first you look at the physical and usually when you're in your mind, already the mind will judge the physical and then the next is what you see is the psychological self of that person, what the kind of how they speak, what they say. You look into that and so this is the physical form of the person and then you

see the psychological form of the person and usually that's where you get, most humans get stuck there. They see this physical and the psychological and in themselves also they're identified with their physical body and their psychological form identity, I call it.

So they relate only to form, roles, bodies, egos, form identity. Essence identity is the transcendent. So in any situation, can you sense your own essence beyond the person, it's presence.

That's the question and while you are interacting and conducting your business, if you can continue to sense your essence while you talk about the products or whatever it is, your attention is not totally absorbed by that and then the strange thing happens, people love you because they feel so good in your presence. Maybe not everybody, some may not get it at all. They're so identified with their mind that they don't get it at all but most people have some, a little bit of an opening where they can sense that you are present.

They don't have a word for it. What they register is that they like to be in your company and so I experience that occasionally, I visit an accountant and always, we love, I don't like, I have no idea what the accountant is talking about ever. So the moment she opens her mouth, and talks for 10 minutes, I haven't understood a single word but the interaction is lovely because I go there and look at her and we talk about the weather, how was the weekend but there's more than the words.

There's a meeting on a deeper level and while she talks and I don't understand, I'm just present. I don't even try because I know I won't understand it. Just presence and we have wonderful interaction.

She loves hearing from me and there's just one example of bringing transcendence into ordinary situation. So I believe if I became a second car, second hand car salesperson, I would do very well because I don't care whether they buy the car or not. I'm just.

Thank you. Something much more pleasant is our interaction at this moment. don't, whatever you want to buy, buy it or don't buy it, but I enjoy the interaction of this moment.

It's much more enjoyable than any future moment where you might buy it or not. It's just wonderful if you don't care about that. And of course that's already expressed in the, what I call don't care is expressed in the Bhagavad Gita, the ancient Indian sacred scripture, where it is called karma yoga, which means not to be attached to the fruit of your action.

That means not to be attached to the outcome, the mentally projected outcome, but simply to be present with the action. The fruit will look after itself. That's what it says.

And Jesus puts it in slightly different words. He says, don't be concerned about tomorrow, but tomorrow will look after itself. That's also because the fruit is the future

outcome.

So the beautiful teaching of karma yoga is to bring presence into whatever you do, so that the doing is not a means to an end, at least not primarily. There may also, a little bit of that may be there, a means to an end, because the reason why this person has come to you when you're a car salesman is because he wanted to buy a car. So there's a little bit present of that reason, but the true reason is the human interaction.

If that comes the primary thing, then all these relationships are enjoyable in themselves. And the amazing thing is the fruit of the action is actually much more bountiful when you are not looking to it. The bounty comes of itself because you give your fullest attention to the present moment.

You don't have a large percentage of your attention where you want to get to, the fruit of the action. So you lose power then. You lose not egoic power, but true spiritual power.

When you take your attention into this is what I want, then a lot of your attention is there, and then you are interacting there as a means towards getting there. It just doesn't work. So really anything you do can become karma yoga, it can become a spiritual practice.

That's the beauty of it, by letting go of attachment to the outcome. A huge amount of conflict disappears from your life, totally unnecessary but very normal conflict, when you let go of attachment to the fruit of your action, of the outcome, then you can just be with the present moment. Because an enormous amount of conflict is generated by people who are attached to the outcome.

Even just humans letting go of that, the amount of conflict on the planet would be reduced enormously. But we don't have to wait for others to do it, we have to do it for ourselves. So experience the freedom that comes when you let go of attachment to the outcome of what you're doing.

Then you can truly give your fullest attention to the doing, and there's joy in that, there's a liveness in that. So your whole life becomes a spiritual practice. Your entire life then becomes the spiritual practice, and it becomes increasingly present moment centred.

That's where the power is. And it's in you, but it's not of you, not the form of you. Just wonderful.

So happy practice, and when things arise, negativity and upset or whatever arises, often you may ask yourself, am I attached to the outcome here, what I want to come of this situation? Or am I giving my fullest attention to that? The moment you're attached to the outcome, ultimately you suffer.

You suffer. And some people still need that, they're not ready to hear, let go of the

attachment to the outcome, they're not ready to hear it and need a bit more suffering. As long as you need suffering, you'll get it.

For many people suffering is their spiritual teacher, and eventually it awakens you. When you've suffered enough, and then at that moment when you're ready to not suffer anymore, you've had enough of it, something comes into your life that shows you another way. It could be a book, it could be something you overhear on the radio or television, a comment, or you meet somebody who says something, or you walk in a bookstore and the Power of Now falls off the shelf as you walk.

Which actually happened to one person who told me that story. She walked in and the Power of Now fell off the shelf and she picked it up, and it changed her life. This is why there's a saying, when the student is ready, the teacher appears.

And that's always the case. So don't get too concerned if you know people who you're hoping and wanting that they are ready to hear what you're saying or to get it, and they don't, it's fine, they will in time. If they don't, just a little bit more, they need a little bit more of that teacher that's called suffering.

The most popular spiritual teacher on the planet. The greatest guru. No doubt about that.

A moment of stillness, although the stillness has been there in the background all the time.

Eckhart Tolle Talk YouTube 16

[Speaker 1] (1:28 - 6:28)

In this lecture, we are going to look at the relationship between quantum mechanics and In quantum mechanics, quantum mechanics is defined as the relationship between quantum Quantum mechanics is defined as the relationship between quantum mechanics and quantum Your state of consciousness is the most important factor in your life. Not what happens to you externally, but your state of consciousness determines how you perceive the world, what actions you take, how you react, and how you behave. to circumstances and events, your relationships with people and other life forms.

It is, in other words, primary. The primary factor in your life is not the events or whatever circumstances of your life may be, successes, failures, and so on, but your state of consciousness. So you should give your state of consciousness in the present moment, that's when it arises, your consciousness inseparable from the present moment, give it your fullest attention.

It is more important than anything you do externally. And in fact, what you do arises out of your consciousness. So wise or skillful action, action that is helpful and does not create further suffering, further problems, arises out of state that is non-egoic, the state that we may call presence or awareness.

For thousands of years, humans have been trapped in egoic consciousness, and all the ancient spiritual teachings and religions have stressed the fact that there's something dysfunctional within human consciousness, which in many ways is a wonderful thing and quite miraculous, but there's an element of, a strong element of dysfunction in human consciousness that was already there thousands of years ago.

It now is becoming intensified and is amplified by our scientific and technological knowledge. The Buddha stressed the fact that you are condemned to a life of ultimately suffering in one way or another, unless you awaken. So the Buddha pointed to the possibility of awakening, which is a shift into the state of presence out of the egoic state.

And that will change the way in which you experience your life and how you affect others. And in the Christian teachings, the term salvation is often used. So Jesus points to the possibility of salvation because there's something not right.

Jesus said, for example, you are the slaves of sin. Sin, literal translation of the word as used in the Greek Old Testament, New Testament, is missing the mark of human existence. So you fail, there's a failure, missing the mark like an archer who misses the mark.

That's sin, the slaves of sin. And sin is therefore unconsciousness. The destiny of humans

is to evolve into the awakened consciousness.

And this is why I am offering you here some doorways into the awakened state.

[Speaker 5] (6:44 - 7:14)

Manifestation, creating things consciously is important, but it's not of primary importance.

[Speaker 1] (7:14 - 9:41)

It is of secondary importance. Important enough, but there's something that's of primary importance, and that is to become conscious of your connectedness with, now, whatever term you want to use to point to it, your connectedness with, your oneness with, that which transcends all manifestation, that which transcends the world of physical forms, also transcends the world of mental forms, emotional forms. It transcends your identity as a person.

To connect with that, connect implies a duality, so it's not really connect. It's to become aware of your oneness with a deeper realm of being. And here, this is a good word.

Being, to become aware of your essential beingness, your essential identity as the I am, which is nothing to do with any mental concept. Mental concepts are also in the realm of forms, of the manifested realm, or sometimes in philosophy, it's called the phenomenal realm. The realm of phenomena, things happen, they arise, they pass away, and then interesting things continuously arise in your personal life and collectively.

There's infinite creativity at work. Just listen to the news tonight, and you see how infinitely creative the universe is in creating extremely challenging problems and situations. The challenges ultimately seem to be a great obstacle in one's life, whether they are of a personal kind or collective kind, and sometimes the two cannot be separated.

[Speaker 2] (9:43 - 10:06)

These often seem to be the greatest obstacle, but as you come to deeper realizations, you begin to see that the challenges are actually a necessary part of finding the path to transcendence.

[Speaker 1] (10:07 - 10:13)

The challenges push you into awakening.

[Speaker 5] (10:14 - 10:20)

They force you, eventually, they force you to awaken. So it's all fine.

[Speaker 1] (10:28 - 20:12)

The most important thing is the realization of the importance of being, which is also the foundation for any kind of manifestation you want to do. I sometimes use this weird analogy. It came to me years ago when I was in meditation.

I was just in a space of thoughtless awareness for quite a while, just sense the beingness of myself. Which is one with the being of the universe. And then I opened my eyes and I started becoming aware of sense perceptions again.

And it very clearly saw, I was actually sitting in a park in London many years ago. And then I looked around, I saw the trees and people in there and the grass and the sky. And then this weird analogy came to me.

It felt like whatever I was perceiving through the senses was a skimmed milk. And what I had just come out of and realized was the cream that is being. Everything arises out of the being.

The being gives rise to forms. The being itself is formless. And so become aware of the cream and then you realize whatever you perceive with your senses, the phenomenal realm is the skimmed milk.

It's one with, of course, skimmed milk is not separate from the cream. It's just thin. It's differentiated kind of.

There's other things in it, more water, but let's not take this too far. This analogy, there's the, so when you realize the I am, and I'm not just, hopefully not just talking about it because as I'm pointing to it, it may be possible for you to verify in your own experience, if only a little bit, verify what it is that I'm pointing to so that it doesn't remain a mere concept. Your own spiritual awakening came about spontaneously while you were in the midst of a depression.

Now you teach people various approaches to awakening, such as paying attention to the inner body. But since your own awakening happened on its own accord, not because of techniques or approaches, what makes you think that what you are teaching will actually work for people since you did not use any of these approaches to awaken? If awakening happens spontaneously, why meditate?

Why pay attention to the inner body? Why invite awakening in any way? Why indeed?

Now you may have noticed I have never said to anybody, you should listen to me or you should pay attention to the inner body or you should be conscious or whatever. But I have never said to anybody, for some people, the awakening happens spontaneously, very quickly. For other people, the awakening is a more gradual process.

And all the things I mentioned in the question, in paying attention to the inner body, meditate, any kind of spiritual work is not separate from the awakening, but it's part of the awakening. It is the awakening consciousness that makes you do these things. It is not something separate from the awakening process, but part of the awakening process.

If you come here more than once, you're awakening. Once could be a mistake. Or if you read an entire book, an entire spiritual book that's truly empowered by spirit and you're enjoying it, you're awakening.

Now you could read a few pages and hate it or you could read an entire book because you had to write a review about it and hate it. That's possible. So there are some exceptions to this, but then you're not enjoying it.

So we can't separate the awakening from what is happening to you right now. You would not be drawn to this if the awakening were not happening. So in other words, you are awakening.

And if you are awakening, then you may feel that a pull towards that, but the pull is not so much, the mind may misinterpret it. It may say, I need to become fully awake. But you're awakening already, right?

It's already happening. That's why you're here and why you're listening. So we can't really separate that.

And another similar question, it's almost the same question as this, is do we do something? These are very two extreme schools of teachings, spiritual teachings. You have to work hard at it.

Otherwise you won't get it, says one. The other one says there's nothing you can do. But you're not going to work hard at it just because somebody tells you you need to work hard at it.

You work hard at it, if you even can call it that. Something wants to come through here, through this form. Something wants to come through you.

And so then you take up some spiritual practice. There's an inner urge to take up spiritual practice. That's the awakening.

It's happening. It wants to make room. And sometimes the awakening makes room drastically, just pushes everything out of the way, like a volcano.

And at other times and more frequently, the awakening is a more gradually eroding of the egoic layers that cover the splendor that's underneath, that which wants to come forth. It's a gradual erosion from within and from without. Suffering helps too, a little bit.

So it's undergoing the process of awakening. So you're awakening already. It's not

something that's going to happen.

Doesn't mean that occasionally you can't be asleep. I mean, spiritually speaking, you can still go back to sleep periodically. Most people do.

That's why it's called awakening process. Means there's a falling back, all patterns. You don't go like that.

You go like... And sometimes... No.

No. No. The mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive.

To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

[Speaker 6] (20:45 - 24:59)

A few months ago, after knowing Eckhart Tolle for a while and studying the books, I woke up and I suddenly got it. I understood suddenly how thought was just an illusory thing and how thought is responsible for, if not all, most of the suffering we experience. And then I suddenly felt like I was looking at these thoughts from another perspective.

And I wondered, who is it that's aware that I'm thinking? And suddenly I was thrown into this expansive, amazing feeling of freedom from myself from my problems. I saw that I was bigger than what I do.

I was bigger than my body. I was everything and everyone. I was no longer a fragment of the universe.

I was the universe. And ever since that day, I've been trying to get back there. It comes and it goes, it's like riding a wave.

Sometimes I'm on, sometimes I'm off, but at least I know where I want to go and that I want to take as many people with me as I possibly can because the feeling is amazing. You know, it's our intention. Our intention is everything.

Nothing happens on this planet without it. Not one single thing has ever been accomplished without intention. So I started thinking about my life and I started thinking about this conference and what we're about and I looked back and I thought, well, I was two people my whole life.

I was in the living room entertaining people, being a monkey, doing my thing for the company and trying to relieve my mother who was suffering. She had rheumatoid arthritis and phlebitis and everything under the sun that was nagging at her and she was depressed and I wanted her to be free and I wanted her to realize that her life was worth something because she gave birth to someone who's worth something. And then I would

go into my room and I would sit with a legal pad.

I was a little kid. I would sit there and I would try to figure out what it meant, what it was all about. Why are we here?

What is this? And one day I read something from Buddha that said that all spirituality is about relieving suffering and I suddenly realized that's what I'm doing in the other room and I'm aligned. My purpose is aligned with this.

So I felt incredibly lucky. I lose sight of that all the time. I get caught up in different concerns and ego concerns but I'm so lucky to be a part of this community and to do something that is of value.

[Speaker 1] (25:30 - 1:18:01)

Welcome to our live Easter meditation. You're here not because you want to awaken but because you are awakening. Unless somebody dragged you here or wherever you are, wherever you're here is, if our meditations are deeply enjoyable then you are awakening.

So this is all part of the awakening, the collective awakening process goes far beyond the personal. In fact, that which is transcended in the awakening process is the personal dimension. Transcended does not mean it gets totally eliminated but you go beyond it.

It no longer dominates your consciousness. And in a manner of speaking, you die to the personal dimension. And for some of you or many of you, most of you, it's a gradual dying process.

And for a few, it's a drastic and sudden death. For most, as I said, it's a gradual dying of the being centered in a personalized sense of identity. And that dying of the personal self of which our being together here is a part, that's the Good Friday message.

The truth contained within that. And the death, as I see it, the death of Jesus happens on Friday and the birth of Christ, the resurrection, the rebirth into a different dimension happens at Easter. And until the death of the personal sense of self is voluntarily embraced, it's painful.

But what's even more painful is to be trapped in that narrow sense of self. What is that narrow sense of self? Consciousness is identified with form.

Another way of putting it, consciousness is trapped in form, doesn't know it, dreamlike state. Whenever you get upset about trivial things, what he did or he said or she did or she said or your parents or your spouse or your ex-spouse or money matters and you get upset, and reactive, that's a good indication that consciousness is trapped in form. And then form becomes all important, which is a delusion.

So you are trapped. Another way of putting it, you don't know who you are. Another way

of putting it, you are nailed to the cross of matter.

You are nailed, you, consciousness, are nailed to the cross of form. And you suffer. Eventually, you surrender.

In other words, the reactive entity does not operate anymore and then you're free. The awakening to who you are beyond form. The words I'm speaking here are, of course, thought forms, but there is the unseen dimension to our being together here that has nothing to do with thought or sense perceptions, but it's the awareness that is arising of consciousness itself, the formless dimension in you, one could say.

The words which are form, thought forms, continuously point to that. That to which they point is, of course, beyond words, beyond form, is who you are essentially, and you recognize it as we sit together here, that there is something here that is not the words, not what you see, not the image of this person, the form, but something arises from within you that you cannot name, although I occasionally try to find a little word for it, inner space, stillness, awareness itself arises. That's where the person is transcended.

Of course, this is helpful to be here together and enter that dimension or allow that dimension to rise in which the person is transcended. The real challenge is in everyday life, which for many people seems to consist of nothing but the personal and all the personal concerns. And some of you who are able to be here or sometimes when you're not disturbed or you go out into nature or sit quietly in a room, you can become still, alert, present, transcend the personal.

And some of you, yes, you're able to, it's beautiful. The awakening is happening. And some of you are not able yet to sustain it the moment a challenge comes from the world of the personal.

Now, the phone rings. Are you able, when you answer the phone and talk to whoever, your accountant, be there as the person who deals with whatever needs to be dealt with, but also not lose awareness of spaciousness? Let's see the real, your purpose for being here, not just here now on this planet here, is to master that art of being rooted in the impersonal and still dealing with the world of form, the world of matter, the world of thoughts.

Ultimately, more effectively than before, because one of the great benefits of mastering this art of this dancing, the dance between form and formlessness, one of the most wonderful benefits is you lose your fear of form, the world, other people. In other words, you lose fear. And fear is that which blocks love, which would naturally be there in the absence of fear.

Fear ultimately saying form is all there is. Now, a belief that there is something beyond form doesn't help you. Belief, I believe in God, I believe in the spiritual dimension, that

doesn't help you because a belief is still a thought form, so you still have fear.

It needs to be an actual realization, not an understanding thing as, oh, now I understand. No, it's not that kind of realization. A knowing, non-conceptual knowing, a living knowing of that in you that is formless, that is still, present, alert, spacious.

You have to bring that into this world, into the world of madness. Madness meaning the complete, absence of transcendence. Otherwise, the world makes you mad.

And whenever you go back into the world, you become mad again, like everybody else. So you can bring sanity to the world, or you can allow the world to make you mad, draw you into its madness. Whenever you're fighting something or someone, the world is drawing you into its madness.

Of course, somebody 2,000 years ago, already said that, forgive your enemies, is basically the same thing, saying the same thing. Don't fight anything or anybody. Fighting is a form of self-destruction.

It's an inner state of consciousness, a reactive state of consciousness. Any reactivity is a form of fighting. So you have all the fights in the world that are not working because they are fights, the fight against terrorism, the fight against drugs, the fight against crime, the fight against poverty, the fight against illness.

So these are not solutions, they add to the problems. The solutions, that's not really solutions, there is one solution to all the problems, which is find the transcendent dimension in you. And it's not a question of saying, okay, I found it now, what's next?

By finding means to continuously live that knowing. It's not a once, okay, I found it now, I'm awakened. It's a continuous knowing in the background of your life, non-conceptual.

Awareness stays with you. That's what it is. Shines through the personal.

And then through that, the light that shines through the person that was before was so heavy and dense, that is what transcendence means. Now, I had quite a few questions about, well, two things, one, quite a few questions about the refugees or migrants that are pouring into Europe, how some here that I picked at random and then there are others, how best to be in a state of compassion and so on. It's already wonderful to see that there is a lot of compassion and especially in some countries, like Scandinavian countries, Germany, and so on.

There is a lot of openness and compassion towards the suffering of others. And it's heartening to see that. There's also a lot of fear in other countries and also in Germany and Scandinavia of what might happen to their society, their cultural values, if there's a continuing inflow of people.

So it's a question of balancing the heart and the head. A time will come when there will be no more borders, but at the moment, just as a time will come when we don't need laws anymore, but for the time being, they still have a function. If we open borders totally, then of course, the entire social system would break down.

There are not enough jobs for everybody. There's nowhere to live. After a while, if millions and millions come in, that would be the end.

So compassion is wonderful and needs to be balanced with wisdom, compassion and wisdom as a balance. The middle way, the Buddha's recommendation is the middle way. The challenge is initially on a physical level, finding accommodation and work.

A greater challenge is the integration, which hasn't really been done very well in most countries. So they need to focus on that, because if they don't focus on the integration, it could lead to huge challenges for the society. Which would be fine too, because humans evolve through challenges.

But if you can have wisdom, then you'd no longer need a huge challenge to develop because by applying wisdom to a situation, which means a balanced view, by applying wisdom to a situation, you prevent it from becoming a huge challenge. And if you cannot apply wisdom to a situation, then it will become a huge challenge. And that will be fine too, because humans evolve through challenges.

Wisdom usually means that, yes, there'll still be challenges, but you don't create gigantic challenges for yourself. In the absence of wisdom, you do. That's...

So it's an interesting fact that not only for individuals, but also for the collectives, there's a continuous, one thing after another arises. Oh no, now this. First it was Greece was the big challenge.

And now you have an even bigger challenge. It's as if some script writer for the drama, the collective drama, infinitely creative script writing. Okay, what can we do now for the next episode of humanity?

Now let's give them that. It's a challenge for, of course, for the refugees themselves. It's a huge challenge.

And for the others where they go to, it's also becoming a challenge and could become a huge challenge. Mindset, people, these people come from different places that represent different forms of conditioning of their mind, just as in the West, the mind is conditioned in certain ways. So in the West is only just arrived at certain insights through painful, very painful, insane behavior that they manifest in until recently.

They've only just arrived at a fragile realization of the importance of seeing another person's point of view or another coming to a compromise rather than wanting my way

or our way through incredible suffering that they inflicted on themselves. They've now arrived at this fragile point where they value tolerance and compassion. And that's been a long road and it could be lost again easily.

It's only just, it's part of the growth of, it implies some diminishment of ego in order to practice tolerance and compassion means on a collective level, there has been some diminishment of ego and it has happened through suffering that was self-inflicted through endless wars culminating in the insanity of the first and second world war and genocide and so on. So all that self-inflicted suffering has finally brought them to this point and it has been going on for centuries. The gradual equality for women to value equally man and woman is also relatively recent.

We've arrived at now, the separation of church and state also was a relative recent achievement and that took centuries again of struggle. And not all parts of the world have arrived yet at that stage. They're still stuck in other more intolerant mindsets.

And this is why the integration is very important because integration means, are they able to adapt to our mindset? Now, there are some people who say, all cultures are totally equal, it's just different. I would suggest that there is such a thing as a development in cultural values and the development of collective consciousness.

And if a society displays compassion and tolerance towards others, that is a sign that there has been a development in consciousness in that society. If another society displays intolerance, then that hasn't happened yet. Even in European societies, not that long ago, there was huge intolerance.

So what is the mindset that people come with? Are they able to undergo the shift? That is the question.

Is there going to develop an alternative society that has a totally different mindset within the same country that remains to be seen? It is a challenge. There are many good signs.

It's wonderful to see the compassion that is in many humans now in Europe. And it is also understandable that in others, there's also fear. There are some small minorities in Europe that are very unconscious, that violently attack or try to attack immigrants, but that group is relatively small.

So let's see where this challenge takes us. Humanity ultimately is going to evolve as a whole, as a single organism, more and more. So, and it seems natural that there's more coming together now of cultures that before were totally separate.

Now it's growing into something that we cannot foresee what form exactly it will take. Societies that are still in a different mindset, there are still places on the planet where the collective mindset corresponds to the Middle Ages in Europe. Not saying that those places cannot have humans who are highly evolved, just as in the medieval times in

Europe, there were human beings.

Some human beings were deeply spiritual, egoless and highly evolved. Even within those societies which collectively were quite ignorant and deeply, deeply in the grip of the collective ego, which in Middle Ages in Europe took the form of religious dogma and so on. So there are still some societies which are at about that time period.

So that the shift can be speeded up. If they come to the West, to what extent can they go beyond their mindset and not all the refugees are from those parts of the world because the Middle East, there are many different energy fields. Syria is not the same as Afghanistan.

It's not the same as Iraq and so on. There were ancient cultures in many of those places that predate European culture. And Islam, for example, in itself, Islam in the Middle Ages was more advanced and more tolerant than Christianity, more culturally advanced.

And so it's not the religion. A religion does not exist outside the consciousness of the people who practice the religion. So really it's what is the state of consciousness of the people who practice the religion.

It doesn't exist outside of that. It's something in human consciousness. This is a huge thing that perhaps some other time we can talk about it in more detail.

So let's welcome the challenge and see if you, on a personal level, if you live in Europe and you can help, you feel called upon to help, that's a wonderful thing to do. Thank you. The question is whether at this moment you can know or sense within yourself that underlying presence that is deeper than the person.

And it's very hard. It's very intangible. It's very elusive.

You can't say it's here or it's there. It's all pervasive. It's your own presence.

And if you're thinking very much, you can't sense it, not while you're engaged in thinking about it. Okay, where is the presence? I'm trying to find it, but I can't.

I wonder if I'm doing something wrong. Well, the only thing you're doing wrong is you're trying to find it through thinking. So if thinking subsides for a moment, what remains seems like nothing at first, a spacious, just a space.

But in that space, which at first seems like nothing and certainly doesn't seem interesting, that space, if you don't immediately run away from it, and then gradually you begin to sense that there is a depth there and a peace, and there is more to it than one could ever put into words to that emptiness. And that connects you with something that transcends the thinking mind, but without which there would be no thinking. That is the ripple becoming aware of its own depths where it is more than the ripple.

And then the ripple continues to be a ripple for a little while, but the way in which it experiences the world, the surface world, actually is different because it senses a deep connectedness with something that it cannot be named really, something deep and vast. And it can sense that as the foundation for its life at the very essence of its life. Could you speak about the role of conscience in the awakening experience?

How is the sense of moral right and wrong manifest in the egoic state versus a more awakened state? Conscience. The strange thing is that in some languages such as French or Spanish, consciousness and conscience are the same word.

They don't have separate words for consciousness and conscience. English has separate words, German has separate words, French and Spanish don't. I don't know about other languages.

So conscience, of course, is an intuitive knowing of right and wrong. And deep down, everybody has that in the same way that deep down, everybody has consciousness that may be obscured by the egoic mind. And it's only when presence begins to run your life, you live predominantly through presence that there's absolutely no longer any doubt about right and wrong.

Right action happens spontaneously. You don't inflict suffering on others in order to enhance or protect yourself. The ego may talk about conscience or what's right or wrong, but when it comes to actual situations, the ego will always serve itself first.

So it will inflict suffering on others without knowing it. In the egoic state, you have no empathy. The more you're in the grip of the ego, the less empathy you have with other humans or other life forms.

So there's a complete absence of the conscience. The ability to have empathy is covered up. It's there somewhere deep down, but it's covered up.

And you cannot sense your way into another human being, which is what empathy is. So it's almost like suffering from a disability, certainly a dysfunction. And that is where this huge amount of suffering is created by humans for other humans, including killings, because you don't know what you are doing anymore.

Not anymore, you don't know what you're doing. In the words of Jesus on the cross, forgive them for they know not what they do. And not knowing what you do, some you may ask, what do you mean they don't know what they do?

If you have a terrorist like the man in Norway who goes around shooting people, he has a certain rational, seemingly rational explanations for what he's doing. He explains it all, he can write it down, saying this is all, it all makes sense to me, he says. In what sense can we possibly say he doesn't know, he knows full well what he's doing?

Well, yes, he knows on the level of conceptual knowing, he knows what he's doing. But there are two ways of knowing in a human being. One is the conceptual knowing.

When I walk in the forest, I know the forest to some extent conceptually. The trees, I know the names of some of the trees or plants. I know the name of the forest.

I can, I have other conceptual knowledge, I even know myself as the form that I am. Eckhart is walking in the forest. Conceptually, I know what's happening, I can explain it.

I'm walking in the forest, I'm seeing this tree, I'm seeing that, I'm smelling the air now. And this and that, I can explain it. I can name it and know it conceptually.

But whether I'm truly experiencing the forest depends on whether another level of knowledge is active or activated in me. And that's non-conceptual knowing. And in non-conceptual knowing, when I look at a tree, and I can feel and I can sense the tree's being or aliveness.

And I can perceive the totality of the forest with all the look around and feel the, I can feel the energy field of the forest. Without any labeling, I feel the aliveness of it. I know it, but not through concepts.

I also know myself walking in the forest, but not as a concept. Me, Eckhart, the writer, is walking in the forest as a concept. But I can, I can sense the consciousness that I am and that is the deeper knowing.

And it's only through the consciousness that I am that I can be aware beyond concepts of the aliveness all around me. And only then am I in wonder and awe of the forest. Before, if I only have conceptual knowledge of the forest, I may have some ideas in my head that say, oh, it's a nice forest, but I don't really know that.

I certainly wouldn't be able to feel the sacredness of the forest. I wouldn't know the forest on that level. I would only know it on a superficial level.

And so, because so many humans are identified with concepts, the entire consciousness consists of an accumulation of concepts, including concepts they have about themselves, which is the ego. Concepts they have about others, they relate to others through their mental concepts. Naming, judging, opinions.

And concepts easily get agitated. The bundle of concepts in people's heads in the absence of a deeper level of knowing, very often these bundles of concepts that people consist of become agitated about other concepts. That's the ego.

Just look on the internet, how about people, what they write. Some people get angry and upset. It's full of that.

Aggression. Concepts fighting other concepts. They're not relating to other human

beings.

It's a conceptualised reality, trying to survive. It's all part of the madness of the ego. So the question is whether conscience implies an ability to empathise.

And you can only have empathy... if the second, the deeper level of knowing has become activated in you, so that you're no longer trapped in concepts. Can use them, but you're not trapped, imprisoned by concepts.

Then you suddenly realise when you relate to another human, you empathise, which means... The word, by the way, is only about, I think 200 years old or something like that. It came into English via German, translating a German term, which wasn't also created about that time.

The German word is Einfühlung, which means to feel yourself into someone. And then you don't... You know, now you know what you do.

You cannot, in fact, you cannot inflict... ..suffering when you have empathy. Then something stops you.

It's like you're doing it to yourself. There seems to be a gradual growth of the ability to empathise. If you look at the past, when humans, for example, they loved watching executions in the village square or the city square, and laughing at disability was also common.

Disabled people were treated very badly. It seems that not being able to laugh it was harder for them to empathise. Who knows?

There's even a book I came across recently, quite interesting, that somebody wrote an account of... I don't remember, unfortunately, the name of the author. He wrote an account of world history from the point of view of the growth of empathy.

And the title of the book is Empathic Civilisation. So, it all is to do with the two levels of knowing. Knowing through concepts, it has its place, but does not make you into a...

..full human being. It's only when the deeper level is activated... ..we could call that unitive knowing, then you become truly human. What is the role of sex in consciousness? How should it be approached as a way to be more awake? Are lust and casual sex a detriment to consciousness?

Are they always detrimental? LAUGHTER Well, let's see if I can remember. LAUGHTER No, sex, of course, is a wonderful thing.

We could call it an addiction that nature has built into the human so that they continue to survive as a species, because if that addiction were not built in, that causes pleasure, if that were not built into the human body, who would engage in that absurd act?

Because it's such a pull, it does have a tendency of making humans unconscious. You may have observed it in yourself when it takes over.

It's a very strong pull that you go... LAUGHTER ..or you may go into your mind.

[Speaker 10] (1:18:02 - 1:18:05)

LAUGHTER So it's either out there...

[Speaker 2] (1:18:07 - 1:18:10)

..or you go...

[Speaker 1] (1:18:10 - 1:29:39)

LAUGHTER And, of course, it pulls you towards where it wants to go, which is the final orgasm. That's where it wants you to go. So, tantra is an ancient Indian way of engaging in sexuality without losing consciousness, but growing in consciousness through it, bringing consciousness into something that usually would make you unconscious.

And the simple thing is to become the observer at any stage, so that you... Let's say the sexual impulse arises, for whatever reason, you see something or think of something, or someone, rather, to bring awareness to it without needing to take it anywhere, to bring awareness to it and just feel it and sense it and be the awareness for it. And if you're with another person, not necessarily engage in the full act of sexuality, but even if it's just a touching, to be aware with that, bring awareness to that, to the sense perceptions, so that awareness arises even as the impulse is there.

You meet it with awareness. And that's a beautiful spiritual practice, and then you don't always need to take it to the end. You can actually enjoy it more than when it takes you over and makes you unconscious.

I call it an addiction. It really becomes a true addiction when it takes over your mind, and then you compulsively seek sexual partners, in which case it really pulls you towards more and more unconsciousness and becomes one of the ways in which the mind seeks fulfillment and never finds it. And that's where the song implies, I can't get no satisfaction.

And then you need the next fix. It can become a true addiction in the conventional sense, like a drug. It can become that.

If there's a sexual impulse, let's say you look at a man or a woman and there's a slight sexual impulse, you can just be with that. And that's the beginning of tantra. You don't need to go anywhere.

You don't need to go up to that person and say whatever your pickup line is. But just be

allowed to watch the beauty of it, the male form, the female form, and be aware, and at any stage bring awareness to it. This applies to anything that tends to make you unconscious, any strong urge, like let's say overeating, if that is your urge, if you can bring awareness to the impulse of wanting to eat before acting on it, that is tantra too.

Anything that usually pulls you to unconsciousness, when you bring awareness into it, you actually use it in your growth of awareness. The very thing that before made you unconscious can then be used and make you more conscious. So if your impulse is to overeat and in the middle of the night you find yourself, without you knowing it, you got up and your hand is on the refrigerator door, and in that moment you wake up, I mean truly wake up, and feel the urge to open the door and take out the chocolate cake, then you can observe the impulse inside you and you can sit down for a couple of minutes and feel this urge to indulge in the need to take something in and feel it fully. You may find sometimes it subsides as you bring awareness to it. It begins to subside.

If it doesn't subside, maybe you still have to eat the chocolate cake, but at least there was some awareness and if you bring awareness into the eating, ah, because it's only you really overeat when you lose awareness. If you eat consciously, we have Janine here who wrote a book about it. She could talk to you much better, explain it much better than I can.

So bring awareness to the act of eating, then I believe, I've never actually had the problem of overeating. I've had other addictions, but that wasn't one. If you bring awareness to it, the desire to overeat, I would say, would quickly subside if you eat consciously.

So anything that pulls you usually towards unconsciousness, use it as awareness practice. There could be any other addiction too. Drug, whatever drug, whatever substance you use, feel the need inside you.

Feel it arise. Watch it, observe it. Allow it to be there so that it doesn't take you over.

It's only when you're unaware that these things can completely take you over. So you're not fighting it as such. Awareness never fights it.

Awareness is really the space in which it arises because you're not fighting against it. You're not pushing it down. Don't do that with sex because they've tried that for hundreds of years.

Aesthetics, religious practices, pushing it down, it makes it far worse because then it seeks channels that are actually quite destructive. Because sexuality is such an enormous urge, you can't push it down. Rather than pushing it down, it would be preferable to have a different sexual partner every night.

It's probably preferable to pushing it down. So that's not the answer. But to meet it in

awareness, that's where whatever would usually be an addictive urge that makes you unconscious, meet it in the space of awareness where then it comes in there and it goes, shh, and maybe another wave comes, shh, and in that spaciousness that you are, it comes in and talks.

It's like a dark cloud. It comes into the space of the blue expanse and then it goes, shh, and then another one comes, shh. So whatever the impulse is, awareness is the answer, not fighting against it.

And, of course, cutting the link also in sexuality, especially the link between thinking and the sexual urge. Otherwise it can keep you awake at night. You see the source of power in that teacher, which it isn't.

It's in you. Very good teachers. It's time for you to leave now.

I'm thinking about the evolution of spirituality and how over time more people have had access and it's moved from a situation where... Yeah, this is nerve-wracking. Anyways, it's moved from a situation where often esoteric mysticism was not accessible and now it's much more accessible.

And I'm curious if you see a point in the future where the student-teacher, the guru-student relationship will begin to pass in favor of a direct feed where we're able to draw in the wisdom directly ourselves or maybe through something like Bohem Krishna Murli Dialoguing where it's an instinctual process. And my concern is, I think as long as there's a student-teacher relationship, we're always looking up to the person who can rather than looking into ourselves. Yes.

Thank you. Thank you. And this is very true.

This is why it's often a wonderful thing for people who have been following a particular teaching or teacher. It's a wonderful thing for the followers when the teacher finally passes away. I have no immediate plans, and often they're distraught when it happens.

They feel abandoned because there was such an attachment. There was ego in that too, but they didn't know it. They feel like a child.

Suddenly the main parent figure is gone. So they're thrown back upon themselves. And some of them remain in that state of disorientation, but others are able to suddenly realize what they didn't realize before.

But I hope this is not the case here. It's more likely to happen if they kind of almost worship a guru-like figure, which there's still quite a few of those around in the world. Then it's much more likely that you see the source of power in that teacher, which it isn't.

It's in you. So it's if the teacher... Some teachers actually send their disciples away.

They're very good teachers. They say, it's time for you to leave now. What?

[Speaker 10] (1:29:39 - 1:29:40)

Oh my God.

[Speaker 1] (1:29:41 - 1:34:41)

Yes. So you're ready. It's like a little bird.

The time comes when the bird has to leave the nest. Don't be like this 30-year-old man who refuses to move out of his parents' home. So it's to be able...

It's not only the teacher. It's also the teaching to be able to use the help that the universe gives you. You know the famous phrase, when the student is ready, the teacher appears.

So when you are ready, whatever corresponds to your state of consciousness, helpful thing comes to you. It could be a book. It could be something, a person you meet or something like this.

So I believe that the guru-disciple relationship perhaps eventually will disappear in its traditional form and will be replaced by something more informal. This already is a little bit more informal. There's not that attachment, I hope, to the figure of the...

There's not all the confusion between the vehicle through which the teaching comes and the teaching. And I sometimes say I feel like a window frame. And of course, the light comes through the window.

And so don't confuse the frame, the window frame with that which transcends all form. When you can sense the presence sitting here and your mind might interpret it as perhaps coming from me, but when you can sense the presence, where do you sense it? It's in you.

You sense it in you. A good teacher always encourages you not to become attached, to go your own way. If you don't need to come back to another retreat, that's great.

And if you... Increasing number of people will begin... I know that many people who are here will become, and some already are, teachers in their own right.

So that's... Whether it's formal or informal, whether it's part of a certain practice, they might be therapists already or they might be working as counselors with people or they might be engaged in education or in healthcare, many different capacities. And gradually, they already, by being present, they disseminate the teaching and the words

may accompany that.

So many of you are growing into the role of teacher, which has its own danger because, again, we've talked about it a few times, the danger is that a conceptual identity arises in your mind of you as a great teacher. And that will be a block. But you can sense the power that is in you that is different, but that is not superior to anybody.

It's very hard to explain, but you need to be careful of any conceptual identity and then there will be more and more teachers arising, not just a few. And so I believe that's the way we are going because that means some humans awaken before others awaken. And those that awaken before others awaken, they become teachers, either formal teachers or informal teachers.

In the Course in Miracles, it says anybody who practices in their daily life the Course in Miracles is called teacher of God. You become a teacher of God the moment you start practicing presence. Even if you don't speak the words that are out of presence, simply by being, for example, in a non-reactive mode in relationship with people, by sensing an outflow of goodwill towards other humans with decreasing judgment in your mind about others, all this, you become a teacher.

You become a teacher of God. So the answer is there will not just be a few isolated famous figures, but more and more teachers will arise, which are those who awaken before others begin to awaken. And then inevitably they become teachers.

[Speaker 3] (1:35:01 - 1:37:19)

Welcome, friends. Welcome to our special School of Awakening webinar with Eckhart Tolle. My name is Tammy Simon.

I'm the founder of Sounds True, and it is absolute joy to be your host for this session. We're going to begin our live session with Eckhart guiding us through a meditation on pure awareness. This is a meditation that he originally introduced at our very first School of Awakening that took place two years ago, and I'm so glad that this larger public audience will have the chance to experience the meditation as part of this webinar.

For those of you who are just learning about the School of Awakening for the very first time, let me tell you just a little bit more about this program. The Eckhart Tolle School of Awakening is the most advanced and in-depth learning program that Eckhart Tolle and Kim Ang teach. It's a five-month immersion program that this year includes two virtual retreats along with monthly teachings and meditations with Eckhart and Kim, all in the context of a vibrant online learning community.

The goal of the School of Awakening is to intensify presence and align with the awakening process that many people are already undergoing. If you want to learn more about the School of Awakening, you can just click the button on this page. Also, please

note that we're in the final enrollment period for the School of Awakening, and that's because the program starts at the end of this month.

The first day of school is soon. It starts on March 27th. Again, we'll be starting our webinar with a guided pure awareness practice, and then following that, I'll ask Eckhart some questions that we've received from the Eckhart Tolle community about the awakening process.

And now, as I said, a great joy to welcome Eckhart Tolle. Eckhart?

[Speaker 1] (1:37:20 - 2:00:41)

Hi, Tammy. Hi, everybody. Nice to see you.

Well, I don't see everybody, but you see me. So apparently, we are starting with a pure awareness meditation, if we want to call it that. Pure awareness is an interesting idea.

Well, it's not an idea. It only becomes an idea when we talk about it. Pure awareness is beyond any idea or concept.

It's the essence of who you are, and most people go through life without ever encountering that dimension of their being, and that's a great pity. I often use the term form identity and essence identity. Your form identity is whatever you add after you say, I am, whatever you add to that statement, I am, is part of your form identity.

Usually, people would start with, and identity is very important for everybody. Everybody is looking for a stronger sense of identity. It starts in childhood already.

So it's after meeting the basic needs of food and shelter, one could almost say, the next thing that arises is not a physical need, but a deep-seated psychological need, and that is a need for an identity. So everybody is searching. It starts in early childhood already.

They're searching for a more stable, more secure, more expanded sense of who they are, sense of identity, sense of self. So everybody is searching. So wherever you go, lots of the things you see on the internet, it's a search for an identity.

So let's just explore what you would add to, if you said, I am, the normal things that you would probably add is perhaps your gender, a very popular subject these days, used to be a very simple subject. Now it's much more complex, but for our purposes here, it's not complex. Whatever it is that you want to add as your gender is fine.

I am. And then other things come, of course, perhaps racial things are also very much in the forefront these days. So perhaps that would come to you also next.

White, black, whatever, shade of color, doesn't matter. You add that because it has become part of your sense of self, your sense of identity. And then, of course, there's the

body, whether it's old or young, your age.

You add, I have such and such an old, an old white, black man, woman, whatever, and so on. And then it goes on after that to do with your, say, station in life, perhaps work, profession, or your relationship to other human beings, mother, father, daughter, and so on. Anything else that you have incorporated into your sense of self and manufactured a sense of self out of that.

Possessions, perhaps you are a big person who has lots of possessions. I am the owner of a company. I am the owner of a private jet.

That would be a big sense of identity. Or perhaps you have the opposite. You might have developed a sense of identity of somebody who has less than others and been disadvantaged all their lives.

And then you have an equally big sense of identity. I'm somebody who has been treated unfairly by life. It's terrible.

Another big, also part of your identity, negative or positive, doesn't matter. You add more, things accumulate in your inner space and you hold them together with your name. That's your, my name is such and such.

The name becomes the receptacle for all the other things that you put in there that you derive your sense of self from. And then you say, oh, well, that's me. And it's never quite very satisfying for long.

And it's very rarely enough. That's the strange thing about that sense of self. And this is what I call the form identity.

And it's fine. Everybody has one, nothing wrong with that. So you acknowledge your form identity.

You don't need to say, I don't want to have a form identity. You have a form identity. As long as you're here as this particular form, you have a form identity, whatever it may be.

And it's fine. The problem is that there's always a sense of, there's still something missing of the things that I have in here that I've put into this receptacle. This is my name.

And I've put in all those things that I identify with as me. And then this thing's not quite right. I need something else.

More needs to be put in. So there's always a sense of dissatisfaction that arises very quickly. I'm not enough, ultimately.

There's something missing in life, in my life. I don't know what. And you come up with all

kinds of things.

And the awakening, spiritual awakening, begins with the realization that there is more to you than that. And this more to you is your essence identity. And you find your essence identity if as an experiment now, let's say we have a board, a blackboard or a whiteboard.

And on this board we have written, I am. And then imagine whatever you would have added to that, a list of things that you feel is you, gender, age, profession, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. You add that.

I am. Let's say you add it vertically to me. And that for our meditation, or it's not really meditation, it's a little experiment.

You take a, whatever it is you do, you used to erase whatever is written on the board. I used to have chalk and a sponge. You would erase what's written with chalk on the blackboard.

So you get that. And you start just for the best. What is left of me if I temporarily, just for this moment, I erase what I have added to I am.

So you, whatever it is, mother, father, profession, gender, race, et cetera, age, opinions about yourself. I'm the best that's ever been, or the worst that's ever lived. That too is a concept that you have identified with.

There are concepts that you accumulate there. And you erase just temporarily. So you don't give it any more attention.

It's gone. And then even the last thing, the receptacle itself, the name, you can temporarily erase that. I don't remember my name.

I don't remember my email address. I don't remember my gender. So what's, in order that you have to let go of all the accumulated concepts, because there are ultimately all mental concepts that gave you your sense of self.

You let go of the mental concepts. What is left of me? If there's no more anger, no mental concept left of who I am.

There's only I am. Is the essence of me gone? Or is the essence of who I am still there?

If I don't even remember my past or any conceptual thing about me. I'm so present at this moment. That all I know, and I'm talking for you, I'm so present at this moment that all I know is that I am.

Now, if you can just add a glimpse of that. What is left? What is that?

I am. And there's no concept there anymore. But what is that feeling?

Is it a feeling? That sense of being. That sense of I am.

Being and I am is the same thing. To be is the infinitive, and I am is the first person singular. They just sound very different.

Really, you should be saying I be, but English language has developed in a different way. I am, it comes from being. All you are left with is a sense of beingness or presence.

And then you ask yourself, is anything vital, anything of absolute value, lost now? Am I essentially still here? Without referring to any concepts about myself or any thoughts.

And you'll become aware at this moment that you are aware because that awareness is what's left. When you take everything away, that beingness, that sense of presence or beingness that you cannot define is what's left. We can use certain words to talk about it or to point to it, yes.

But in itself, it is beyond words, beyond concepts, beyond thoughts. So there is a space in you that is beyond words, concepts, and thoughts, that is beyond thinking, but you're not asleep. There is that space in you that is always there underneath the fluctuation of words, concepts, and thoughts.

They're all thoughts, ultimately. Thoughts are inner words. Underneath this fluctuation of concepts and words, there is a sense of presence or beingness of I am.

And this sense of, this is pure awareness or consciousness that gets absorbed by thoughts. It flows into the sense of I, flows into, it animates the concepts in the mind. And then you derive your sense of self from the concepts without realizing that that which animates the concepts is the awareness, the pure awareness.

And so it's not realizing the essence of your being and moving only on the surface of life, the surface of the ocean of being. That's your form identity is what happens on the surface of the ocean of being. Waves and ripples and waves clashing and all kinds of things.

And every wave thinks it's me, I am, a wave. It doesn't realize it's the ocean. So what animates, what gives life to all the things that you identify with, which are ultimately concepts, because you don't identify with objects, you seem to, let's say you have possessions, you identify with the possessions, but you experience the possessions.

How do you experience them? You experience them as mental concepts. My house, my car, my private jet.

You experience them as concepts in your mind and you attach the my to it, the sense of, you associate a thing with a sense of self, but the thing is experienced as a concept.

Maybe there is no car, maybe the whole thing is, maybe the whole thing is, you live in that matrix and everything is made up. Nobody knows whether the actual, the external world is actually there or it's being created as a dream of consciousness.

But all you know is you can't know whether the, what is it? The Aston Martin or the Ferrari that you derive some of your sense of identity from is actually there or you have made it up in your mind. But all you know is that you have this thing in your mind and that's your car.

You have form identity, nothing wrong with that. You need to operate, be able to operate on this level of form. Yes, use your mind, but the essence identity is there that is underneath all that.

And if you don't find that, I call it the deep eye sometimes as opposed to the surface eye. So the surface eye is whatever you add to I am. The deep eye is the realization of beingness of I am.

And the two can live together. They are compatible. It doesn't mean you can have either one or the other.

You can have one leg. So to speak a metaphorical leg, you can have one leg in the being and one leg in the form identity. It's a deep eye and the surface eye.

And that is the purpose as I see it of human life is to be able to live in that way where you are rooted in the I am and you're able to deal with the things of this world and continue to have a form identity, but you no longer exclusively derive your sense of self from that. It's a relatively superficial sense of self for a little while, but your deep sense of being becomes from another place. And that is a place really that is at that level, you are one with every other human being and every other being.

It's the level of oneness. On the level of form identity, you need the other because without the other, you cannot define yourself. You always need something that's not you.

Imagine, let's say, your racial identity is strong. A very important part of who you are is your race. And it's fine.

You can honor that. As a little thought experiment from science fiction, let's say you suddenly want, suddenly the ETs come and they transport you to another planet where everybody is exactly the same race and exactly the same skin color as you. There's no other anymore.

At that moment, your entire sense of who you are as this race would collapse because without the other, that race doesn't even exist. They wouldn't have a name for it. If you went to a planet where everything is green, every object and everything is green, they would not have a word for green, obviously.

You need the other. So for your form identity, you always need the other. And the ego very strongly emphasizes the other.

It needs the other to be as other as possible so that I can sense this, my sense of self ultimately. If it's only your form identity, it's fictitious. To sense myself, to sense more strongly, I need to have the other, more other.

We can see it everywhere in this world. You need to emphasize the otherness of others. It's an egoic need to strengthen your identity.

It's an illusion, and it leads to a lot of turmoil and suffering and chaos. But it's the ego at work. You have to recognize that and go to that deeper place where there is no other.

And that is the awareness. And then you can do some good in this world. You can bring about a different world because you're no longer trapped in the world of needing to make the others other as other as possible.

It's an egoic delusion. Terrible, terrible. So here we have the deep eye.

For here, for all purposes, just experiencing the deep eye, even if it's just a glimpse. Letting go of concepts. What remains when you wipe clean what you've written on the board after the I am, and all that's left is I am.

Pre-ness, presence. And then as you become familiar with that place, so to speak, it deepens, and you can sense the power that resides in you, which is the power of consciousness itself, which is the essence of everything. You can sense that power, but it's not power over others because in that power there is no other.

You have power without having power over others. It's the inherent power of the universe. And you can sense it now, perhaps only as a glimpse right now.

As I stop speaking for five seconds, you can sense it now as a glimpse, and that's a good start. Oh, and you don't know much about it on that level. What can you say about it?

Not much. That's fine. And then you become more, then you sense it more strongly, and then it begins to even change the way in which you operate on your form identity.

It actually, it makes a difference to that also. Pure awareness is simply then being aware right now, being aware that you are aware. Sounds strange.

Being aware that you are conscious. Being aware that you are consciousness. Better way of putting it.

So that's the essence of all spiritual practice. Just that. It's not complicated.

So it's taken us 25 minutes to explain the essence of all spiritual practice. No, don't need

to read all the books anymore. Just practice.

[Speaker 3] (2:01:03 - 2:01:44)

Wonderful, thank you, Eckhart. As I mentioned at the beginning, we've received questions from the Eckhart Tolle community and have chosen a few to ask you here. And here's the first one.

This person wrote in, you're offering a new school of awakening, but can spiritual awakening actually be taught like other subjects that are taught? Your own awakening was spontaneous. If spiritual awakening can be taught, tell me more about that.

And why do you feel now is the time for us to come together and explore these deeper teachings? Oh, right.

[Speaker 1] (2:01:52 - 2:16:40)

Would everybody benefit from spiritual teaching? No. Not everybody would benefit from spiritual teaching.

There needs to be a readiness in you, which is very hard to define what that is. There needs to be a readiness for you to receive the teaching so that it can accelerate your awakening. Now, when I say accelerate your awakening, that implies that something has already started.

Something has already opened up in you. And there's still many humans who not only would they not be interested in hearing any spiritual teaching, many would even feel hostile towards it if they had to listen to it. They'd feel almost as a personal attack.

There are many humans who are still extremely self-possessed, which means possessed by the egoic sense of self. And there's no opening for anything else. They still believe that they can make it.

They are basically in total control of their lives and they're going to make it or whatever the ideas is that they have in their minds. And even the suggestion that there is a power that is beyond who they are as a person, even to hear that suggestion would be regarded as a personal insult. So not everybody can be reached.

Not everybody is ready. Many young people are still not, although many are ready, but as if you're very young, the ego is still forming and you think you're not open yet to receiving what the spiritual teaching has to offer. And often I've met many, many accounts of people who have come to me and said, somebody gave me your book 15 years ago and I opened it.

And I thought it was just complete mumbo jumbo complete mumbo jumbo. There was even a reviewer quite a few years ago in Time Magazine who actually wrote that. He or

she, I can't remember, wrote a review of the power of now and described it as mumbo jumbo.

And of course, from the reviewer's point of state of consciousness, that was an absolutely correct statement because that is how they perceived it. And so people have come to me, said somebody gave me that book and I opened it was just, what is this? I read a page, they said, and I didn't understand a word.

What's he talking about? They put it on a shelf. Five, six years later, they picked it up and opened it.

Many people have told me similar accounts. They opened it, wow. Suddenly it all made sense.

What does it mean? They recognized the truth in it. But what happened in the meantime from the time when they were given the book and it was meaningless to when they opened it up again, they suffered.

They suffered, something happened. They lost something vital. They experienced some kind of perhaps a serious illness or had an accident or somebody close to them died or their business collapsed.

They became ill, whatever, something happened and created suffering and the suffering created a crack in the egoic, dense egoic cell. And then there was an opening suddenly. And then there was a recognition.

The spiritual teaching, a school of spirituality, of awakening, it doesn't really teach you anything new. It's always perceived as a recognition. It's a recognition.

Ah, and there's an immediate realization. Oh yes, I knew that. I could not have said it, but I recognize the truth of that.

So it addresses the deeper level of who you are. So in other words, it requires a minimum degree of awareness for there to be a receptivity to spiritual teaching so that spiritual teaching can be helpful. Without that, it's not helpful at all.

So at this minimum degree of awareness is, yes, it's awareness or presence, which is the same thing, the same no thing. Awareness or presence is the dimension of consciousness that is beyond thinking. And that is realized the moment you stop thinking without falling asleep, for example, now.

And you realize you are still very much there when you're not thinking. But a deeper dimension of you is there when you're not thinking. And of course, that is in a spiritual school or school of awakening, that deeper dimension is pulled out of you more.

That is helpful. It would come anyway. Life ultimately is the greatest spiritual teacher.

So, but a spiritual teaching can accelerate it. But what otherwise would take much more longer time, that realization. So it can be taught.

What can be taught is partly, let's say one could divide it, three parts to it can be taught. One is, what can be taught is making people aware of what it is in them, that what are the greatest obstacles or hindrances to the full unfolding of their consciousness. What are the hindrances in you?

What are the obstacles in you? If your spiritual teaching can help you, you can point out what the obstacles are. They are all part of the ego.

The obstacles are like reactivity, becoming aware of the various ways in which you react to things, becoming aware of identification with your thoughts when anxiety, worry arise, becoming aware that you are not your thoughts, explaining how the pain body works, how it can take you over, how it can pain body can use your mind. All kinds of things can be pointed out that otherwise you may overlook and they may obscure again the arising awareness. So spiritual teaching can help you to point out what the obstacles are.

Because once you recognize the inner obstacles to awakening, which are the ego, that you can transcend them more easily. If you do not recognize the obstacles, they have you in their grip and they can easily obscure the arising awareness. And another way in which spiritual teaching can be helpful, it uses pointers, concepts, words, but they point to something.

When I say the deep eye, that's a pointer. The deep eye is still a concept, but it points you beyond concepts. When I say, can you sense the deep eye in you?

You can't think about that. When you think about it, you can't. So you have to stop thinking.

So the concept points beyond itself. That's how a spiritual teaching can work. It can use helpful concepts, but point beyond the concepts.

And another way in which it can work is as a direct transmission of presence. When words arise out of presence, they come out of this energy field of presence and that can awaken the presence in you, but only if there's already some presence there. A minimum of presence needs to be there.

And how do you know whether it's there? It's very simple. If these words that I'm saying now make sense to you and say, yeah, I can sense the truth of it, then you have that minimum, or you may have more than a minimum.

You have that awareness. If what I'm saying to you now makes absolutely no sense to you, I suggest that you wait a little, three, five, 10, 15, 20 years, and life will give you more suffering. It's inevitable.

And at some point, the suffering may have cracked the egoic cell sufficiently for the light of awareness to shine through. And that receives the teaching and that can then grow. So there needs to be something in you that's able to receive the teaching, which ultimately it's not the teaching.

It's the consciousness of the so-called teacher. There's no teacher. There's only consciousness, but consciousness uses different channels.

And Jesus said... Nowadays, it would be a deeply offensive statement, but he lived in a different time when you could say deeply offensive things. He said, do not cast pearls before swine.

All that it means is that they are not ready for the teaching. They are interested in eating, drinking, and fornicating, so to speak. Let's be blunt.

There are still many humans whose main interest is different. They're not interested in any spiritual awakening. So Jesus used that expression, but I would not use that because they are not swine.

They are just humans waiting to be awakened or to come to an awakening. The essence of who they are is one with the essence of who you are. So you are not superior to them in essence.

You're not superior to any human because every human has come out of... is a manifestation of the one consciousness. So one more point.

Yes, to summarize, the spiritual teaching with limitations, I'd say it can be taught if there's a readiness in the sense, not adding information to your mind so much, but as an acceleration of what's happening in you already. A subsidiary question would be, what about religion? Is it being religious helpful for spiritual awakening?

Oh, hmm. If you're very religious people, are they closer to spiritual awakening? Are they more open to spiritual awakening?

And there's no... Some may be more open because their religion, because every religion has a transcendent dimension hidden somewhere, even though it might be obscured by ideology and dogma and very often heavily obscured by ideology and dogma. But every religion, there is a transcendent dimension there in the background somewhere.

And some people may have access through their religion, may have access to it, and then they would be open to it. I have had letters and communications from monks, Buddhist monks, Christian monks, nuns, in monasteries saying, your book has deepened my faith and what wonderful. However, there are others for whom religion is an ideology, it strengthens their egoic sense of self, and they would be totally closed to any spiritual teaching.

So there's no receptivity there. So religion can be, yes, it has given you access to the transcendent dimension, or it has closed access to the transcendent dimension completely. But perhaps if you suffer a bit more, then it might still...

So suffering is so valuable. What would we do without suffering?

[Speaker 3] (2:16:45 - 2:17:04)

All right, Eckhart, we have another question here for you. This person wrote in, I've heard that having a strong inner intention to awaken can be helpful when a person wants to accelerate spiritual awakening in their life. Do you think that is true?

And if so, can you say more about this?

[Speaker 1] (2:17:05 - 2:25:33)

Right. Do you have a strong inner intention? I'm asking not Tammy, I'm asking everybody.

A strong inner intention to awaken. Yes and no. Intention usually implies you want to get somewhere.

If I have an intention to learn a new skill, I project myself, I want to get there. Intention implies I'm here, but I want to get there. I have an intention to achieve this, to obtain that, to build that, to manifest that, which is my intention.

Now, if you use the same for awakening, spiritual awakening, it would not be helpful, it would be a hindrance because the strong intention to become awakened would place the awakening in some future moment and you would create a conceptual sense of self that you, the so-called awakened being, want to achieve again in the future. And therefore, the strong intention to awaken in this case would be the greatest hindrance to awakening. However, if we, instead of intention, we could say motivation, do you have a strong motivation to awaken?

Or if we use the word intention in a different way, instead of intention, you would direct it towards the future, is it possible to use the word intention directed only into the present moment? And then your intention is, in this moment, I intend to be awake. So there's no time.

In this moment, your intention is to be awake now. So there can't be any future. Your intention is to be present now.

And if that intention is very strong, that's great, then you are present now. And to be present means to be no longer seduced by thought, useless thinking especially. And this is why, if I may quote a famous, wonderful spiritual teacher from India who passed away many years ago, Nisargadatta Maharaj, who said, when they asked him what is spiritual

awakening, he said, he had a lot of yang in him, so whatever he said was very forcefully expressed.

He said, what's spiritual awakening? It's a radical refusal to harbor thoughts. That's how he spoke.

It's a radical refusal to harbor thoughts. Now that's a strong intention. But it's not an intention for the future.

It's an intention that merges with the present moment because that's where awakening is inseparable from present moment awareness. Awakening is present moment awareness. And you can only achieve, so to speak, you can't achieve it, discover it perhaps, you can only have it now.

So there's no future in awakening. That's, again, we have some schools of thought, of spirituality teach or claim that there's nothing you can do to spiritually awaken. They say, let go of all effort, just do nothing, then it'll come.

Just don't let go of all, no effort, every effort is an obstacle. Okay, that's one extreme school. Okay, then you go, okay, that's great, I have nothing, that's nothing to do.

Okay, and 10 years later, you still find yourself sitting on your couch watching TV and drinking beer and waiting for your awakening. It's not come yet, but that's okay, it told me it's going to come. Then you have another school that says the opposite, that says, if you do not want spiritual awakening as much as a drowning man wants air, you're not going to get it.

Now, of course, that would be a very strong desire if you're drowning and you really want air. So which one is right? The secret is you bring the two together, have no intent, direct, no intention directed towards the future, but only present moment.

There's an intensity suddenly in the present moment. That intensity is presence and you no longer, you no longer, that intensity, in that intensity of presence, you no longer want anything because it's already there. So you, it's so easy to be awake in the present moment.

You can be awake in the present moment. You might lose it the next moment. You're not talking about the next moment, but right now, and that's the only thing you can do is be present now.

And let go of thinking unless it's helpful as much as possible. The radical refusal to harbor thoughts, and again, that's only one approach. It's the active approach.

You can also have the passive approach. You're so surrendered to this present moment that very few thoughts, if any, arise because what is there to think about? I completely

accept this moment, or as an ancient teacher recommended as a best spiritual practice to say the mantra whenever any situation arose that was a little bit difficult or challenging, use the following mantra.

He said, thanks for everything. I have no complaint whatsoever. That's the mantra, but you have to mean it.

If you just say it, it doesn't work, but if you mean it, thanks for this. I have no complaint whatsoever. Thank you for this.

I have no complaint whatsoever. That's also, that brings you to the same point as the radical refusal to harbor thoughts, which is a Yang approach. Thanks for everything.

I have no complaint whatsoever. It's a Yin approach. Yin, Yang.

Yin, Yang. So I love that. Thanks for everything, which every moment is good as it is, even the seemingly bad ones, especially the seemingly bad ones.

If somebody puts a great meal in front of you, it's great to say, oh, thanks for everything. Thank you. Thank you.

I have no complaint whatsoever. It's a great meal, but then something else happens. Something is given to you that you don't want.

Of course. Thank you. Because it's the present moment.

You might as well be friendly with it because it's all there ever is. You appreciate what is. There you are.

That's the opening into the transcendent dimension.

[Speaker 3] (2:25:38 - 2:25:55)

We have one final question for you, Eckhart. There's two parts to this. The person wrote in, can you tell us more about what it feels like to be fully awakened and what are signs of awakening along the journey?

[Speaker 1] (2:25:59 - 2:38:40)

What it feels like. Well, let's put that aside for a moment. But the signs of awakening are perhaps more important for people because people ask, well, is it happening?

Am I awakening? Or a question I often get, when am I going to awaken? It's the wrong question.

When am I going to awaken is the wrong question. But a slightly better question would be how do I know if the awakening process is happening in me or to me? How can I know

that?

Because for most people, it is a gradual process of disidentification, ultimately disidentification from thinking, so that you realize that thinking and awareness are no longer completely intertwined. Awareness or pure consciousness, pure awareness, separates itself from thought. And then thoughts very easily collapse because they're no longer feeding on consciousness.

So there's a separation of thinking and awareness. That's the disidentification from thought. And that is the process.

And that has its ups and downs. But there are certain signs that you have. And one of the clearest signs is you live more in the present moment.

That's a very simple thing. One of the clearest signs is you have the ability to live more aligned with the present moment. In other words, there is an appreciation of whatever it is around you at this moment.

There's an appreciation of the little things, the little things because you're no longer waiting for the big thing. But in the unenlightened, egoic consciousness, you're waiting for some big thing when you're going to start living. However you interpret the big thing, the big thing would be you meet the ideal partner or you meet the big thing, you finally make it in whatever you want to achieve.

Or the big thing is the world finally recognizes you as one of the greatest or whatever the big thing is. And so you're no longer looking for that. I mean, some people look for the big thing.

They want to get married or they want to have the wedding. The wedding lasts one day and they spend several years thinking about it. And then let's not talk about what happens after that.

So the little things, all the appreciation, the gratitude is one word that you can use for present moment living because you appreciate the little things that including objects as an appreciation of the... I have a... You can't see it.

I have a wooden desk here. It is lovely. I love touching the wood often.

Looking at the sky, many times during the day, I look at the sky and it changes all the time and it's so wonderful. The weather is for me a wonderful source of joy because these are... You're always surrounded by some kind of weather and I love weathers, always changing weather, rain, clouds, sky.

And I give it attention. It's a natural thing because it's part of being in the present moment. So all the little things in the looking out of the window, giving attention,

appreciation of what is, even anything, even man-made things.

So you live more like that as you live more in the present moment, you also notice that life becomes... You experience fewer problems in your life because most problems are manufactured in your mind, the unobserved mind. And many humans inhabit a world of problems.

The entire identity is derived from their problems and it's all make-believe in the mind. What's the problem at this moment? Well, nothing.

That's a miraculous question because at any given moment, there is no problem. Even if you don't know what you're going to eat for dinner and you don't have no money left, it's not a problem right now. There was a time in my life when I was more or less at that stage and it was very interesting.

It was an important part of deepening what had already happened to me, not knowing what to live on the next moment. But if you're present in the moment, what you need does come to you. It's almost miraculous.

So as you live more in the present moment, there's more inner peace. And so you notice that less obsession with past, less obsession with future, more appreciation of this moment, which means there's more inner peace that you feel. So that is a clear sign as you're able to live more in the present, is a clear sign that the awakening has happened.

Another good sign is you notice that you're not complaining the way you used to in your mind or out aloud. Because many people spend a lot of their time complaining mentally, out aloud, and on social media and the internet. It's true.

They've always tried something to complain about. And that's part of the egoic sense of self, the need to emphasize the otherness of others, even to emphasize the otherness of situations. I'm critical about this situation.

This shouldn't be happening. This shouldn't be. This shouldn't be happening.

And then you can be critical of others, complaining about others, what they did, failed to do, did wrong, said great. Of course, now the ego has created, the egoic mind has created social media. It's a wonderful thing now for complaining.

You can spend your life on Twitter and Facebook complaining about others, and millions of people are doing it. So you find the end of complaining, that's another sign that the awakening is happening to you, because you recognize it's not only, it's futile, it's destructive, it's unpleasant. Before you didn't know that, because the ego can't tell the difference between pleasant and unpleasant.

For the ego, often what is unpleasant is regarded as pleasant and the other way around.

So no complaining anymore, and that's also connected with being able to live in the present. And so that's a huge burden that's lifted.

If you don't, this obsessive complaining is gone. You notice also you're less reactive in situations where before you used to be reactive. You might notice it when you're driving, you're not reactive to other drivers.

You don't misinterpret other drivers, whatever they do, as a personal insult to you. So there's less reactivity in people that you normally trigger you, to use that word, people who trigger negative reactions in you, and suddenly it doesn't happen anymore. You're able to just accept them for who they are.

You can visit your parents without going through the same thing that goes through every time you get together with your parents. They criticize you. Just not everybody, but they criticize you.

You defend yourself, and then you criticize them. The same, like old, I used to say old records, but records don't exist anymore. So old, you have to, different metaphors and computer programs are still, the same programs are running.

And so people have computed the same programs are running in their minds for years and years and years. And they don't even know it because they're completely identified with it. And when you, as you begin to awaken, you recognize these old programs and gradually you detach from the old programs in your mind.

It's another clear sign that you're awakening. So there are many signs, but they all means your life actually feels less heavy. The burden of being, the burden of yourself becomes less because people don't realize it, but they carry a huge burden of themselves with all their preoccupations and worries and reactions.

And there's an absence of the transcendent dimension, complete ignorance of the transcendent dimension, which is the deep eye. So all that is, these are signs that the awakening is happening. And another sign, as I pointed out before, is when you listen to a talk, a spiritual talk, or you read a book that was written from a spiritual state of consciousness, there is immediately a recognition.

And you feel more enlivened in some way. You feel better. You feel definitely it's an act of recognition.

Oh, yeah, sure. Yes, yes. There's always, when you hear Tish, we're teaching, it's not really ultimately anything new.

And you say, oh, yes. I knew that. I couldn't have said it, but I knew it.

I knew that. But that knowing is not conceptual knowing. It's non-conceptual knowing.

And that's something that our civilization doesn't know anything about. Schools cannot teach you that this, apart from conceptual knowing, there's a deeper sense of knowing that is non-conceptual. Well, we may be talking about that in the school of awakening, but don't wait for it.

So I trust that it will be helpful to those of you who were open, who are open to the message. And if you're not open to the message, you've left us long ago anyway, I assume, unless you're in the process of writing critical comments about it on Facebook or Twitter. That's fine.

That's fine, too. So let's leave it at that for today. I wish you well.

And let's spend just a moment in presence of becoming aware of, to go back to the very beginning where we started, become aware of the deep eye, erase all the other stuff that gave you your sense of self and realize the deeper sense of self that arises from the deep eye, which is beingness of presence. I am that I am. I am.

[Speaker 2] (2:39:06 - 2:39:07)

Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (2:39:11 - 2:41:59)

Thank you so very, very much, Eckhart, for this special School of Awakening webinar. Thank you. Again, I want to remind everyone who's joining us that you can find a button on this page that allows you to learn more about the Eckhart Tolle School of Awakening.

Registration is open through March 23rd, and then the School of Awakening begins on March 27th. You can just click the button on this page to learn more. I also want to share just a little bit that will give you a little bit more insight into the program.

The Eckhart Tolle School of Awakening is a five-month immersion program that includes two virtual retreats. You'll also receive monthly teachings from Eckhart and Kim, practical exercises, and meditations to help accelerate the awakening process and enable you to integrate presence into every aspect of your life. Additionally, one of the most powerful parts of the program is the opportunity to join online with a vibrant community of like-minded people dedicated to intensifying presence in their life.

This is certainly the deepest and most advanced online program that Eckhart and Kim teach. Some of the additional topics that Eckhart will cover include the specific obstacles to spiritual awakening, how to work with feelings of disconnection, irritation, and difficult emotional states, what it means to view suffering as a great teacher, and how when viewed in this way, suffering can quicken spiritual realization, how to live from the deep eye, as Eckhart mentioned, instead of the surface eye, and contribute to the collective evolution of our species. When you join the program, you'll have access to attend the

two virtual retreats, and then also these five months of live teachings with question and answer sessions and live group meditations. Again, you can click the button on this page to learn more, and whether you join us or not in the School of Awakening, I want to thank you so much for being with us here for this special webinar and for your own interest, commitment, resonance, and motivation to intensify presence in your life.

Thank you so, so much. And thank you, Eckhart, for this special School of Awakening webinar and everyone for being with us. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (2:42:02 - 2:57:01)

The usual mistake or dysfunctional way of living, unconscious way, is, as I've mentioned before, is devaluing the present moment and overvaluing the next moment. The ego lives always with reference to past and future. The mentally are always somewhere else.

Instead of giving fullest attention to this, because this is the most valuable moment. Why? Because it's the only one in the present moment.

Give your fullest attention to this moment, because it's not true that the next moment is more significant, because it never comes. So there is a way of being totally present in the planning for the future. It's all little things.

And even if you're the Pope or the president of a huge corporation or the president of a country, it's still the same. The present moment in its richness is usually overlooked, because you're looking for something more significant. It's fine to achieve things, especially if they are beneficial, but for humanity and the totality of the planet, it's lovely to have that.

But even that doesn't make up your identity. The more you honor the small things, the more likely it is that you'll experience more good things in the so-called future, because you have such a good relationship with the present. Gratitude is an underlying state of consciousness, which is giving your fullest attention, honoring what is.

The power to manifest is in experiencing the fullness of the present moment, the undifferentiated fullness. So when you don't complain about not only other people, but also about your life, then you can't be a victim anymore. I is the light of consciousness in which these feelings are being experienced right now.

The victim is a huge, a huge present. It is not who you are. And remember, thanks for everything.

I have no complaint whatsoever. So there's this wonderful stillness here, and let's acknowledge it. The power is not just in you.

It's all around you. Free of compulsive thinking. And then you are free to use thinking as

a beautiful tool for creating.

But you're no longer creating from an egoic neediness. You're creating as an expression of consciousness that creates through you. Whatever it is that you create depends on who you are on the form level as a person.

You may have certain abilities or certain things you have learned, and how or what you create depends on that. But that which inspires the creation is the consciousness that then moves through you into a particular channel. And then creativity comes in, whether you're an artist or even a scientist needs that, or the science is based on rational thinking and analysis.

The greatest breakthrough in science came to people. There are many stories about that. They came to people who suddenly went blank, not really blank, but spacious.

Einstein had many moments of spaciousness. And then things suddenly come that could not be arrived at through thinking. Thinking was necessary too, but it didn't.

The real breakthrough comes as a revelation, even in science. So, and it transforms your relationships to other humans. And that's a beautiful thing.

Even if that's all, if you're not creative in any other area except in all your relationships to relate with that feeling of benevolence towards others, no matter whether it's your intimate relationships or relationships that happen for a few minutes that during the day, all these are important. And so when you're no longer judging a human being, then you can sense and flow of goodwill towards a human. But it presupposes that you are not judging yourself either.

So first you have come into your own spaciousness, and then you discover the spaciousness in the other, even if they don't know it yet. When your gaze, in a wider sense, gaze, not just the visual gaze, but directing your attention, directing your attention to somebody and going deeper than the surface appearance of that person, which is first of all, the physical form of that person. Now for many people, that's the first thing they notice and the last thing they notice.

They only relate to another as a physical form, which they either don't, are not interested in or they want it. I want you. And then beyond the physical form, there's the psychological form of that person, the kind of personality that this person has.

So that's the next thing. So level one is a physical thing. When you meet somebody, level two is a personality of that person, which is also, it's a psychological, this is the physical form.

The next level down is a psychological form. And if you are stuck on those two levels, you can never truly come to a relationship of true lovingness towards the other, of true

goodwill towards the other, of truly sensing something that unites you to the other. There's always that sense of separation because you haven't gone deep enough into the other.

Why haven't you gone deep enough into the other? Because you haven't gone deep enough into yourself. It's only if you've gone deep enough into yourself and by deep enough means, into the inner spaciousness in which you're not thinking, no compulsive thinking, an alertness remains, that is, you become suddenly very deep.

And then you can look at another human being, no matter what they say or do or how they look. You can then sense their beingness also, but only through yours. And there you meet, when you can sense a human's beingness, even if they can't sense it for themselves, you can, there's a feeling of love, not in a conventional sense, a lovingness towards the other.

And that is, you recognize the most essential thing of who you are is also in the other. You recognize that oneness. And what is that?

It's consciousness. What you love in true love, what you love in the other, is their consciousness. What you love in the dog, although it's lovely to touch a dog, it's lovely to look at the dog or the cat, but what you really love, when you look into the eyes of the dog, is the consciousness of the dog.

The beingness looks back at you and you look into the eyes, unobstructed by thinking in the dog. And for a moment, the dog frees you from your own thinking. People don't know that that's what happens.

And that's why they love dogs, because for a moment, you look at a dog and there's always a few moments when you're not, unless you're so bad that you can't even be present with your dog. For a moment, the dog frees you off and you go, you feed yourself more fully, because there's a being who is one with itself and is not imposing anything. So there's the shared beingness or consciousness you suddenly sense.

And this shared consciousness, to realize the shared consciousness is love in the true sense. And the same could happen even with a tree, when you truly acknowledge the beingness of the tree from your inner, so that you look at it without imposing judgment or interpretation on it. It does not mean that you can never say anything about the tree.

It means, for example, it means there are two ways of knowing the tree or anything, or knowing a human being, of knowing anything. There are two ways of knowing, even yourself. One is through thinking and concepts.

So I can know you by knowing many things about you and your past and what happened to you and your background. And so all these things I know about you, but there is a more fundamental and more essential way of knowing. I can know you as consciousness

rather than as the form that you are.

I can know the tree by looking at it, giving it my fullest attention and just the awareness for the sense perception. And I'm looking at that tree and I can suddenly sense its aliveness, its stillness, its beingness. I can sense that.

Sensing that means I'm connecting with it and connecting means the connection has always been there, but now you notice it, you connect it, connect with the tree and you love it. It does not mean that in some other moment when a child wants to know what the name of this tree is, because there is a time when a child asks about names and concepts, you're not going to refuse and say I'm not going to tell you about the name because I don't want you to get trapped in concepts. You have to encourage the child not to lose the deeper knowing when you give the name.

So you tell this is an oak tree or better you tell the child we call it an oak tree because it isn't an oak tree, we call it an oak tree. And then encourage the child to look, to continuously continue to perceive it, touch it. If there's something to smell, smell it, listen to the leaves, listen, look, touch, interact, give it your attention so that the child is not trapped in a world of concepts as is the destiny of many children these days at an early age get completely absorbed by concepts and before you know it at a fairly early age they are lost in their minds.

Unhappy a lot of the time. What's the next thing that I can think of that I need? We'll talk about that.

So if you discover within yourself that a lot of the time you are in a state of lack, of insufficiency, of not enough and you feel that the answer to the remedy is to be active in this world and achieve and do as much as possible then you'll probably find that ultimately that is not the answer to your state of lack. In order to transcend, to go beyond your state of lack, of neediness, of not enough, spiritual practice and spiritual realization is necessary. Focus on the realization of being.

It's only there that you can go beyond that state of lack which is ego. Go within and discover who or what you are beyond the person.

[Speaker 4] (2:57:22 - 3:00:58)

Welcome everyone to today's live online event The Shift That Changes Everything. In just a few moments we're going to be joined by Eckhart who I know many of you know is widely recognized as one of the most visionary teachers of our time. Eckhart's also the author of the international bestsellers The Power of Now and A New Earth and he has literally introduced millions of people across the world to the joy, peace and freedom of living life in the present moment.

My name is Sybil and on behalf of Eckhart Teachings and Sounds True I want to thank

each and every one of you for coming tonight and attending this session. We're just so honored to have so many people from all over the world joining us. And before we get started I just wanted to mention that part of the inspiration for tonight's talk comes from an online program that we're doing with Eckhart called Doorways into Presence How to Quiet Your Mind and Live in the Now.

Have you ever wondered what it's like to live a day in presence like Eckhart? This is a question all of us were asking ourselves the team here at Eckhart Teachings and Sounds True and we're like I think there's so many other folks who are asking that too. How does Eckhart actually live in the now every single day?

Many of us want to be present as we move through the day and feel all the freedom and peace that stems from the present moment but how do you actually do that? Right? Like especially when life throws you challenges or problems or it's just the general busyness of the day that can be so distracting.

Well, this new online program with Eckhart shows us how. Eckhart's going to be guiding a community of students through 14 experiences so we can learn how to use our everyday moments differently and build what Eckhart calls presence power. And when you make this shift and live in the now each day it changes everything.

We're able to quiet our minds and continually experience the dimension of stillness that's always available. We're very much looking forward to this and the upcoming program with Eckhart and we hope you'll all join us too with a lot of students from all over the world. And also today we're offering a special teaching bonus when you sign up.

So after you enroll you'll receive a collection called Living Free from Stress and Anxiety. It includes three of Eckhart's most popular audio programs The Secret of Happiness The Joy of Being and Freedom from the World. We wanted to give everyone the opportunity to listen to these special teachings and prepare for the program that Eckhart's going to be guiding us through called Doors to Presence.

So in addition to receiving a special discount when you sign up today you'll also get these teachings when you enroll. And if you're interested you can find out more about the program and register at EckhartTolle.com And I'll also be able to give you some additional information about the program at the end of the event this evening. And now without further ado please allow me to introduce and welcome our friend and guide for tonight's talk Eckhart Tolle.

Eckhart, welcome.

[Speaker 2] (3:00:59 - 3:04:30)

Thank you, Sigru and hello everybody. Welcome to the present moment. I'd like this session to be to become for you an actual experiential realization what presence is.

So we're not just talking about presence but being present. Sensing the presence. So that presence that you can sense is in between the words behind the words it's behind all sense perceptions it makes all sense perceptions possible it's behind all thinking it makes thinking possible it's behind all emotion it's what makes emotion possible but in itself it transcends all these things it is inseparable from sensory perception thinking and emotions but also transcends those it is likely that you have encounter presence and you do from time to time or perhaps quite often encounter presence without recognizing it for what it is it could just be a moment when you feel at ease you feel a sense of well-being a sense of peaceful aliveness not because you have desensitized yourself not because you've taken some substances not because you're about to fall asleep not because there's a lowering of your consciousness no it's a heightened consciousness thinking of course is a manifestation of consciousness emotions are a manifestation of consciousness sense perceptions could not exist without consciousness so what we're talking about when we use presence we're talking about the essence of what you are which is consciousness the light of consciousness one could say this vast consciousness that is

[Speaker 1] (3:04:30 - 3:04:33)

universal consciousness it's not only within you

[Speaker 2] (3:04:33 - 3:06:08)

it is also without it is the one could say the intelligence that underlies all phenomenal manifestations of the universe there's a hidden concealed hidden vast intelligence that gives rise to the evolution of all life forms impossible for us to understand it but we can sense it within ourselves as the essence of our being so the easiest way to point to presence to say that you encounter it when you stop thinking for a moment without losing consciousness stop thinking means the continuous voice in the head that usually comments on what's going on around you or comments on all kinds of things imaginary scenarios and so on the conditioned voice in the head that you live with

[Speaker 1] (3:06:08 - 3:06:28)

everybody lives with that voice in their head that talks all the time inside or if it talks aloud then you're considered crazy people say there's people walking in the streets talking out aloud and you say oh they're mentally insane but the only difference between a normal human being

[Speaker 2] (3:06:28 - 3:06:58)

and those people that you call mentally insane is that those who you do not call mentally insane when they're still doing the same thing they're just not talking out aloud it's happening in their head it's a continuous stream of thinking and that creates the ego the

egoic sense of self an ultimately fictitious identity that you are infinitely more than the entity created by the movement of thought and the emotions that reflect the movement of thought

[Speaker 1] (3:06:58 - 3:07:04)

there's infinitely more to you than what you conventionally call the person

[Speaker 2] (3:07:05 - 3:07:24)

a person is a conditioned entity a form that consciousness has taken and most humans unless they are awakening already spiritually which is what we are talking about the arising of presence is spiritual awakening unless you are awakening

[Speaker 1] (3:07:24 - 3:07:27)

and many of you are awakening

[Speaker 2] (3:07:27 - 3:12:34)

even if you don't have words for it many of you are here because you are awakening otherwise this session would be totally meaningless to you and there may be a few to whom it is totally meaningless what is this guy talking about? so you must have had a glimpse of what it is that I'm talking about and if you haven't perhaps you can have it now and that glimpse is the possibility of arriving at the briefly at first the cessation of thinking the voice in the head stops and yet consciousness remains and you can look around or look at this image on the screen or look around the room take everything in but you are not thinking about it it's just sensory perception and what is behind the sensory perception?

presence another word for it is awareness so there is an awareness that is perceiving at this moment and that awareness is silent but it's awake and that awareness is the deeper dimension to who or what you are that's no longer the person that you usually think of when you say I there is a deeper I a deeper sense of being that transcends the personal sense of identity so you can sense there is an awareness in you a consciousness and that consciousness is perceiving it doesn't need to interpret it it knows at a very deep level but not conceptually you can look around your room or wherever you are you know that there is furniture or whatever there is but you don't call it anything you just allow it to be so there is instead of a person perceiving things which is what you are always interpreting, commenting and labeling mentally instead of a person you are now perceiving not as a person you are perceiving as awareness so there is a shift from personal sense of self a shift to a deeper level you could call it deeper or higher it doesn't matter to a deeper level of consciousness where you are not a person you are that which is prior to the person and that's awareness presence and that's amazing you can then be aware of that awareness you can sense this presence that you

are in addition to whatever you are perceiving it's in the background of your sense perceptions the background of your life it's a spacious vast presence that connects you to something that we cannot really define or talk about it's deep and it's infinite it's a soul it's not just the depth of your being it connects you to the very soul of the universe the ancients ancient Romans and Greeks had this wonderful term anima mundi which is latin for the soul of the world there is such a thing as a world soul and that is your your soul presence the consciousness that you are is a ray or a spark of that inseparable from the soul of the totality so it's a liberation from the ego itself liberation of the self and then life becomes more harmonious when you begin to invite that consciousness into your life that presence your life begins to flow with greater ease more harmoniously

[Speaker 1] (3:12:35 - 3:12:43)

not that you are not challenged anymore challenges continue but all the challenges do once you begin to awaken to presence

[Speaker 2] (3:12:44 - 3:12:53)

challenges then deepen your presence in fact you need the difficulties in your life to deepen your presence

[Speaker 1] (3:12:54 - 3:13:00)

as you begin to awaken any challenge will deepen your presence

[Speaker 2] (3:13:00 - 3:15:24)

in the early stages it could also happen that challenges take you completely out of presence when you encounter difficult situations or people can take you totally out of presence but gradually as you become a bit more established, rooted in that presence the opposite happens challenges don't make you unconscious they make you more conscious so in a nutshell presence is awareness without thought and then thinking becomes a more helpful tool rather than something that torments you many people their thinking mind torments them continuously they have an unhappy sense of self they talk to themselves using unhappy words they talk about other people using unhappy words and concepts and they confuse what the voice in the head with actual reality out there they can't tell the difference between what is and the way in which they interpret what is which is the conditioning of the mind when you come to an alignment with what is which is always now life becomes easier not free of challenges but much easier and challenges don't produce unhappiness anymore that's a big thing and the difficulties of your life don't make you unhappy anymore amazing I believe there are a few questions that people have submitted or want to ask I don't know if there are any questions left Sybil you have some?

[Speaker 4] (3:15:24 - 3:15:46)

I do, I have questions that people submitted prior to the session and the first one we wanted to ask you was from Randy in New York and Randy's question Eckhart is if you could choose only one practice to bring about the greatest impact of presence in your life what would it be?

[Speaker 2] (3:15:48 - 3:21:00)

Great, wonderful question thanks one practice that's not complicated at all you don't need time to master it this practice it does not take time obviously if a practice of presence takes time it's not really working very well is it? so the the most simple direct practice is to be aware of your breath to be aware of your breathing for example now to be aware of it, your breathing now before I just said that it's very likely that you were not aware of your breathing unless you knew already what this great practice is but the moment I said it your awareness went to your breath and you can feel the air moving into the body and out of the body and so to speak you follow it with your attention you follow the air with your attention as it goes in and out that is the most direct and simplest practice of being present I'm not the first person to come up with that somebody called the Buddha already talked about it 2,500 years ago it was called Anapanasati Yoga it's the practice of the ingoing and outgoing breath ingoing and outgoing breath awareness now the breathing is always there most of the time you're not conscious of it, when you direct consciousness to your breathing something very interesting happens it slows down or completely eliminates your thinking and there's only an awareness of your breath so if you want to, if you're being tortured by your thoughts as many people are many people don't even know that they're tortured by your thoughts, they think they're being tortured by life whatever their life situation it's so dreadful my life is so difficult and complicated I can't stand it anymore and then the narrative continues and continues and you think that's your life not knowing that it's a narrative in your mind, it's not your life to confuse a narrative in your mind with your life is a fundamental, very dreadful error but very, very common has anybody taught you that at school or university? probably not the most fundamental knowledge not to confuse a narrative in your mind with your life because your life isn't a narrative in your mind it's always now, it is never not now, this is most fundamentally your life is now not the narrative of past and future, that is helpful for practical purposes but no more than that not to give you an identity that's a fictitious identity your true identity is rooted in the power of the present moment the power of now be aware of your breathing you don't even have to control it, there are certain meditation practices that have a very structured way of approaching your breath and you can change the length of your breath you can count your breath you can do all kinds of things, that's fine for meditation practices but the simplest thing is no matter where you are, and you don't even have to say, ok, I'm going to meditate

[Speaker 1] (3:21:00 - 3:21:14)

now it's fine, I love meditation but I sometimes make fun of it a little bit then you enter a totally different ok, now it's time to meditate for 10 minutes and throughout your life

[Speaker 2] (3:21:14 - 3:21:28)

wherever you are be aware of your breathing whenever you can it creates an inner spaciousness because when you're aware of your breathing, you can't do much thinking and most of the thinking

[Speaker 1] (3:21:28 - 3:21:40)

as you may know or maybe it's news to you most of your thinking is not only unnecessary but actually very harmful it creates all kinds of

[Speaker 2] (3:21:40 - 3:23:08)

pseudo problems well the mind is telling you it's working on solving your problems it's actually regurgitating old narratives not real problems there is such a thing as focused application of the mind thinking ability becomes enhanced when there is a presence behind it so when you have an actual real problem to solve in your life approach it not only with your thinking mind but also with the cessation of thinking you can continue step back from thinking into stillness and if you want to use your breath to access the stillness, it's a good portal, be aware of your breathing so first, these are the problems when I have something to think about I usually, because I'm old fashioned I have a notepad and a pen and if I have to think about what can I do in this situation, what are the solutions, I start writing down possibilities these people, modern humans like you you probably use some device, I don't know what you do on

[Speaker 1] (3:23:08 - 3:23:14)

a keyboard or whatever so you write what is it that I can do in this

[Speaker 2] (3:23:14 - 3:24:10)

what can I do to solve this if it's an actual problem, because many things that humans come up with in their mind are not actual problems, they're imaginary constructs if there's an actual problem, okay action needs to be taken, what is it that I can do, write down this, this, this and then you run out of ideas and then it's time to become still be aware of your breathing you don't need to close your eyes you can, but it's not necessary to be aware of your breathing because you can be aware of your breathing and there's still enough awareness left to be aware of your surroundings if you want to focus more deeply on your breathing, you can close your eyes and then really focus on your breathing but I say even one conscious breath makes a difference in your life

[Speaker 1] (3:24:10 - 3:24:23)

if you take that one conscious breath several times during the day what do I mean by one conscious breath it's one conscious in and out breath

[Speaker 2] (3:24:23 - 3:25:38)

how long does it take, I don't know, maybe, let's see I'm doing it, conscious breath goes like this, that was it, in and out 10 seconds, maybe, doesn't matter and that's one conscious breath, what does it do it creates a gap in your stream of thinking a stillness a presence arises, has always been there, is always there underneath all the thinking so presence is not something that you need to achieve or attain it's something that you discover because it's already there so you can't really work hard to become present because it's already there and this is why in some traditions people say well you are already enlightened

[Speaker 1] (3:25:40 - 3:25:45)

and the person says what are you talking about, my life is a complete mess, how can I be

[Speaker 2] (3:25:45 - 3:26:14)

enlightened, all my relationships are in shambles I'm not enlightened, well underneath all that mental noise and emotional turmoil, there is a presence there is a deeper consciousness so the simplest practice is to be aware of your breath and even if it's only one conscious breath

[Speaker 1] (3:26:14 - 3:26:28)

but taken many times during the day whenever you remember and you might want to take two or three instead of one, even better two or three conscious breaths while you're on your computer on your keyboard

[Speaker 2] (3:26:29 - 3:27:09)

okay stop for a moment one or two or three conscious breaths or just observe that you are breathing just direct your attention there you are breathing there is no doubt about it you are breathing so just observe that you are breathing breathing happens to you, you are not doing it but for most people thinking is the same, thinking happens to them, they are not doing it they have no control at all what their mind does, they have no awareness

[Speaker 1] (3:27:11 - 3:27:48)

so thinking happens to them in the same way that breathing happens to them but this doesn't have to, breathing yes that always happens something in you wants to live and it's breathing, it wants you to live in this incarnation and that's why you're breathing and

no matter how unhappy you are, you cannot kill yourself by stopping breathing, you won't be able nobody has ever committed suicide by stopping their breath holding their breath something in you does not want to commit suicide it wants to come to the end of your incarnation naturally

[Speaker 2] (3:27:50 - 3:28:33)

and only the silly person wants to commit suicide so get in touch with that in you that does not want to commit, it's not unhappy the presence is not unhappy the awareness is not unhappy so the simplest practice be aware of your breathing now that can lead you into the next practice that they are closely connected the other practice is to be aware of the inner energy field of your body when you're breathing that connects

[Speaker 1] (3:28:33 - 3:28:55)

you almost inevitably with the inner energy field of your body because you breathe into and if you can feel that you're breathing into as deep as the abdomen without no effort, it's just happening don't make an effort it's just happening, you're breathing and your attention follows the

[Speaker 2] (3:28:55 - 3:29:08)

breath as deep as the abdomen, belly although the air probably doesn't go there but your attention goes with the breath and from there you can sense an energy spreading

[Speaker 1] (3:29:08 - 3:29:24)

out throughout your body an inner energy field it pervades the body I call it inner body awareness it's also an ancient meditation practice if done in a more structured way it's called Vipassana

[Speaker 2] (3:29:24 - 3:29:55)

or going back also probably taught by the Buddha too and by Jesus, we only have fragments of his teachings he talks about the possibility that your body can be full of light that's what he's talking about so inner body awareness to sense the inner energy field of your body and breath awareness are closely

[Speaker 1] (3:29:55 - 3:30:09)

related and sometimes breath awareness inevitably could connect you to the inner energy field of the body and then they merge into one practice you're aware of your breathing and you're aware

[Speaker 2] (3:30:09 - 3:31:03)

of that your body is pervaded by a sense of aliveness, that is the intelligence that inhabits your body it transcends who or what you are as a person and you feel intensely alive not in an excited way in a calm way so there's breath awareness and inner body awareness, they merge into one let's see if there are any other questions, Sybil?

[Speaker 4] (3:31:03 - 3:32:06)

We have a question from Southern California from Tam she says she loves all of the tools that you've given so far and it's been really really helpful throughout her entire life and there's times where some situations happen and it just becomes really overwhelming what's your best advice to help become present when we do have these overwhelming times and it just feels like it's too much to bear and none of the regular practices of presence are working, when you see or hear something that's extremely upsetting or you just feel totally overwhelmed and consumed in unconsciousness in the moment recently it felt like all the wonderful tools that were helping so far didn't help in moments of overwhelm and stress and probably deep unconsciousness what would be your advice to help pull me back to consciousness when that happens?

[Speaker 2] (3:32:08 - 3:33:29)

Thank you, we probably need to differentiate between different things here, there is such a thing as emergency situations emergency situations in your life that require an immediate response you're being attacked by a wild animal or a crazy human or your house is on fire or there's an earthquake all these things are happening more and more these days by the way, as you probably know for many people actually emergencies happen and they require an immediate when this happens there is no time to think about how can I be present the emergency can either

[Speaker 1] (3:33:29 - 3:33:35)

cause you to enter a state of panic

[Speaker 2] (3:33:35 - 3:33:56)

and extreme well panic is extreme fear it's also possible that an emergency makes you very present itself it it can have

[Speaker 1] (3:33:57 - 3:33:59)

either one or the other effect

[Speaker 2] (3:33:59 - 3:34:12)

on you, it can make you panicky and fearful or it can make you intensely alert and out of that alertness comes whatever response is required in that situation

[Speaker 1] (3:34:13 - 3:34:24)

no thinking is involved in an emergency situation if the emergency forces you into absolute presence

[Speaker 2] (3:34:25 - 3:34:39)

it's not a practice you can't say your house is on fire and say now I need to practice presence but it may be that the emergency itself creates this intense presence

[Speaker 1] (3:34:39 - 3:34:45)

in you and then an intelligence operates in you and causes you to take

[Speaker 2] (3:34:45 - 3:34:55)

right action for that moment whatever that may be, it is not premeditated and it does not come from the conditioning of your mind accumulated conditioning of your mind

[Speaker 1] (3:34:55 - 3:35:05)

so you are not reacting in some old predictable way when you are present it is more likely should you encounter an emergency situation

[Speaker 2] (3:35:05 - 3:36:08)

but you have been practicing presence in your daily life beforehand it is your chances of staying present and experiencing an intensification of presence when an emergency happens is much greater, it is in other words it is more likely when you've been practicing presence already in normal situations in your life when a true emergency happens, that presence will become very intense and that means immediately it will take action through you and you will do just the right thing for that situation, nobody can predict what that might be so sometimes people think people probably heard of accounts of people who have performed heroic actions maybe they have saved other people or heroic things and they later ask what did you how did

[Speaker 1] (3:36:08 - 3:36:38)

you are so brave, how could you do that and they say I couldn't help, I just did it, I couldn't help it there was no thinking involved it just happened, I did it and when this happens also you don't take credit for it if you save somebody's life because it just, the action then happens through you a greater intelligence one could say acts through you, it takes action so you are more likely to be prepared

[Speaker 2] (3:36:38 - 3:36:54)

you will be prepared for true emergencies if you have been practicing presence because

the presence power has been growing in you, so you will not be paralyzed for example by an emergency, some people are

[Speaker 1] (3:36:54 - 3:37:05)

either paralyzed or they go into intense mode of panic and it's not likely that panic will lead

[Speaker 2] (3:37:05 - 3:38:15)

to really intelligent and effective action they will probably do the wrong thing that makes the situation even worse or gets them killed that's panic so presence practicing of presence is a good preparation should life present you with an enormous challenge, an immediate an emergency that needs to be dealt with immediately, so that the emergency does not overwhelm you you can face it that's one thing but there's another form of overwhelm that's to do with the the thinking mind so you have some problems in your life or maybe a succession of problems that's why you become overwhelmed, you have several problems not absolute emergencies but difficulties in your life, somebody close to you dies and you lose your job the next day and then you get home the following day and your wife has left you or your husband left you or whatever

[Speaker 1] (3:38:15 - 3:38:35)

many things suddenly come I can't take it anymore, I'm so over well okay so here we're talking somewhat different situation from the actual immediate emergency this overwhelm is produced by the thinking mind trying to find some

[Speaker 2] (3:38:35 - 3:38:49)

kind of coping with impossible, seemingly impossible situations that you cannot actually do anything about right now at some point you can take action to to solve situations but

[Speaker 1] (3:38:49 - 3:39:04)

right now because it's not an emergency so right now you just have all these problems arriving in your life what is your my investments have collapsed if you had any my bank account is empty I can't pay my rent

[Speaker 2] (3:39:04 - 3:39:30)

all these things are could lead to overwhelm but what is the overwhelm is the thinking mind creating havoc in your mind oh my god I can't take anymore, what should I do my life has come to an end I can't cope with it there you need to take action

[Speaker 1] (3:39:30 - 3:39:38)

and here again the preparation for that should it happen that in your life you are

[Speaker 2] (3:39:38 - 3:40:39)

faced with several problems occurring in a short space of time practice presence in your daily life again is a wonderful preparation for coping with a series of problems that may arise in a short space of time in your life so that's why it's very important to practice presence when things are going relatively okay so that what I call presence power grows in you and as presence power grows in you when these situations happen you are able to take your attention out of the chaotic thinking mind and bring your attention into the present moment in whatever way through your breathing or your awareness

[Speaker 1] (3:40:40 - 3:40:44)

don't believe your mind when it tells you I can't do it now

[Speaker 2] (3:40:45 - 3:41:09)

I need to think about my problems I can't do presence now it's impossible this thought is a lie if you have been practicing presence and then you have this thought that says I can't do it now there's no point don't believe in every thought that comes into your mind that's another practice don't believe in every

[Speaker 1] (3:41:09 - 3:41:24)

thought that comes into your mind your thought says I can't do it now there's no point of course you can take a conscious breath there's nobody who cannot take a conscious breath if you decide to take a conscious breath and if you don't believe your mind

[Speaker 2] (3:41:24 - 3:41:55)

it tells you you can't do it then you take a conscious breath on a practical level physical movement helps if you feel overwhelmed go out into nature and breathe consciously there and take in your surroundings nature is a very healing thing

[Speaker 1] (3:41:56 - 3:42:05)

when your life is especially when your life has become chaotic go into nature even if you live in a city there will be nature

[Speaker 2] (3:42:05 - 3:42:49)

somewhere maybe you have a backyard maybe you have this big park where you can go there will be nature somewhere you can get out of the city even better so you go into nature and nature can help you become present it's easier to be present in nature than to be present in a city. Once presence power grows in you it makes hardly any difference

you may still have a preference for nature but you can be as present in the city too.

But in the early stages of presence arising in you, nature is very helpful. So when life becomes

[Speaker 1] (3:42:50 - 3:42:54)

a burden to you then go into nature

[Speaker 2] (3:42:54 - 3:44:02)

and bring your attention to your sense perceptions and your breathing, be there fully and it can liberate you to some extent it liberates you from this mental overwhelm this was perhaps an interesting story from my early life when I was a child I was I didn't have a happy childhood well there were some happy moments, yes in fact this is what I'm going to talk about now on the whole my life, my whole life was not happy because my family environment was chaotic and a lot of screaming and anger and horrible so my parents meant well but they were in the grip of their own unconscious conditioning they couldn't help it so I was not happy there very unhappy at school too so I carried this unhappiness and at some I don't know how old I was, maybe ten, I got a bicycle for Christmas

[Speaker 1] (3:44:03 - 3:44:05)

so I was able to get out of the city

[Speaker 2] (3:44:06 - 3:44:07)

it wasn't

[Speaker 1] (3:44:07 - 3:44:15)

it was a medium sized city so I took like a 15 minute bike ride and I would be out it wasn't grand nature

[Speaker 2] (3:44:16 - 3:44:28)

like just cornfields and hedges and trees and little groves but it was nature so I got out of the city

[Speaker 1] (3:44:29 - 3:44:44)

many times on my bike the moment I reached nature I felt so much better and there was one thought that repeated itself every time I did this it repeated itself in my mind and that thought said

[Speaker 2] (3:44:45 - 3:45:34)

I didn't fully understand what it meant but I just thought that this will always be here this will always be here this will always be here and this referred to nature so I had this intuitive realization there is a human made world which was a world of unhappiness for me and there was the natural world which represented the liberation from unhappiness and it represented well-being and harmony so that's my first that was my first spiritual experience in life was that occurred many many times

[Speaker 1] (3:45:34 - 3:45:39)

so nature is wonderful in a way you could people may not realize

[Speaker 2] (3:45:39 - 3:46:04)

the world that you inhabit consists primarily of human made things and natural things you can divide all your sensory perceptions into human made things that surround you all things furniture, cars buildings utensils everything human made and then you have

[Speaker 1] (3:46:04 - 3:46:09)

nature even as I sit here in my room I can see all the human made things

[Speaker 2] (3:46:11 - 3:47:34)

and then there is nature, look out of the window there is trees there is nature and I've got some plants here potted plants you can look at the plants there is the human made world and there is there is a plant and there is another one behind me it's a rubber plant it is and that's natural and it's interesting to see that you have these two dimensions the human made things and the natural things and then of course there is always the sky sky is always, even if you are in the middle of a huge city you can't see a single tree the sky is still there and the sky is a beautiful thing that actually can represent the inner consciousness this is why Jesus talks about the kingdom of heaven which in my translation is the dimension of spaciousness which is an inner dimension which is presence so Jesus talking about the kingdom of heaven dimension, kingdom of heaven vast spaciousness is the inner spaciousness of presence

[Speaker 1] (3:47:34 - 3:47:54)

Buddha talked about sunyata usually translated as emptiness but a better translation is spaciousness again as an inner state, a realization of this inner dimension all pointing to that it all comes together

[Speaker 2] (3:47:55 - 3:48:08)

it's only one truth one true teaching comes in just different forms so overwhelm is actually emergencies

[Speaker 1] (3:48:08 - 3:49:25)

and then there is the overwhelm by your mind and that you can do something about and get ready for it because we all get challenged and we are living in a time when collectively humanity is going to be challenged more and more so there will be challenges that affect every one of us there have already been some and there are some now collective challenges so you are either prepared for them or you are not, if you are not prepared you will become very unhappy and you won't be able to cope but if you are prepared it will, the challenges that humanity is facing will be an inseparable part of the awakening of humanity humans don't awaken even other life forms don't awaken unless they are challenged deeply that is part of the evolution of consciousness so it's all good what looks bad on the surface on a deeper, higher perspective

[Speaker 2] (3:49:25 - 3:49:38)

is all good and it all makes sense be ready for the challenges in life, it's incredibly important to grow in presence so to speak

[Speaker 1] (3:49:38 - 3:49:59)

so that presence power can manifest itself more fully through you presence itself is timeless of course but your ability to become a vessel for presence a conduit for presence that grows in time because here we inhabit the dimension of time

[Speaker 2] (3:49:59 - 3:50:05)

and yet presence is the transcendent dimension that is timeless

[Speaker 4] (3:50:11 - 3:50:37)

Eckhart, along those lines the final question as you know the title of tonight's event is the shift that changes everything and the final question we wanted to ask you this evening is what is that shift that changes everything and why is it essential right now for humanity to undergo this shift

[Speaker 1] (3:50:38 - 3:50:44)

right, thank you so I've already started kind of already started talking about that

[Speaker 2] (3:50:44 - 3:50:52)

question before you asked it so it's the

[Speaker 1] (3:50:56 - 3:50:59)

awakening to use that term

[Speaker 2] (3:50:59 - 3:51:09)

the term awakening has been around for thousands of years Buddha, the word Buddha means the one who is awake

[Speaker 1] (3:51:09 - 3:51:23)

Buddha means being awake Jesus talked quite often about staying awake it's misunderstood in most churches Jesus said a literal quote

[Speaker 2] (3:51:23 - 3:51:53)

this is probably one of the fragments that he actually truly said I can't remember what gospel it is from said, and what I say to you, I say to all stay awake that's Jesus Buddha is the one who is awake when people ask Buddha what are you, he said I'm awake so what is that awake awake is

[Speaker 1] (3:51:57 - 3:52:09)

they have gone through this shift in consciousness from the egoic consciousness that is totally identified with the thinking function to a deeper or higher consciousness

[Speaker 2] (3:52:09 - 3:52:19)

I usually prefer the term deeper but higher is fine too a deeper consciousness that transcends all this

[Speaker 1] (3:52:20 - 3:52:24)

so that you find a deeper sense of identity

[Speaker 2] (3:52:26 - 3:53:14)

than the one that is based on your personal history for most people their sense of identity is based on their personal history and however they interpret their personal history their personal history is a narrative they tell themselves, a story they tell themselves and they call it my life it's very limiting and ultimately very frustrating because this narrative is never fully at ease it's always a lot of the time it's an unhappy narrative, sense of identity it's a burden that people carry, it's the egoic sense of self, it creates problems where problems didn't exist before it creates dysfunction

[Speaker 1] (3:53:15 - 3:53:23)

as reflected also collectively in world history, read the history of the 20th century first half especially but

[Speaker 2] (3:53:23 - 3:53:48)

any history of oh my god this is insane millions, I can't remember, nobody knows exactly how many humans were killed by other humans in the 20th century alone but hundreds of millions and that's the manifestation of the collective level of this unconsciousness

[Speaker 1] (3:53:48 - 3:53:53)

so unless we, now we have created enormous technologies

[Speaker 2] (3:53:55 - 3:54:04)

which can amplify the dysfunction of the egoic mind it's already been doing that so it amplifies the egoic madness

[Speaker 1] (3:54:04 - 3:54:09)

and if we don't transcend the egoic state of consciousness

[Speaker 2] (3:54:09 - 3:54:17)

to a higher state of consciousness we are going to kill ourselves because

[Speaker 1] (3:54:18 - 3:55:10)

it's just technology amplifies the mental dysfunction that humans have been carrying for thousands of years it wasn't so bad in the past people had only got they had all these swarms to kill each other and then the technology grew and grew and grew and now we are confronted with the digital technology which to a large extent also amplifies the dysfunction of the human mind what people do on facebook not everybody you can use it consciously too but millions of people are using it to simply to amplify their egoic sense of self the image that they want to create of who they are, some fictitious image and now

[Speaker 2] (3:55:10 - 3:55:24)

through technology they can project this image to the outward world using of course lots of filters so they look, everybody looks beautiful with all the filters they can apply to their facebook pages even I could look beautiful

[Speaker 1] (3:55:24 - 3:55:42)

if I put a filter supply oh everybody looks so great and everybody looks so happy and it's all fiction so you have an externalization of the human ego through the technology

[Speaker 2] (3:55:43 - 3:55:59)

we can talk about this for a long time but there's no need here and now but to see there's an enormous amount of dysfunction in the human mind that we need this all the

ancient traditions talked about that already that

[Speaker 1] (3:55:59 - 3:56:45)

human mind has great possibilities but it has an inbuilt fundamental dysfunction the Buddha called it dukkha, suffering you always, wherever you go you encounter suffering unless you wake up and Jesus terms it's called sin sin means really missing the mark of human existence, that's the original translation of the word sin in the new testament is to miss the mark so you miss the purpose of your life the purpose of your life is to awaken as a human being to become more conscious, to awaken to this consciousness there is no other purpose to your life

[Speaker 2] (3:56:45 - 3:56:55)

than this awakening all the others are secondary purposes yes, on a personal level you have secondary purposes in your personal life, everybody has different personal

[Speaker 1] (3:56:55 - 3:59:04)

purposes, but they must be aligned with a greater purpose which is to live more consciously to awaken to this new consciousness these are the ancient teachings, they've already spoken about this but for the first time I would say in the history of humanity is the awakening now an absolute necessity rather than a kind of luxury so in the past a few humans here and there, not many of them we never heard of there have been humans always awakened humans in history but it has never been an absolute necessity for humanity to go through this shift in consciousness but now unless we go through this shift in consciousness we are undoubtedly going to destroy ourselves so this is why it's so vital, but the strange thing is, we need this, we need this crisis the evolution of consciousness needs this crisis so it's not a bad thing it's actually a necessary thing to be facing this crisis and because that will bring about the awakening then we begin to inhabit a different world, not a world totally free of challenges but not the havoc that we are creating at the moment which is all, whatever world humans create is a manifestation of their underlying state of consciousness it cannot be otherwise and so the only thing that is threatening us is the human mind dysfunction of the human mind, it's within us there are no external enemies ultimately, the true enemy lies within so that's what it is all about, so the shift in consciousness is now absolutely necessary but it is also

[Speaker 2] (3:59:06 - 3:59:22)

more available and somehow I would say, easier to realize than it has been in the past that's a good thing it is more accessible and easier to realize than it has been in the past but be ready

[Speaker 1] (3:59:24 - 3:59:29)

big challenges are coming and either

[Speaker 2] (3:59:29 - 3:59:43)

they will bring about your awakening or they will make you very, very unhappy to say the least so it's a wonderful thing that

[Speaker 1] (3:59:44 - 3:59:53)

the possibility of human awakening, that is the essence of our age the age we live in is a

[Speaker 2] (3:59:54 - 4:04:37)

deep crisis leading to the awakening of human consciousness and it all comes back to where we started this moment presence is called presence because it's inseparable from the present moment that's why it's called presence intense present moment awareness of course you remember the past when necessary you can plan for the future when necessary, fine but otherwise the focus of your life is present moment then everything shifts this is all there ever is actually there is nothing else ever so you might as well recognize it present moment awareness, that's all there ever is this is your life not the memories or future projections this is your life your life is now, it's never not now so you become a friend of the now friendly with now you wake up into the now so to speak and no longer carry this heavy burden of this exclusively personal sense of self the heaviness of the self Buddha talked about the fiction of the self, the illusion of the self the mind made itself with its heaviness of course it's still there, but you're not trapped in it anymore you're still a person but there's more to you than the person and you can sense that there's more to you than the person, so it comes it all comes, very simple present moment present moment awareness is you're aware of whatever is in the present moment sensory perception feelings occasional thoughts and you're aware of yourself, very important you're aware of yourself but not the self that's the person but you're aware of yourself as the awareness itself as the consciousness itself you can sense your beingness so to speak you can sense your presence, you can sense the I am which has nothing to do with your history whether your personal history was a wonderful success story or a great disaster doesn't matter anymore there's something that transcends that if your personal history was a great success story you're probably not motivated yet to enter presence because you are satisfied by superficial things until they collapse because they will if your personal history is a disaster then there's a better chance of awakening but for most people it's a mixed bag bad things have happened, good things have happened but wasn't that great it's very limiting so you go deeper so you become aware of being aware, this sounds a little weird, you sense yourself as beingness or consciousness the presence, I am the presence I am and there's no time in it

[Speaker 1] (4:04:37 - 4:04:44)

nothing to do with whatever happened to you in your past, nothing to do with it and nothing to do with what's going to happen to you

[Speaker 2] (4:04:44 - 4:06:04)

in the future and there's enormous power there, it's the power of life itself, it's the Dao however you want to call it and so and then gradually you live more in that you become more rooted in that dimension and that's the shift that is needed great, thank you everybody stay present that's all that ultimately matters your state of consciousness is the most important thing, it's not an ego thing at all your entire world that you experience is mediated through your state of consciousness thank you, thank you

[Speaker 4] (4:06:07 - 4:06:08)

thank you so much Eckhart

[Speaker 2] (4:06:08 - 4:06:09)

thank you

[Speaker 4] (4:06:09 - 4:07:24)

and thank you all of you for being with us this evening, I wanted to invite you again for those of you who are joining us a little later in the program to Eckhart's new online program, if you want to continue this teaching with Eckhart the program will be beginning in several weeks and we hope you'll join us in a community all over the world and tonight when you sign up after you enroll you'll also receive a special bonus teaching called Living Free from Stress and Anxiety and it includes three of Eckhart's most popular audio programs and we wanted to give everyone the opportunity to listen to these special teachings and prepare for the upcoming program with Eckhart where he'll be guiding us through the doorways into presence, so in addition to receiving a special discount on the program you'll also receive the special bonus teachings when you enroll today and I hope you had a really really good experience here tonight it was so wonderful being with all of you and you can find out more about the program and register at EckhartTolle.com thank you so much

[Speaker 5] (4:07:24 - 4:07:25)

for joining us this evening

[Speaker 1] (4:07:38 - 4:28:15)

something is still missing in my life something is still not right and then you try other relationships and you try other places to live and you try other activities and sooner or later and usually sooner you come again to the place this isn't right either and then you ask what am I really meant to do, where am I really meant to be because it's not here it's

never here ultimately because you're not at home deep enough in the now so you can never feel this is never but there's no external solution to that there's only an inner solution to that you come home to the now and you have to drop down beyond the mental emotional accumulations that you confuse with who you are and you sense as I sometimes say the ripple on the surface of the pacific ocean stops thinking of itself as a ripple and senses its own depths and suddenly the ripple feels at one with the depths of the ocean but also feels at one with every other ripple that it sees on the surface of the ocean because it senses its connectedness with the totality with the one and therefore recognizes every other ripple as also being an expression of that and then for the first time it can become comfortable with other ripples really at ease the ripples of course in our analogy are people but there is a source of power in you that transcends the person and it's not egoic power over somebody and it's one with the power that is the power of life in the universe where all life arises and people sometimes have a problem with self confidence or valuing yourself and sometimes you try to convince yourself by changing your thinking that you are actually good enough that you should be self confident but there is a better way to find the source of self confidence on the egoic level self confidence is there because you see you can tell yourself I'm actually more intelligent than most of these people or I'm better looking than most, I have to remind myself that I'm better looking than most and then you, okay yeah I feel a bit more confident now or you say I actually have more money than these people so I should have more self confidence whatever it is, some way of convincing yourself and then you compare yourself with others and then you focus in on those areas where you feel superior to others and try not to think about other areas where inevitably you are inferior to others because you cannot be superior in all areas it's a complicated game when you start comparing yourself to other people and if you want to bolster your self confidence and you only have to focus on where you feel I'm actually better than most but that doesn't really work that well so there is a better way of self confidence that has nothing to do with comparing yourself with others or with feeling you are better than or not as good as and that is direct access to inner power you don't need any comparison you can have it right now at this very moment if you are not stuck in your thinking mind but take your attention a little bit beyond the thinking mind and then realize that you are the presence behind the thinking mind without which there could be no thinking you're the aware presence behind it all that is deeper, you've gone deeper than the thinking mind and that aware presence is where power resides and it's not yours because it connects you with universal power therefore you don't need to compare yourself to anybody anymore or feel as the ego always does that you are either superior or inferior to somebody else that's not a comfortable way to live where you have to classify yourself when you meet people and so your fear is always I might be inferior or behind that fear is a desire to be superior power really, it is feeling your inherent power, I don't often use that word, I just use it for title of a book but there is a source of power in you that transcends the person and it's not egoic power over somebody and it's one with a power that is the power of life in the universe where all life arises and people sometimes have a problem with self

confidence or valuing yourself and sometimes you try to convince yourself by changing your thinking that you are actually good enough that you should be self confident but there is a better way to find the source of self confidence on the egoic level self confidence is there because you see you can tell yourself I'm actually more intelligent than most of these people or I'm better looking than most, I have to remind myself that I'm better looking than most and then you, okay yeah I feel a bit more confident now or you say I actually have more money than these people so I should have more self confidence whatever it is, some way of convincing yourself and then you compare yourself with others and then you focus on those areas where you feel superior to others and try not to think about other areas where inevitably you are inferior to others because you cannot be superior in all areas it's a complicated game when you start comparing yourself to other people and if you want to bolster your self confidence and you only have to focus on where you feel I'm actually better than most but that doesn't really work that well so there is a better way of self confidence that has nothing to do with comparing yourself with others or with feeling you are better than or not as good as and that is direct access to inner power you don't need any comparison you can have it right now at this very moment if you are not stuck in your thinking mind but take your attention a little bit beyond the thinking mind and then realize that you are the presence behind the thinking mind without which there could be no thinking you are the aware presence behind it all that is deeper you've gone deeper than the thinking mind and that aware presence is where power resides and it's not yours because it connects you with universal power therefore you don't need to compare yourself to anybody anymore or feel as the ego always does that you are either superior or inferior to somebody else that's not a comfortable way to live where you have to classify yourself when you meet people and so the fear is always I might be inferior or behind that fear is a desire to be superior and when you access true power you recognize you can relate to humans without any sense of either superiority or inferiority and that's amazing liberation you can only do that when you feel your inherent power beyond the mind and mental images of who you are it's wonderfully liberating to be able to meet other human beings and absolutely have no interest in finding out whether you are superior or inferior because you see it's a delusion anyway and then you have that sense of absolute equality with every human being they are all your equals and you are their equals which is nice when you met VIPs then you don't have to go who am I compared to this person you are consciousness essentially and this person is consciousness essentially which has taken form so you may remember the story I told in one of the books there was a Zen teacher abbot of a Zen monastery in Japan who was about to meet VIPs that were visiting the monastery, the governor of the province was coming with his staff and as the governor of the province approached the abbot got up to greet him and at that moment he noticed the palms of his hands were sweaty which is a sign of nervousness and because, so he was very much able to observe himself and he observed that but of course he went on with the ceremony of greeting the officials and the next day he announced to the monks that he was going away, that his realization was not deep enough because he

explained he became nervous when the governor of the province came he felt his palms got sweaty so he was not deeply rooted in his own being he went off for several years and then he came back and finally he was able to live in true connectedness with power which is not personal it's an amazing act of self observation another act of self observation you can do you can observe when you relate to people, whether your behavior changes even slightly, whether you behave to, whether you're talking to the lady who is cleaning your office or whether you're talking to the CEO of the company observe in yourself, is the ego still operating and don't beat yourself up if you find that the way in which you relate to the cleaning lady is different from the way you relate to the CEO of your company that's an insight because whenever you discover the ego operating in you which is built on image making it's a great thing meaning you're becoming more conscious the process of becoming conscious often involves becoming conscious of your own ego and see it in action if you then beat yourself up about it, that's more ego on top of the original ego so you get layers of ego, oh my god but I'm still not rid of my ego no ego is nothing, even ego looks personal but it's nothing personal really in ego, it's a pattern of behavior in humanity in the collective unconscious that has been there for been growing for thousands of years, a separate sense of identity, a sense of separateness yes, so observe how whether a great sign if you're beyond ego is that you're the same with everybody and you feel like actually the same with everybody and if you don't then you can observe the ego in action but when you observe the ego it begins to change it cannot sustain itself in the light of your observation the ego requires your unconsciousness so all the egoic patterns in you can only survive if you don't know what you're doing but if you know what you're doing, in other words you're there as the witness as it's sometimes called the observing presence then you can the ego cannot survive when you recognize it as silly for example or you smile at it and you see how silly it is to play one kind of role with one person and then play another kind of role with somebody else who has a different social function why? what for? are you neither with the CEO nor with the cleaning lady it is a role and the ego plays many roles so is it possible to not play roles?

yes, just be straight, be yourself is the famous saying and of course the question is how can I be myself? who is myself? so you cut through the mental to the place of power and feel that the presence right now for example you are both a person and the deeper presence the moment you start thinking about where you're going to go next or you just think about what happened this morning or what's awaiting you next week or anything else you are the person and the moment you drop down into just spacious presence which feels very much alive you are the aware presence you're not a person right now this mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation the most basic thing is not to have a confrontational relationship with what's going on right now and that's not only with your children if you can master that with your children you can master it anywhere that is one of the primary ways of dealing with things in a

conscious manner not to internally oppose the isness of this moment

[Speaker 7] (4:28:18 - 4:30:06)

hello now that I'm up here my planned question has eluded me but I have the essence of what I wanted to ask I have two young children and a very busy house on a daily basis it feels like working at a night club it is just chaos with two very young children at the end of the day I feel so exhausted that often I find myself going oh I'm so tired and over time that kind of begins to mentally wear and I don't know how to do the meditating I take quiet moments in the day but I don't seem to know how to feel ah the days ended and that's great because physiologically I am so exhausted and I wanted to know is there a pointer that you could offer or even another form of talking to myself or not talking but whatever it is the response to the intensity of raising two young children which in time will pass but in the now I'm in it is incredibly overwhelming and I cannot seem to stop feeling even when I accept it I'm kind of getting sick of the accepting of the

[Speaker 1] (4:30:08 - 4:30:10)

how old are they

[Speaker 7] (4:30:10 - 4:30:12)

two and six

[Speaker 1] (4:30:14 - 4:32:44)

well ideally I would spend some time at your place to observe how you deal with things and then I could advise you perhaps on how to deal with things in a different way but this probably is not practical so you have to be rather than me you have to be the observing presence in your home you can imagine that it's me the awareness in you so here's Eckhart which just briefly symbolizes the awareness in me it's you watching how I deal with situations that arise throughout the day with the children and all the demands of daily life and that self observation may already be the beginning of some a little bit more spaciousness coming in so you can observe to what extent you just react to every situation so you're at the mercy of every situation because it triggers a reaction in you rather than having a space of freedom and then respond to the situation it doesn't necessarily mean that a lot of the time while you're dealing with things that you have to withdraw and sit on a chair or just rest a moment you probably won't be able to do that and it's not necessary you can't say I need to take a minute off now for presence they won't let you laugh cough but can you be present now let's see since I can't be there could you give one or two examples of because it's always best to look at how it actually arises of a situation and there are probably many during the day that create stress for you that create that kind of reactive turmoil yes

[Speaker 7] (4:32:44 - 4:35:11)

so I've got in the house organized some sort of organized sense it feels a bit calmer the I get the children they go to nursery school for a couple hours a day they come home and my two year old he's pumped up and ready to play and throwing stuff around and they love to run and scream and have a good time that's what they're doing is really having a good time we have calm down time but they're brothers they want to play with the same toy at the same time so that the it appears and feels not unnormal it feels like this is just the functioning of children but the intensity when I'm trying to stay conscious and using my own mind without reacting to them yelling and screaming and fighting over a toy and then we set up a new system this is going to be the new system and then that quickly changes so the changing is this it's like this it's so fast that my brain it's doing this this face expression this is it I'm like this and then they need the food and then the two year old needs all the needs met the clothing and the this and then the six year old wants all the needs met at the same time and it's just mom at home because dad's not home until eight and it is so much that my brain feels like it shorts out so I do take moments of I'll just stand there with them that's when they really try and get me going they know mom is getting peace and they're really great kids I mean it but when they see me getting the peace then they want to really get riled up and have a good time so at the end of the day I just feel knowing that this is a period of time and they grow and it will pass but at this exact now the lack of calmness even amidst a decent schedule a calm schedule feels really challenging

[Speaker 1] (4:35:13 - 4:35:43)

well the calmness of course has to come from within you it doesn't come from outside so one way of accessing it is to not it seems to me that this is quite normal that you spent a lot of time in an antagonistic relationship with what's happening in the present moment

[Speaker 7] (4:35:44 - 4:35:47)

yes I just discovered that the other day yes

[Speaker 1] (4:35:47 - 4:50:58)

and that is the basis of the dysfunction it's not what's happening in the present moment it's your inability which is not really inability because you are able but you just are not practicing it yet to align yourself with the present moment and whatever is taking place in it and not operate with the underlying assumption that this whatever is going on at this moment should not be going on because it's only that underlying assumption that what's going on now should not be going on they're screaming they're throwing things of course if the mind says this should not be going on but it is going on that's how suffering happens and how you then contribute more to this to the upheavals that are continuously taking place because you can't accept this moment as it is and so I would suggest to set aside at first brief practice periods give yourself five minutes ten minutes when you are so bring so much alertness when the children are there and do what they

do you bring so much alertness into those five or ten minutes that whatever they do is okay and then you still talk to them tell them something whatever you feel you need to do but in a different way because it doesn't come from a place of non acceptance uh uh very unconscious parents and of course you are not one of them very unconscious parents get angry with their children I've seen parents with small children they knock over a glass at dinner or in a restaurant and the parent gets extremely angry uh no now it's in the nature of a young child not to be able to handle very well they're not as skillful yet handling physical objects so it's in their nature to knock things over and spill things of course you still teach them how to hold it and after some time they learn but obviously they cannot handle things as skillfully and things will get spilled and I have observed parents getting very angry and even hitting their children and spilling something that of course is totally it's a more extreme example I'm sure that's not what you do but it's just taking the same dysfunction to a more to an extreme but the underlying dysfunction is to not be at one with the present moment so instead of feeling that you need to seek stillness and then they will know that because they interpret it as you're withdrawing attention from them when you go into when you kind of stand still or something like that and then they make even more nice because they want to get your attention back so but in this practice they don't even have to notice what you're doing because it's not as doing as such it's see if you can immediately whatever they do it's already done it's already the present moment you can't argue with what is so and then if whatever action you need to take you take this is the most basic thing is not to have a confrontational relationship with what's going on right now and that's not only with our children if you can master that with your children you can master it anywhere in other areas of your life because it's for everybody in whatever situation you find yourself in that is one of the primary ways of dealing with things in a conscious manner not to internally oppose the isness of this moment basically you're already a master when you live like that but if you practice for five minutes at a time then okay then you're a master for five minutes and then you might get you might not succeed even during those five minutes but then you might but there will be times when you actually feels better to live in this way and then you get an incentive to practice a bit more give yourself instead of don't tell yourself from now on I'm going to be completely present with whatever they do that's too much give yourself small spaces at first and then when you find actually it works then they grow a little bit a little bit more space until it becomes second nature and then you're awake and then bringing up your children will have become a more helpful spiritual practice than 20 years in a meditating in a Zen monastery so that really it's your spiritual practice the another thing that is helpful to remember and bear in mind is ultimately bringing up doing what you do with the children telling them what you need to tell them and helping them with what they need is all important but there's something that's more important and that is your state of consciousness behind what you do and say or another way of putting it how you do what you do is more important than what you do how refers to the underlying state of consciousness so this is really the what I'm talking about is surrender doesn't mean they can do whatever they like but internally to

be one with what is as it arises then you will sense a certain peacefulness underneath it all and a spaciousness and you don't even, nobody will even notice by looking at you well if I were there I probably would, looking at you very closely so that's the awareness in you growing and I'm leaving aside now other things that you can that are more of a practical matter to what extent to create boundaries for their children, to what extent their behavior those are things that you can learn from other people there used to be a thing on television, well we haven't had cable in some years but when we had still cable I occasionally saw a weekly episode of, I think it was called Super Nanny it was an English nanny she was an actual nanny and she became quite famous because of that program of course it helped that she had a British accent and so she went into the most dysfunctional families, at first the program would always show the chaos in the house and mother and father can't deal with things, everybody screaming and then the super nanny would walk in and I don't think she would have said anything what I said like surrender to the present moment but she had other ways, very useful ways of how one can deal with situations, create certain boundaries but not too many boundaries the balance between boundaries for the children of what behavior is acceptable and what is not acceptable the boundary needs to be wide enough to allow for creative art flow and trying things out and making mistakes and yet it needs to be prevent them from bringing total chaos into the house and those are more external things that you could look at the super nanny is the equivalent of the dog whisperer with the dogs who is again Cesar Milan as you may know had a conversation with on our TV a few years ago he has this ability, he always goes into places with the most dysfunctional dogs, so at first they show you the dog is and then Cesar Milan comes in and sometimes he just looks at them and then they start to behave differently so those are intuitive I believe he does it very intuitively but to come back then to what I can address here is only the level of consciousness what your state of consciousness needs to be in addition to what I said you may want to look into some external things concerning boundaries and so on because some parents for example as everybody probably knows some parents they tell children not to do something but when they start whining and shouting or throwing a tantrum after a few minutes they say okay then go ahead so that's teaching them dysfunction already at an early age another one because then they learn that if they just complain enough and shout enough and show aggression or anger then they'll get what they want another one of course is giving attention some parents only give attention when something is going wrong the main way the main instances when they give attention to their children is just when the children have done something wrong or when they're screaming then they get attention when they're quiet the parent is so busy they can't give attention they've got other things to do then the children learn the more I scream or do things wrong or break things or cry some children learn that the moment I cry she comes running okay then with some children you can actually see they're not really crying they're just going through the motions ahhhh and then the mother comes running get attention what lesson do they learn then when they become adults unhappiness works unhappiness gets me what I want they don't know that that's the

lesson they learned it's unconscious and I had that too I had for a long time I was addicted to my unhappiness and the underlying assumption was that somebody, presumably God if I was really unhappy would eventually come and do something about it that was, I knew that was the underlying assumption and why there was so much unhappiness so people, basically they think unhappiness works the adult but the adult may have learned as a child that unhappiness works, because that's what their parents taught them, unconsciously so the adult and some people are stuck with that pattern until they die so they get, they complain and the pain body rises up and thinks I really have to be more unhappy because it's not working yet, but it will work and of course when you're an adult, the opposite is true when you're in that state of consciousness, nothing really works so don't teach the wrong lessons for the rest of their life and attention giving is vital and again just mention it again don't just give attention when there's something going wrong or when they cry or shout it's vital to give real attention when you have a quiet moment together and the reason why there are no quiet moments the children don't even know what it is, because the parents don't give them any quiet moments the life seems to be so demanding, life around them, that parents don't, it's only when something needs to be done, or something needs to be put right, or they need to stop them from doing something then attention is given so give attention, not when they're doing something wrong but when they're just sitting there there's a moment of, and then you talk, you look at them there are parents who only, whatever interaction they have with their children is about either telling them what to do or not to do now you do this, stop doing that now do that, you haven't done that yet, do that in some households the only thing you should do is either do this or don't do that that's from my superficial observation of things so there may be a little bit of that in your house too I don't know, but the quality of the interaction well, you know the expression, there's an expression quality time, it's a little bit of a cliche to spend quality time with someone what that really means is to be present with someone, that's quality time quality time is not watching TV together and have a beer, that's not really not quality time quality time means no time, it's present, giving your fullest attention to somebody, that's quality no time so all these wonderful learning for you and of course for them too so maybe I will see you again next time and you can give a progress report

[Speaker 5] (4:50:59 - 4:51:00)

thank you

[Speaker 1] (4:51:14 - 4:54:52)

so this is a typical example here of Saint Francis teaching and spiritual practice which is to make yourself into nothing very radical a very radical form of spirituality to make, allow yourself to be to disappear don't be the total opposite of what the ego wants the ego wants to stand out and Saint Francis goes that way I sometimes call that the mountain or the valley the ego wants to be the mountain, it wants to assert it's form

identity, it's form it's me, it wants in some way it wants to stand out it wants to be the mountain if it cannot be the mountain in victory and triumph, it can at least be the mountain in misery so when you see yourself as a victim egoic identity, you're still a mountain you haven't become a valley it's a very strong ego identity and you complain to people how miserable you are and how life and other people have treated you you're still a mountain it's exactly the same as you say how great you are and the great things that you have achieved, both are egoic mountains and by strengthening your form identity you cut yourself off from the true power which is, of course that which is beyond the person, which is deeper than the person so in one way or another, the ego has to dissolve either through intense suffering that life inflicts on you, or the voluntary surrender to life, which is what Saint Francis preaches but also that what we do here, it's the voluntary coming into the present moment and so on they're all ways of transcending the ego

[Speaker 2] (4:55:58 - 4:56:19)

it is likely that you have encountered presence and you do from time to time, or perhaps quite often encounter presence without recognizing it for what it is it could just be a moment when you feel at ease

[Speaker 5] (4:56:20 - 4:56:28)

you feel a sense of well-being a sense of peaceful aliveness

[Speaker 2] (4:56:30 - 4:56:44)

not because you have desensitized yourself, not because you've taken some substances not because you're about to fall asleep not because there's a lowering of your consciousness, no it's a

[Speaker 5] (4:56:44 - 4:56:46)

heightened consciousness

[Speaker 2] (4:56:46 - 4:57:09)

thinking of course is a manifestation of consciousness emotions are a manifestation of consciousness, sense perceptions could not exist without consciousness, so we're talking about, when we use presence, talking about the essence of what you are

[Speaker 5] (4:57:09 - 4:57:21)

which is consciousness, the light of consciousness, one could

[Speaker 2] (4:57:21 - 4:57:52)

say this vast consciousness that is universal consciousness, it's not only within you, it is also without it is the, one could say the intelligence that underlies all phenomenal manifestations of the universe, there's a hidden concealed hidden vast intelligence that gives rise

[Speaker 5] (4:57:54 - 4:58:40)

to the evolution of all life forms impossible for us to understand it but we can sense it within ourselves as the essence of our being so the easiest way to point to presence is to say that you encounter it when you stop thinking for a moment without losing consciousness, stop

[Speaker 2] (4:58:40 - 5:00:49)

thinking means the continuous voice in the head that usually comments on what's going on around you or comments on all kinds of things, imaginary scenarios and so on, the conditioned voice in the head that you live with everybody lives with that voice in their head that talks all the time inside, or if it talks aloud then you're considered crazy people say there's people walking in the streets talking out aloud and you say oh they're mentally insane, but the only difference between a normal human being and those people that you call mentally insane is that those you do not call mentally insane they're still doing the same thing, they're just not talking out aloud, it's happening in their head it's a continuous stream of thinking and that creates the ego the egoic sense of self an ultimately fictitious identity that you are infinitely more than the entity created by the movement of thought and the emotions that reflect the movement of thought there's infinitely more to you than what you conventionally call the person a person is a conditioned entity, a form that consciousness has taken and most humans unless they are awakening already spiritually, which is what we are talking about, the arising of presence is spiritual awakening unless you are awakening and many of you are awakening even if you don't have words for it many of you are here because you're awakening otherwise this session would be totally meaningless to you and there may be a few to whom it is totally meaningless what is this guy talking about so you must have had a glimpse of what it is that I'm talking about and if you haven't perhaps you can have it now

[Speaker 5] (5:00:50 - 5:00:54)

and that glimpse is the possibility

[Speaker 2] (5:00:55 - 5:01:04)

of arriving at the briefly at first the cessation of thinking the voice in the head

[Speaker 5] (5:01:05 - 5:01:27)

stops and yet consciousness remains and you can look around or look at this image on the screen or look around the room take everything in but you're not thinking about it

[Speaker 2] (5:01:29 - 5:01:39)

it's just sensory perception and what is behind the sensory perception? Presence. Another word for it

[Speaker 5] (5:01:39 - 5:01:59)

is awareness awareness so there's an awareness that is perceiving at this moment and that awareness is silent but it's awake and that awareness is the

[Speaker 2] (5:01:59 - 5:02:09)

deeper dimension to who or what you are that's no longer the person that you usually think of

[Speaker 5] (5:02:09 - 5:03:00)

when you say I there's a deeper I there's a deeper I a deeper sense of being that transcends a personal sense of identity so you can sense there's an awareness in you a consciousness and that consciousness is perceiving it doesn't need to interpret it it knows at a very deep level but not conceptually you can look around your room or wherever you are you know that there's furniture or whatever there is

[Speaker 2] (5:03:00 - 5:03:39)

but you don't call it anything you just allow it to be so there is instead of a person perceiving things which is when you are always interpreting commenting and labeling mentally instead of a person you are now perceiving not as a person you are perceiving as an awareness so there's a shift from personal sense of self shift to a deeper level you could call it deeper or higher it doesn't matter to a deeper level of consciousness where you are not a person you are that which is prior to the person and that's awareness

[Speaker 5] (5:03:39 - 5:03:44)

presence and that's amazing you can then

[Speaker 2] (5:03:46 - 5:04:05)

be aware of that awareness you can sense this presence that you are in addition to whatever you are perceiving it's in the background of your sense perceptions, the background of your life it's a spacious vast presence

[Speaker 5] (5:04:06 - 5:04:14)

that connects you to something that we cannot really

[Speaker 2] (5:04:15 - 5:04:44)

define or talk about it's deep and it's infinite it's a soul it's not just the depth of your being it connects you to the very soul of the universe the ancients ancient Romans and Greeks had this wonderful term anima mundi which is latin for the soul of the world there is such a thing as a world

[Speaker 5] (5:04:44 - 5:04:47)

soul and that is

[Speaker 2] (5:04:48 - 5:06:19)

your soul presence, the consciousness that you are is a ray or a spark of that inseparable from the soul of the totality, so it's a liberation from the ego itself liberation from the self then life becomes more harmonious when you begin to invite that consciousness into your life, that presence your life begins to flow with greater ease, more harmoniously not that you are not challenged anymore, challenges continue but all the challenges do once you begin to awaken to presence challenges then deepen your presence and in fact you need the difficulties in your life to deepen your presence as you begin to awaken any challenge will deepen your presence in the early stages it could also happen that challenges take you completely out of presence, when you encounter difficult situations or people can take you totally out of presence, but gradually as you become a bit more established, rooted in that presence the opposite happens, challenges don't make you unconscious they make you more conscious

[Speaker 5] (5:06:25 - 5:06:45)

so in a nutshell presence is awareness without thought and then thinking becomes a more helpful

[Speaker 2] (5:06:45 - 5:07:23)

tool rather than something that torments you many people their thinking mind torments them continuously they have an unhappy sense of self they talk to themselves using unhappy words they talk about other people using unhappy words and concepts when they confuse what the voice in the head with actual reality out there they can't tell the difference between what is and the way in which they interpret what

[Speaker 5] (5:07:23 - 5:07:29)

is, which is the conditioning of the mind when you come to an alignment

[Speaker 2] (5:07:29 - 5:07:45)

with what is, which is always now, life becomes easier not free of challenges but much easier and challenges don't produce unhappiness anymore

[Speaker 5] (5:07:47 - 5:07:59)

that's a big thing and the difficulties of your life don't make you unhappy anymore amazing

[Speaker 2] (5:08:28 - 5:08:29)

on solstice

[Speaker 1] (5:08:34 - 5:09:51)

the sun reaches its highest point and then reverses its course so to speak from our perspective doesn't really, but from the perspective of Tom here on earth and from our perspective it's a kind of still point between two movements solstice actually means sun and stis comes from latin which means standing still so it appears that for a moment the sun stands still poised little bit like throwing a ball into the air, you throw it up and it rises and then there comes a moment a very brief moment when it stops rising and hasn't started falling yet and that's the point of stillness

[Speaker 2] (5:09:54 - 5:10:04)

and perhaps that's the reason

[Speaker 1] (5:10:05 - 5:10:12)

or the deeper reason why in many cultures solstice is a spiritual event

[Speaker 2] (5:10:12 - 5:10:21)

the still point

[Speaker 1] (5:10:25 - 5:10:29)

it's a similar point that is there when you

[Speaker 2] (5:10:34 - 5:10:39)

breathe in and you come to the

[Speaker 1] (5:10:39 - 5:10:49)

end of the in-breath for a brief moment there's that still point between the two breaths

[Speaker 2] (5:10:49 - 5:10:51)

between the in-breath and the out-breath

[Speaker 1] (5:10:59 - 5:14:31)

and again at the end of the out-breath there's another brief still point before the in-breath starts and those are very powerful points if you become aware of them they are wonderful portals into stillness you can do it even now as you listen to me you breathe out the end of the out-breath there's a cessation of movement when you pay attention to it it might become a little bit longer but there's no need to force it in any way when you pay attention to it it naturally becomes a little bit longer so reaching that dimension within you becoming aware of that stillness the in-breath and out-breath can be helpful they contain the whole movement of your life and the universe the beginning of the in-breath that starts from the still point is the coming into form birth growth development then reaching maturity achievement and then you reach that point of cessation point of stillness and then comes the reverse movement and you have to become aligned with that reverse movement in your life

[Speaker 2] (5:14:31 - 5:14:33)

for example

[Speaker 1] (5:14:33 - 5:15:32)

and surrender into it and recognize it for what it is the natural movement return journey back into where it all started the stillness if you're not aligned with it or resist it it's very unpleasant because you realize that instead of growth and development and gaining and obtaining and multiplying and adding to you're experiencing the opposite you may experience loss

[Speaker 2] (5:15:33 - 5:15:36)

or people around you begin to

[Speaker 1] (5:15:38 - 5:15:39)

disappear

[Speaker 2] (5:15:39 - 5:15:48)

things are shrinking instead of growing

[Speaker 1] (5:15:50 - 5:15:57)

even your physical body you might begin to notice starts

[Speaker 2] (5:16:02 - 5:16:04)

shrinking in some way

[Speaker 1] (5:16:20 - 5:18:39)

so if you become aligned with that movement which traditionally might be called you realize that you're beginning to grow old that can be a wonderful thing and as I said if you're not surrendered to it recognize that it is a universal movement and can be deeply spiritual if you're aligned with it but if you're not it's a painful process if you're still stuck in your ego by the time you reach that reversal from development and growth to the opposite movement then the opposite movement is experienced as very painful in meditation I'd say that the out-breath is more important than the in-breath it's when you let go and in your life potentially the stage of dissolution has greater potential spiritually than the developmental stage but no matter how old you are, you may be 20 years old you can already experience in every in-breath and out-breath you can already experience that universal movement

[Speaker 2] (5:18:44 - 5:18:50)

outgoing outgoing and ingoing

[Speaker 1] (5:19:23 - 6:47:22)

there's content the content of your mind which consists of thoughts and most people have the need to fill up their mind and their life with more content it's a compulsion almost an addictive searching for more stuff to identify with so that you can increase the content of things that the mind identifies with so most people carry around content in the mind in the form of thoughts bundles of thoughts that contain a sense of self that you identify with or in the words of Don Miguel Ruiz that you have faith in and that's all they know their life consists of content both externally one could say everything absorbs their attention continuously stuff things things to acquire things to be worried about things to do problems and thoughts one after another you have to think about this and this continuously continuously so your entire inner space is filled up with content no breathing room a room full of stuff and that's the self there's a self identification with stuff which ultimately is the mind thought stuff life and you feel you're choking to death almost life is experienced as frustrating and bringing up one dilemma after another so the essence of our gathering here is to find the inner space that is there although you may have accumulated a lot of content in your mind there is always behind it or underneath it a vastness of inner space or stillness even in the most nervous and irritated and hyperactive human mind even there underneath there is a dimension of stillness you just have to look for it to feel it to sense it within yourself underneath all the stream of thinking it is therefore vital that you have space in yourself be aware of space in yourself stillness or space just two different pointers to the same thing no thing at this moment is there space in you now if you're not bored when you listen to these words there is space in you so don't try to figure out don't try to figure out whether or not there

is space in me through the mind how do I know whether there is space in me a very simple criterion to use is if you are not bored or angry right now or irritated there is space in you the dimension is there that's because it's only from there that you can sit here and not be bored or irritated or angry now if you are bored or irritated or angry you can either walk out and be irritated bored and angry somewhere else or even there you can say oh I feel bored irritated angry and who knows that how do you know that well I'm aware that I am bored or irritated or angry so are you the boredom the anger or the irritation or are you the awareness of the boredom the anger or the irritation so I'm giving you another chance so before you walk out you can try that now I assume that most of you are not bored irritated or angry from sensing the energy field and so there's the why are you not bored irritated or angry because there is a stillness or space in you now oh oh and you haven't disappeared as a form identity you're still sitting there in the chair yes here's the body there may even be occasional thoughts occasionally in and out and then again under that all that is there may even be a little bit in your stomach that says oh I should have had breakfast am I picking up somebody's thought I should have had breakfast then I wouldn't be hungry now okay and again the stillness underneath it and between it and so your life then is continuously a movement of being there as a form identity but knowing yourself essentially as the space then you are free from being trapped in the form and making your life a misery because no matter how hard you try and what you do you can do all the right things but if the valley is missing in your life then the most vital dimension is missing from your life and no matter how conscientious you are and do all the right things and are tidy and your life is arranged logically and maybe you have a life plan for the next 15 years for every year you know what you want to do nothing wrong with that and you'll still be creating misery because no matter how hard you try if that the vital dimension is missing your life is one dimensional and then even the greatest success who knows one or two of you in three four years time or five years time maybe will reading about you in people magazine and there are worse magazines than people, people is actually people is not so negative there are many others who love talking negatively and then you taste the, what success is like and fame now am I saying don't seek success no the beautiful thing is you can you can still play in the world of form and you play more beautifully when you realize it is only a relative truth and anything that you achieve as this mountain is only relatively true and valid and it will come to an end and everything you achieve as a mountain will have its other side to it everything you lose is loss and gain there is always the interplay you may gain many things and they will produce their own challenges and you will see the other part of success and so you no matter what you do you will never for long find that now your life is actually great it's working, it's all working now that on the form level never really happens for very long but that doesn't matter when you are in touch with the formless however I am not saying that if you are in touch with the valley that it does not affect the world of form it does you will notice that first of all the sense of heaviness and seriousness which is ultimately fear goes out of your life and when you are no longer dealing with situations and people from that place of seriousness and heaviness and

ultimately anxiety and fear then the world that you experience or what you experience as the world changes because a different quality flows out, it is that quality that comes from the unmanifested so there tends to be a great improvement in the way in which you experience the world because you experience in a more gentle way even the so called problems because you are not giving them you are not feeding the so called problems with your reactivity and your heaviness and your fear because the more fear you bring to the challenges the greater the challenges become or the so called problems become through your reaction and it's only from the place of being the valley that you can be in a state of non-reaction when challenges arise in the form of people or situations people can be very challenging situations can be challenging but if you if every challenge brings out the fear you cannot be without fear as long as you are identified with the mountain because you want to survive as this thing that fear only goes when you are in touch with the space and then you don't need to react respond when necessary, yes react, no and many problems are dissolved when you simply don't react because quite often there is nothing much you can do anything you do in many cases, not all, sometimes action is required, but in many cases anything you do, you only add to the problem so what's the problem now? what happens when you look at that phrase, what's the problem now?

your attention then goes from being absorbed in oh my god, what's going to happen to now is that a problem now? and then you have to wake up into now to answer the question on this little card, what's the problem now? you have to actually wake up into the now because you never know there might be a problem now, you have to focus attention and look and so suddenly your attention moves into the present moment, and there you stand in front of your bathroom mirror and, okay, what's the problem now?

you look, well then the mind says, oh, you're looking old it looks in the mirror that's the problem no, of course it's not a problem it's a thought that arises and usually the mind has of course more complicated things to say, but then you realize that at this moment it's not actually a problem but the mind says, yes, but it will become a problem in the next moment but of course when the next moment comes, it comes again as this moment and you have to ask the question again what is the problem now? and the amazing realization will come to you that there never is a problem now only a situation you can deal with it, or leave it alone for the time being it's never a problem some situations demand immediate action and then, of course, it's not a problem there's no time for it to become a problem if it demands immediate action you look, and you act other things you may have to think about you might occasionally have to think okay, what are the possible solutions to this situation and what to do then is to apply focused thinking, but before you do that you become still present and then you, out of that then comes, okay, what are the possibilities in this situation, I could pick up the phone and make a phone call to that person I can look, go to that place and ask for help, I can go there too, and I can do that 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, write it down put it aside, okay and then, which

one of these can I do now, and then you do it it's never, it's not a it's not a problem, if I juggle ideas thoughts in my mind uselessly that's a problem what what if, what if attention back to now, what's the problem now and so it's always amazing to realize that the now is free of problems because you're breathing you're perceiving your senses you feel the aliveness in the body and more than enough to deal with any situation that may arise or may be there I've mentioned a few times the ancient Greek myth of Narcissus the young man who, according to this tale, mythological tale he looked into a pool of water and saw his own reflection and according to the story fell in love with himself or rather the reflection of himself and I see this as a way of explaining what happened to the human mind that created a reflection of itself in the mind and began to identify with the reflection so at that point humans began well when the myth of Narcissus was created by we don't know who by then probably that process had already started a long time before that so falling in love with the mental reflection of yourself or I would slightly reinterpret that not so much falling in love because it's not always necessarily love the relationship that you have with yourself can be a very problematic one and sometimes it's self-hatred so rather than calling it love I would say he became obsessed with himself he became obsessed with that image that he saw but what the myth is pointing to is that it's something that happened in the human psyche collectively and suddenly humans started every human being started to have a relationship with himself or herself it's a strange thing and then the increasingly the mind the thinking mind the unobserved mind contributed more to that so the image it's not just a visual image gradually got replaced more and more by a conceptual image in one's mind of who one is and then gradually deriving one's sense of self from that conceptual image of oneself the other day I looked up I'd forgotten what happened to this man Narcissus in the mythological tale I looked it up the other day and it seems that he eventually committed suicide this is significant too because here too there's a deep truth embedded in that and that is that the human ego seems to have a self-destruct mechanism built into it in other words it is the main it is the main cause of human suffering because it is the egoic unconsciousness especially on a collective level that creates a large the largest percentage of human suffering if you look back 20th century most of the dreadful suffering was not through natural disasters or even through illness that happened to individual human beings or accidents that happened to individual human beings but man-made suffering suffering through violent conflict and so the ego creates suffering for yourself both on a personal level and on a collective level the ego being the unobserved mind in the absence of awareness in the absence of presence it creates suffering, it doesn't want to create suffering it wants you to be more fully yourself it wants you to be better than others if you can't be better in victory you can be better in your misery than others more miserable than others and through the suffering it creates the suffering is also the factor that as you may remember yesterday I described as a spiritual teacher everybody has a spiritual teacher and for most people it's their suffering it's a strange fact that eventually the suffering that is to a large extent not 100% self-created that huge amount of suffering that if you look at it objectively you say, why? it seems so absurd and unnecessary both what

humans do themselves on a personal level and collectively it is so unnecessary if you look at the madness of the first world war that then got extended into the second world war for almost for nothing they started killing each other the ego, the collective ego needed to triumph so the suffering large amount of which is self-ego created eventually awakens you and then the awakening is the end of the ego so there is a self-destruct mechanism built into the ego which is a good thing one of the most important things on your spiritual path is awareness of those patterns that we call egoic that still operate in you and you only really recognize them in situations when you relate to people when you encounter problematic situations, difficult people obstacles on your path it's then that's why these things are so helpful you could easily remove yourself to a little cabin for a year and you might find either you will go insane because your own mind will drive you insane or you might if you are a good meditator you might be able to achieve a measure of inner peace through daily meditation in your cabin and there is nothing wrong to occasionally withdrawing but if you do that as your as a way into the spiritual dimension then you may find that the depth of your presence that arises in the protective environment of the cabin or even the ashram it may not be very deep and then when you come out of your cabin and go back into being with people and encountering situations you may find that you quickly lose it as the story I told before that was told me by a monk, a buddhist monk, western born buddhist monk in Thailand he went very deep eventually but when he was a young monk he meditated in a little hut up the mountain half an hour from the main monastery and was there in isolation for I believe six months or longer and one person would bring him food once a day and nothing disturbed him except the bees and the mosquitoes and the heat so he had to surrender to these things which after a while he was able to do and then he became more and more peaceful. At some point the bees, for some reason there were lots of bees there and his sometimes his body would be covered with bees and he made peace with the bees and said it's okay giving them loving kindness, metta and he didn't get, they didn't sting him it's amazing and then after a few months he had to go, come back into the monastery and then he had to go to the city, Bangkok to renew his visa after achieving what he thought was sublime states of inner peace in the cabin so he overcame the obstacle of the bees, he overcame because he surrendered, the obstacle of the mosquito, the obstacle of the extreme heat the obstacle of relatively little food all that he surrendered to and so became very very peaceful and thought this is enlightenment, I made it and so he had to go to Bangkok to renew his visa and there was a line up and although he was a Buddhist monk for some reason he was highly respected in Thailand but he still had to line up and after one hour in this line up he got to the man and said no this is the wrong line up you have to go there and then he could feel he was beginning to lose his inner peace and then he went to the second line up waited there and finally after half an hour got to the next man and said okay well there's something missing here there are two stamps on this form you should have gone over there first before you line up here and at that point he lost his peace completely and he found himself banging onto the table I have been standing here for two hours lining up and you are telling me now I must go there and at

that moment he observed himself again so he wasn't totally lost he just lost it briefly but the deep peace didn't come back for a long time after that this mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation it's working it says the time is now totally accurate over the years many people have sent me now watches I have a collection of about 10 with different dials some dials at every hour it says now, now, now and then I have others you have to press a button and then it says now and then another button that gives you the time or we have in our kitchen we have a clock that somebody sent it doesn't say now but it shows all the numerals the numbers in a pile at the bottom of the clock and on the dial it says whatever laughter it's easy to forget that it's always now and only now and if you could remember that, not as a memory but have that as a live realization every moment or to put it more accurately in the moment because there's only really one moment although what happens in it changes if you knew that then there would be it that's the awakened state of consciousness you would be in alignment with whatever happens so the ultimate spiritual practice is to remember remember may not be the right word that it's now and only ever now this is now this is your life that you may remember from a power of now or somewhere I talked about usually when people refer to my life, they say my life I call that it's your life situation whatever is going on in your life connected with the usual things that are of concern to people which is your health your relationships your work or lack of it finances living situation usually those things make up your life, my life but I call that your life situation as opposed to life which is only ever now your life situation exists in the mind you have to keep it alive there it's important of course you have to deal with situations as they arise in your life but they only arise in the present moment and when you think about your life situation you can only think about it in the present moment it's important to have these two your life and your life situation and not allow your life situation to completely obscure your life your presence your sense of aliveness your spaciousness and that's helpful to bring attention to learn to bring attention to your senses the expression we could use is come to your senses those five senses so you become more aware of what surrounds you inhabit the body it's another one that connects you with life it takes you out of the conceptualizing mind be here now come to your senses inhabit the body be here now all one and then you don't carry continuously with you like a heavy burden your life situation of course you address whatever challenges arrive you deal with them as they arise in the present moment occasionally you might have to do some planning or some strategy occasionally but also that happens in the present moment for the rest of the time don't allow your life situation to completely obscure completely stifle your sense of aliveness your presence in the moment because then you walk around with the burden of a very heavy personality and you don't see what's around you anymore you can't truly relate to other humans because you have the heaviness of your problematic life situation and whose life situation is not problematic it's in the nature of life situations to be problematic of course you arrange your life as best you can your life situation as best you can yes you may acquire new skills or you

can get a better job or in whatever way you improve or attempt to improve your life situation find a nicer place to live why not that's all fine but the expectation that at some point life should leave you alone and not challenge you anymore and that there's something wrong when life challenges you that's a delusion that itself the unconscious assumption that there's something wrong when life presents so called problems to you better word is challenges there's an unconscious assumption and an unconscious resentment and negative reaction the moment you are faced with a new challenge because of the underlying assumption that these things should not be happening but no matter how carefully you arrange your life situation and no matter how much positive thinking you do which is a nice thing you will still be challenged by life you will still experience the polarities of life you will experience for example that every situation, every new situation has its new set of challenges and you will realize even when you achieve what you want to achieve the very thing that you believe would lead to ultimate fulfillment when you achieve what you want to achieve when you finally get there you will find very quickly that even that new wonderful situation presents a new set of challenges so you're never left alone your life will not leave you alone and so it's in the nature of life to give you challenges in your life situation so if you could remove or realize the fallacy of believing that such challenges should not occur then that will improve your or enhance your ability to deal with situations greatly it also will remove the otherwise continuous arising of negativity when you are faced with life situations from big to small with challenges in your life situation if you assume that there shouldn't be any challenges you become negative there's something wrong you resent it you resent, if you believe in God, you can have an argument with God I can't take anymore God you've gone too far this time laughter or you can draw the conclusion that there is no God because your life would be easier if there were an intelligent God he would obviously make your life easy and everybody else's life too so therefore there can be no God we'll address that some other time laughter so the it's the very same thing as I've mentioned before somewhere people like to watch movies and movies are a kind of reflection of life, especially if they are good movies and they are art in general, like literature good fiction is a reflection of life it's always ultimately about you and would you want to see a movie in which nothing ever goes wrong? laughter it would not be very interesting the characters would not be faced with any dilemma, no challenges they wouldn't develop you would fall asleep or you walk out it's the essence of every movie the plot, the so called plot, almost every movie there might be one or two exceptions can't think of any you can reduce every movie, explain what happens in the movie soon after it starts something goes wrong in the plot it has to, otherwise there's no interest so you love it when you see it in a movie you hate it when it happens to you laughter so if you discover within yourself that a lot of the time you are in a state of lack, of insufficiency of not enough and you feel that the answer to the remedy is to be active in this world and achieve and do as much as possible then you'll probably find that ultimately that is not the answer to your state of lack in order to transcend, to go beyond your state of lack, of neediness of not enough spiritual practice and spiritual realization

is necessary focus on the realization of being it's only there that you can go beyond that state of lack which is ego go within and discover who or what you are beyond the person and you become aligned with the isness of things thereby the ego diminishes now most people only begin doing that when they realize that they've been unhappy for too long the greater part of their unhappiness arose through the mental narrative about the situations they encounter in their lives the I that most people then refer to this word refers to is what I call the surface self that is made up of your personal history of course all the things that you have experienced and all the things that from your past that you identify with, things that you have done, things that were done to you, things you have achieved things you have experienced, the entire culture in which you grew up the collective culture in your particular country the familiar the background of your family how they behaved all those things together leave traces and all these after a while it begins at an early age of course it begins already when the first time you utter the word I, when you are whatever two years old as you probably know very young children when they first learn to speak they often refer to themselves in the third person and they might say oh John wants a drink, but who is John? I oh that's interesting after a while they switch from the third person to the first person and they utter the word I and that becomes the most fascinating word for them and gradually things accumulate around this I which at first is just a sound I and then over the years things accumulate around that sound but of course it's not just a sound but it's also a thought it's a concept in your head it's a thought, it's a primordial thought the thought form of I so it's not just a sound it's a thought and around that thought gradually things, it's like things stick to it it attracts things so with a child it starts with toys, there are certain toys, but this toy is not the child very quickly learns this toy is not just any toy it's mine I have a relationship with this toy, it belongs to me it's my toy and that is how very often the child well, not very often, always the child experiences for the first time the suffering that arises through egoic identification just remove that toy from here to there or maybe just touch it and the child goes that deep suffering oh my god my toy and then of course you put it back and then immediately it goes and then another child comes and again the same thing happens and you can see how enormous suffering arises not because this toy has been removed from the child or moved from this point to that point by somebody, that would be a very neutral event but because something has happened in the mind of that child the concept of I has attracted to itself this thing which is another thought ultimately because the toy is out there but in my mind the toy is a concept this my toy and that concept sticks to the primordial original concept of I which is the surface I of who I think I am the I and then for the first time the child experiences what 2,500 years ago the Buddha described as suffering and the Buddha said wherever you go whatever you do whatever situation you are in you will encounter dukkha which in the Pali language translated is suffering because the I that you think you are identifies with things that are unstable that cannot last things that do not have the capacity to make you happy or to fulfill you or to tell you who you are and so for the first time the child at this early age experiences the truth of the utterings of the Buddha without knowing it of course and the

suffering that arises when you identify with something so when your feeling of identity becomes associated with things and concepts and then of course you graduate from the it's not just a toy only the beginning and of course then the person grows up and identification comes with many other things your parents what your parents have or don't have or more and more concepts accumulate around the I what you are taught by the surrounding culture that you live in who you are, the culture may tell you who you are you belong to this particular culture if you grow up in Australia whatever sticks to the I will be very different from the collective culture from what would stick to your concept of I if you grew up in Saudi Arabia would be very different, a very different I and yet the basic mechanism behind it would be the same, the central concept I identifies with certain things and then your sense of who you are gradually develops and it consists of things that ultimately you are not, but you don't know that, so you identify with the collective, you identify in some countries you still identify very strongly with not only your family, but the history of your family which are all mental concepts what your grandparents did and their, what their parents did and in some cases you can you need that people from some cultures who come to the West are surprised that many Western people know very little about their ancestors and in other cultures you have a very strong awareness of your ancestors and again, that looks like a nice thing on one end you could say but unfortunately these ancestors that you identify with, either in a positive or negative way positive, hopefully positive, they have achieved this or that or they were the victims of those other people 300 years ago and then that becomes part of your collective victim identity that you are already taught when you are 6 years old that 300 years ago these things happened to your people, inflicted by those people and of course immediate, all those concepts accumulate around the central the central concept of I and you, without knowing it, you become more and more trapped in a prison-like identity and finally you reach adulthood and then you have an I that is feels semi-complete but by no means complete, it is still looking out continuously for things to enhance its sense of self, its sense of identity, of who you are because your personal history, yes it has done a lot to give you your sense of identity but it's not enough, it feels unfulfilled, this sense of I it feels not enough and it feels not clearly defined yet so in order to be more clearly defined in some cases you might say what I need is achievement, there is nothing wrong with achievement but in the service of I achievement is something different I need a possessor and possessions to tell me who I am I need that and once I have that then I'll be okay and then you spend a few years 10, 20, 30 striving after accumulating this or that or recognition of other people they need to recognize that I am the greatest or people need to recognize that nobody has been more victimized than me I have been so victimized by life that I'm superior in my victimhood to most people so the I doesn't mind whether you have, when people talk about ego, people usually think that these are people who have a strong ego who think they are better than everybody I'm the greatest I'm the master of the universe I work on Wall Street and I manipulate things behind the scenes and so you feel great until your bank collapses or whatever and then you have big suffering but let's put that aside for a

moment so you have, you identify with that very strongly and so this is usually what people associate with E when they say he has a big ego or she has a big ego or if you're not on Wall Street maybe you have a wonderful body I saw a man walking in the street this morning he had taken off his shirt it wasn't that warm but he was he was the only one who walked around the streets by the harbor without a shirt but of course I immediately realized why he had taken off his shirt because he had the most fantastic physique just masculine everybody looked at him and some people tried not to look maybe he's even here tonight in which case I congratulate you on your fantastic physique and why not enjoy that but realize that it's being used in the service of this surface identity it becomes a mental concept that makes you feel superior to most others and if you say my body is superior to most others then well it probably is for a while and then of course a time will come when it no longer is superior just wait a little as the years pass and then one day you look in the mirror and you realize that something has happened to the mirror and it's not good but in the meantime of course you can be okay for a while and the suffering comes later the suffering is always just around the corner when you identify with things concepts, things, because even that body it's not really, it's not the body that makes up the ego it is the mental concept of my body of identification with that then it becomes ego you can enjoy your body if it's strong and I never had that my body was never strong and great looking so my ego didn't go that way my ego said leave the body alone because this is for people who are not highly developed so my ego said but I have intelligence and knowledge I've read more books than these people they probably never read a single book in their lives but I had more and more I attempted to accumulate knowledge through reading and then I could feel and sound temporarily superior when I met people with wonderful bodies and I could say I could say clever things and make them feel inferior so it was a struggle sometimes it worked but it always meant there's an underlying feeling of unease am I superior or not other people, I lived in England for many years when I was young there of course you still have identification with your social background less these days than it used to be but the way it used to be in England to some extent perhaps still is the moment you opened your mouth and uttered a word in English in England, people would immediately know what social class you belong to weird and so people consciously emphasized their accent upper class accent and even the way you pronounce the word no would betray your social background or you were so good at imitating and many people did that that you sounded upper class just by saying, you don't say no, you say no no and you could talk about your ancestors and their country and their very mansion and whatever okay, that's great I feel superior I couldn't do that either because I didn't know I'd know my grandparents but nothing beyond that so it can't have been a very big story to identify with so all these things as you know the collective eye in some cultures is much stronger than the personalized eye in the western world it tends to be a bit more personalized for men, not for everybody but in some countries you're a very strong collective and often might have to do with your religion and of course that was also the case in the west until not that long ago and then you have a sense again of superiority

that's one of the key things to understand about the surface eye is a feeling of superiority it looks for that it needs that and it always finds it and even if you are if you have nothing if you can't think of anything any way in which you are superior to anybody else neither physically nor mentally nor in possessions nor in ancestry what do you do then?

you become a victim and you can in your mind what clings to the eye is you as either the personal victim or the collective victim and this is becoming very fashionable these days collective victimhood not to deny that of course things have been done to certain groups of people in the past things also have been done to individuals in the past that were very bad but to use that history, that collective history or personal history in the service of an identity that is a delusion and it is unconscious and people don't know that this is what they are doing because everybody is seeking for a stronger sense of identity so if they can't find it in a positive way they will happily have a negative identity as the greatest victims so the this is the collective identity thing is very fashionable these days and again it's unfortunately an illusion because that is not you get trapped in your surface identity enemies it loves the surface identity if it can't feel superior in any other way it loves its enemies we are surrounded by enemies you can do it personally regard other people as wanting something from you or out to get you or the whole collective does it in some ways certain nations do it, entire nations cannot survive without the collective concept of our enemies for example, National Socialism was that in Germany, Communism was that especially in Soviet Russia and nowadays we still have North Korea North Korea can only be held together by this collective victim identity of we are surrounded by enemies and that keeps the collective ego going or we feel so our identity is now so clearly defined because we are surrounded by enemies, isn't that wonderful they are all out to kill us now we know who we are and let's kill them first so they don't kill us you can see how the it is a form of it is a delusional identity so that is everybody walks with that sense of self and it makes your life difficult it creates enormous amount of unnecessary conflict when I talk about enemies, just one more thing almost everybody the way in which there is one little function that one could call also creating enemies, I call that complaining complaining is when you can do it either in your mind or out loud it doesn't matter, it works both ways you can complain in your mind about where you are something is not right about the situation who you are with, what you are doing, but don't want to be doing but you are doing it, but it's terrible or you complain about something that should have happened, but didn't happen or something that should not have happened, but it happened and you can complain about how people behave when you talk about how people behave towards you for example, you have a enormous, inexhaustible source of complaints because people tend to be difficult and not do things that they are supposed to do so you have an enormous source of complaints and every complaint in your mind, you know what he did he told a story of what he did or didn't do or you all know people wherever they go into a hotel they are looking for something to complain about and of course, invariably they find something if you are looking for

something to complain about, you will find something you can come here too to this talk and if you are deeply trapped in the complaining pattern you are already in your mind complaining about what is this guy saying I shouldn't have come here I knew I shouldn't have why did I listen to him I always do that complain if you can catch and this is an egoic device which is really you making either a person or a situation or a location or an activity that you complain about mentally, you are basically making it into an enemy and therefore it strengthens the illusory identity of the ego so I recommend that as your spiritual practice you catch yourself mentally whenever you have a complaining thought in your head and when I say complaining, I am not talking about something you can actually do something about obviously if you move into a hotel you get into your room and the bed has not been, the sheets have obviously not been changed and it's dirty, the bathroom is dirty I am not telling you to be so spiritual that now you sit there and say I am not complaining I am going to sleep in this dirty bed and feel really spiritual no by complaining, I mean the useless complaining that is not designed to and cannot change anything in the situation so there of course you have an example of something you can take action you can go down to the reception and you can say the bed has not been the sheets have not been changed and the bathroom is dirty, could you please do something about it and again there are two ways of doing that and saying that, one is in the service of making wrong which is the ego way so then you talk to the receptionist or it's probably not the receptionist's fault but you're making the receptionist wrong how dare you put me in this room with a dirty bed the ego loves that and then the receptionist becomes your enemy and in making the receptionist your enemy you feel stronger in your identity and then you look for something maybe I can complain about something else just wait until they serve you the soup or the food at dinner laughter it's not hot enough laughter but you can also go to the receptionist and say without any kind of undertone of making wrong in a way that is free of ego you can say oh I got in my room and I discovered that the sheets have not been changed and the bathroom is still dirty, can you please do something about it, no ego so the situation is there not used in the service of the ego, not used to strengthen the illusory identity of ego, therefore to in this situation the second option I just gave you is not satisfying to the ego, it does not feed it and this is why many egos don't like doing it that way laughter so complain is something very very common in many people even people who are already awakening to the spiritual dimension to the deeper eye, they're still trapped in this complaining pattern in their minds of course it's easier to catch others your friends or relatives when they complain and of course I recommend unless you have a prior agreement with your friends or relatives or family members to remind the other when the ego surfaces I don't recommend that you tell people you're complaining again laughter because then you come into conflict with their ego and you cannot fight another ego without being dragged into a useless conflict which probably will bring up your own ego complaining there's a story about the same master who had several disciples and one disciple came to him and said I've been studying with you for five years and I still not quite get it therefore I'm going to leave you and travel for a year, can you give me some spiritual

practice for that year and the master said yes, I'll give you a spiritual practice okay thanks, here it is so in your travels wherever you go, whatever situation you find yourself in whatever you're doing or whoever you're with just repeat these words thanks for everything I have no complaint whatsoever and then you'll become enlightened oh that's cool, thank you so after a year he came back to the master and the master said well how did your spiritual practice go and the disciple said well I did what you said, thanks for everything, I have no complaint whatsoever I said it all the time and I'm still not enlightened why did you give me that practice and the master said thanks for everything I have no complaint whatsoever and at that moment the disciple became awakened ah so before he had repeated the words but there was not the underlying consciousness behind the words and when the master did not complain that the disciple didn't get it, that was fine too so alignment with the present moment is already the beginning of the end of ego non-alignment with the present moment strengthens the ego and that is why the ego most of the time tries to get away from the present moment so that is actually a very, if you really practice that little practice recommended by the Zen master, thanks for everything there are two aspects to this practice thanks for everything I have no complaint whatsoever thanks for everything of course refers to gratitude I have no complaint whatsoever is the absence of the mind arguing with what is and by arguing almost constantly with what is continuously strengthening an illusory sense of identity that needs superiority how do you become superior when you complain about something well, when you complain about a person you obviously feel superior in some way morally, whatever way to that person when you complain about a place you feel superior to that place because you are pronouncing judgment you are the judge even when you complain about an activity that you are doing you become the judge and this is bad so you can see how the illusion arises so we have on the one hand gratitude and on the other hand the absence of interference mental interference with reality where is reality?

in the present moment and again it does not mean you are condemned to non-activity it does not mean you are like remember the person whose bed has not been made in the hotel you can take action but it is a different kind of action and you become aligned with the is-ness of things and thereby the ego diminishes now most people only begin to do that when they realize that they have been unhappy for too long and at some point they realize that the greater part of their unhappiness and this is an enormous realization the greater part of their unhappiness arose not through the situations they encountered in their lives but through the mental narrative about the situations they encounter in their lives so it is not what it is in most in 95% of cases when unhappiness in whatever form arises in you unhappiness is a generic term it could be slightest irritation it is already a form of unhappiness I don't want to be here they shouldn't do that already arising of unhappiness then more unhappiness can come because you can have an entire sense of narrative in your mind an identity that sticks around the eye and this is my unhappy life my unhappy life and many people are trapped in a mental narrative that is the foundation for the illusory sense of identity and they call that my problematic and

unhappy life oh how do I what can I do about this all these things that happened shouldn't have happened but did happen were not meant to happen but happened I never expected these things to go so badly wrong life has treated me so unfairly what these people did to me and what God did to me I've had enough of God there is no God how could it be all long stories how unhappy my life now millions of people carry they are unhappy they have an unhappy life because of the narrative in their minds even if you were in a more extreme situation now you might think well you're talking about westerners who are relatively well off even if you were let's say if you were a refugee now there's always these days there are many refugees moving from place to place and you would say is this person not justified in being unhappy no I was happy I was lucky enough to have experienced a period in my life when I had no place to live as a kind of refugee and already I had stepped out of unhappiness so I could verify in my own life that if I had been unhappy in the situation of sitting on a park bench with virtually no money in my pocket and not knowing what to live on the next day that would be regarded by many people as justification for unhappiness but it's not this is how certain limit situations in your life things that go badly wrong and then not just waiting in the supermarket and starting to get unhappy about how slow they are that's one form of unhappiness a minor form of unhappiness but that accumulates too over the years every other time you're in the supermarket you get irritated and unhappy it accumulates more in other places every traffic jam you get worked up mentally why are they they shouldn't be more dreadful than this so in extreme situations often it is in extreme situations and I know that quite a few of you have been there you have been there you have encountered either something happening to your body you encountered some great loss in your life either to do with relationships or work situation or home situation or finances or people close to you people dying you have been there you have experienced a collapse of certain structures in your life and the reason why you are here is that this collapse in the certain structures in your life has created an opening in the egoic shell because you suddenly became so unhappy that you woke up so the suffering that the ego generates is also potentially an opening into realization of first of all of who you ultimately are not many people have to lose a lot before they realize who they are so this can be a great blessing to lose your foothold either because the body becomes ill or you lose somebody close to you who dies or leaves you or people close to you suffer enormously or you lose your home or your work or all your money possessions or your reputation all these things are potentially are first of all things that are enormously painful for the ego that has built an identity around these things but potentially they are an opening into who you are beyond the ego but the good news is yes many of you or quite a few of you are here because you have already experienced that and some of you may even be in the middle of experiencing a very difficult life situation it is not unusual for people to experience a very difficult life situation it is not unusual at all so the ego might tell you that you have been singled out for this type of suffering but that's not the case there is suffering all around you and sooner or later in one form or another it will come to everybody so but the wonderful thing is it has worked to the extent to which it

has created in you an opening so you are no longer completely trapped in the ego because something has broken off the egoic structure a big chunk of ego of this mental structure has broken off and that at first is painful, the breaking off of a big chunk of ego is painful but it allows an opening there are the lines I believe it was Leonard Cohen who wrote there is a crack in everything there is a crack in everything that's how the light gets in so when something cracks in your life it is potentially an opening into the deep I because what cracks is the surface I that had identified with this, that or the other but the wonderful thing is now you have reached a point where you no longer need to be hit over the head by life to crack your ego that's probably happened already and if you haven't suffered deeply maybe it happened in a past lifetime if you are 20, 25 years old and things have been fine in your life and yet you are here, there must be a deeper reason why you are here so the good news is it worked it has brought you here and I don't mean here, this particular occasion or with me it has brought you to a certain state of consciousness that is deeper than the usual state the deepening has started to happen now this deepening for many humans is first brought about by suffering but then a point comes when you can actually choose the deepening so you don't have to wait for things to go drastically wrong in your life before you awaken to the deeper which we could call the spiritual dimension of life before you deepen and for most of you that applies, you don't need to be hit over the head by life anymore and be inflicted with dreadful suffering I'm not saying challenges will not come to you, they come all the time we'll come to that in a minute but already what we are learning here and now we come to the more essential part because so far I've really been talking about the bad news which is the ego but it's important to understand the mechanism behind the ego if you don't understand how the ego works and the favorite ways of the ego to reinforce itself and strengthen itself, then if you don't understand it, then you cannot recognize it when it happens for example, if you didn't understand how the ego loves complaining you could be trapped in a complaining mindset for the next 30 years why am I not enlightened yet? I've been trying all that kind of stuff why is it not happening? these people seem to be enlightened, they're smiling I'm not why doesn't it happen?

why is it etc but now you recognize it now you can actually choose to be present rather than to be trapped in a mental thought form, that is ego now ego is ego consists predominantly of thought so when your identity is egoic you are deriving your sense of self from the movement of thought and not only that you are identified with certain thoughts which means you derive your sense of self from thoughts all the things that I've mentioned you believe in thoughts that arise in your mind and there is an identity in the arising thoughts, my car my suffering and everything that comes in it's not just a thought that's how it is my life is awful why is it this situation is awful I just can't stand it anymore why are these people that's how it is you look out in the morning you open the curtains the weather is quite good but in other places it rains a lot so if you live in London or in Vancouver or in Seattle often you open the curtains in the morning and then there's a difference between looking out and saying oh fuck not another not

another grey miserable day what am I doing here stuck in this hole that's called suffering now there is another way of getting up and opening the curtains and looking out and you open the curtains and looking out and you see there's water dripping down from the sky and on the window pane and there's not a single thought in your head not even a thought oh the rain is good for the trees and the grass no just you look and you see there's an aliveness there but you don't have to tell yourself that there's just there's light filtering through the clouds of course there must be light light comes from the sun but you don't have to tell yourself that you just see it you open the curtains and you look and there's a moment of wonder and a moment almost of yes gratitude remember thanks for everything I have no complaint whatsoever the spiritual practice of course you don't even need to say that you can actually experience a situation without the baggage of a complaining or negative commentary the same situation that before made you unhappy because it became your entire life suddenly it's neutral and it's not only neutral it's actually alive this moment is alive the rain is aliveness but you don't have to tell yourself that you just see it and so this really I gave just one example of how something changes when you do not impose the baggage mental egoic baggage of a narrative on the situation and then you see the rain is completely neutral it's fine but you don't even have to tell yourself that it just is and you become aligned with the isness of things it doesn't mean that you cannot move to Hawaii or somewhere else where it's sunshine, you can but if you're unhappy there then you move to Hawaii where you will be elated for a few weeks or a few months and then you'll be lying on the beach and you suddenly realize I'm turning into a beach bum and mosquitoes are there at night that's not, shouldn't be happening that's not happening

[Speaker 10] (6:47:22 - 6:47:28)

and it's too hot

[Speaker 1] (6:47:31 - 6:48:56)

can't stand this heat anymore now this is some many of you will know him Jack Kornfield renowned writer of many spiritual books and spiritual teacher and meditation teacher that's a mountain and a lovely formless presence and that's where the books came out of Jack has been bringing the essence of Buddhism to the West for the past 40 years through his books and you were a Buddhist monk for a while in Thailand and then how many years were you a Buddhist monk?

[Speaker 8] (6:48:56 - 6:49:03)

I was there initially for about 5 years and then I've gone back at different periods

[Speaker 1] (6:49:05 - 6:50:23)

and if you haven't read any of his books many of you will have I'm just rereading Wise

Heart and one book I haven't read yet but it has a wonderful title it's After the Ecstasy the Laundry and which of course is about incorporating presence or mindfulness as it's called in the Buddhist tradition incorporating it into everyday life rather than just experiencing it in a meditation setting or meditative environment where you can go and then you have to go back into daily life you have to bring it in there mindfulness is the term that of course is used in the Buddhist tradition I don't use the word because although I respect it because it kind of implies that your mind is full I don't know who first came up with it what is the original Pali or Sanskrit word that has been translated as mindfulness

[Speaker 8] (6:50:23 - 6:50:45)

the Pali word is Sati S-A-T-I and the very best Buddhist scholar that I know a man named Anilayo who lives in Hamburg Germany says that the closest translation to Sati that he would give in English is presence But it's too late now

[Speaker 10] (6:50:45 - 6:50:46)

because everybody

[Speaker 8] (6:50:47 - 6:51:19)

Mindfulness has become a kind of industry you know there's mindfulness in education and it's a good thing in mindfulness there's all this wonderful neuroscience another translation that I like a lot we talked about a moment ago is loving awareness which has both the quality of presence of awareness and also somehow weds or gives the sense that we can rest in love, that love and awareness actually are the same

[Speaker 1] (6:51:21 - 6:52:03)

Metta is another word, loving kindness is sometimes translated as the loving there are metta meditations where you send we send out loving kindness to your surroundings the the meditation that you teach mainly is called Vipassana which is to do with bringing awareness into the body is that right? maybe later on you can give us a little taste of it towards the end so can you say a bit more about Vipassana?

[Speaker 8] (6:52:04 - 6:53:25)

Vipassana is a Sanskrit word that means basically to see clearly and the primary practice of it is mindfulness or loving awareness and it's generally established although not always first in the body partly because there's this line from James Joyce where he wrote Mr. Duffy lived a short distance from his body, that characterization that somehow we're so lost in our thoughts that a first step in coming into presence is to recognize that there's this body and breath that are actually present here and now and that the body experience is a here and now experience and then from awareness or loving awareness

of body and presence then it becomes possible to first notice the rivers of feelings and thoughts and so forth and then to actually become the space of awareness the knowing that to recognize that there's experience and there's also the knowing of experience so that's kind of there you have it you don't have to go to the Himalayas or you know travel all the way that's the essence of it save you airfare laughter I also talk

[Speaker 1] (6:53:25 - 6:55:30)

about that as although the meditation is very structured and when I talk about inner body awareness it's the same thing in an unstructured way so for example as we speak now I could invite everybody here while we listen to actually have some awareness in the inner energy field of their body as you have it now I have it now you can have it now I call that sometimes an anchor for presence to have awareness in the inner energy field of the body and you can you have plenty of awareness left for sense perception sensory perception so a very quick way I would say you would probably agree of getting out of continuously being trapped in the movement of thought is to consciously decide to direct awareness into the body and then look around and you can then give some people the first taste of being able to have sensory perception without the continuous involuntary interference of conceptualization and judgment so you can look around you feel the energy field we can do it now and this is I'm doing now an unstructured body awareness meditation later on Jack is going to do with us a slightly more structured so right now just as you listen feel the energy throughout your body it's easy and then you don't have you don't have unnecessary stuff that you add mentally to this moment let's see Vipassana then has been around for a long time it is possible which is that that was actually one of the original meditations taught by the Buddha

[Speaker 8] (6:55:30 - 6:55:41)

it's believed so of course you get history and myth and so forth you never know but it's certainly been taught for thousands of years yes

[Speaker 1] (6:55:41 - 6:55:54)

yes and of course the breath awareness is also probably was also taught by the Buddha and breath awareness is part of Vipassana yes

[Speaker 8] (6:55:54 - 6:56:57)

and the point in doing it isn't to become a good breather particularly or to have particular special kind of breath it's just what you're saying Eckhart it's to use the ever changing life flow of the body of breath to just invite presence and to be if you're trying to control the breath you already start to struggle and suffer but if you realize oh it breathes itself and in fact the world starts to breathe itself more as you feel it it invites that quality of presence or loving awareness through the breathing and one of the

beautiful things is that as people deepen in their ability to be quiet for the mind to quiet and the breath to open then there comes quite naturally a lightness and a joy very often that is just innate in us when we're not fixated in past and future yes

[Speaker 1] (6:56:57 - 6:57:38)

so breath is also thousands of years old as also breath being a term similar to I just talked a while ago about the sky heavens or emptiness breath is also something that is has no form as such and this is why traditionally it's a word that sometimes means spirit breath and why in the German language for example the word to breathe is Atman which is goes back to Sanskrit

[Speaker 8] (6:57:38 - 6:57:44)

Atman the spirit within or to inspire in English the same thing yes

[Speaker 1] (6:57:53 - 6:58:11)

this mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive to be free you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation

[Speaker 2] (6:58:47 - 6:58:49)

there are some patterns

[Speaker 1] (6:58:49 - 7:06:27)

in the mind that everybody inherits that even for advanced presence practitioners like yourselves can still reassert themselves because they are so normal by the way my definition of normal is insane as you probably know and you may be able to catch yourself many times during the day when this normal, one of these normal patterns reasserts itself and of course one of the most prevalent patterns is the is reducing the the present moment to a means to an end it could be a simple thing like you get up in the morning and you are getting ready to go to work what, how, what is the quality of your doing during that time of getting ready to go out or here you got up this morning getting ready to go to breakfast and then come here how do you experience that time are you able to be present in what you are doing or is the doing no more than a means to an end and that's a huge difference whether you you fold your pyjama and put it on your bed is that do you give it attention is it a pleasant thing to do do you acknowledge the being of this pyjama and feel the texture and give it some loving attention and then you put it away or is it what's the next thing and the next and the next because I need to get I need to if you are not you may, if you don't this habit is always there the present moment is a stepping stone that and not much more than a stepping stone to the next moment which is always a mental projection because it never comes, the next moment never comes does it no I don't think it does because when the next moment comes it's

the present moment so the next moment doesn't come, it can never arrive there's only this moment but if your habit is to treat this moment most of the time as a means of getting to the next moment so not being fully in it but mentally being somewhere else and then just need, so the basic attitude is I just need to get this moment out of the way then I will get to a better one and that is a very deep seated pattern that prevents you from being present but it's only when I voice it like this that it becomes apparent to you because otherwise you won't even see it because it's so normal to live in such a way that unconsciously it's not, you don't you don't tell yourself in your mind that I just need to get this moment out of the way because the next one will be better that is an unspoken and unconscious assumption behind what you do and it's not only, people also treat entire life periods in that way then it's not only of course most fundamentally the present moment but they also treat entire chunks of their life in that way for example you're waiting for the weekend so it's only two more days of having to go to work and then there comes or you're waiting for something else getting a better job finding the person who is going to make me happy in the meantime I'm just ticking over I'm just waiting for well what's the expression I'm waiting for the big break or whatever I'm waiting for the big thing to happen and finally I can start living when that happens whatever form that takes when that happens then my life will really start and that's another way another manifestation of the same dysfunction I don't know if you remember reading about Socrates Greek philosopher who never wrote anything he just talked and Plato who was one of his disciples wrote about what Socrates said, we never know how much of this is Plato and how much of it is Socrates but one certain things are definitely Socrates and one of his most famous sayings of course is well when he was asked why

[Speaker 2] (7:06:29 - 7:06:44)

does the Oracle of Delphi call you the wisest of all men he he said the reason why I'm the wisest of all men is

[Speaker 1] (7:06:44 - 7:06:59)

that I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing not many people actually have understood over the

[Speaker 2] (7:06:59 - 7:07:05)

centuries what I see as the deeper meaning of those words

[Speaker 1] (7:07:09 - 7:07:14)

mostly it's interpreted as pretending not to know feigning modesty

[Speaker 2] (7:07:16 - 7:07:24)

which is a disguised form of ego it's like saying

[Speaker 5] (7:07:30 - 7:07:33)

I'm the most egoless person of all

[Speaker 1] (7:07:46 - 7:09:27)

I'm the most egoless person of all nobody is more egoless than me that's for sure I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing so it's not I suggest it's not feigned modesty there's a deeper meaning and the deeper meaning is that all his extremely creative teachings they all you might know that the teachings all are he used to teach in the form of dialogues with people so they would ask him questions and he would ask them questions and finally the teaching emerged out of the dialogue and often he showed that the original premise that somebody started with is erroneous but it gradually emerges so I'm the only one who knows that he knows nothing means as I see it that he started every talk in stillness he did not begin his teachings with accumulated knowledge in his mind which he then regurgitated he was able to be so creative in his thinking very creative thinking in fact many people say that

[Speaker 10] (7:09:29 - 7:09:30)

that

[Speaker 1] (7:09:30 - 7:10:38)

that we learned western civilization at least learned how to think through the ancient greek philosophers and especially Socrates he taught us how to think so he was thinking able to think creatively use of his mind he had access to the creativity within him and the only way you can do that is by not starting from knowledge but starting from ignorance now the ignorance the way I use the term is not the conventional meaning of ignorance it's to step out of the thinking mind into just aware stillness and in that moment you don't know anything that's how I start

[Speaker 5] (7:10:38 - 7:10:44)

every talk it always starts with

[Speaker 1] (7:10:45 - 7:13:22)

thoughtless awareness in other words I have no idea what I'm going to say that's another way of putting it thoughtless awareness sounds better but the truth is I have no idea what I'm going to say before I start occasionally earlier I came in with a newspaper of course I had some idea then I was going to show you the newspaper and the article so it does happen occasionally and that is not only when you are about to give talks that is the most vital state for you to become familiar and comfortable with that state of not knowing which is there the moment you step out of the thinking mind with its continuous

interpretations and judgments then you are in a state of not knowing when you look at a sky or a tree or at another person and there's just a background of awareness to your sense perception at that moment you don't know anything not conceptually you know nothing because without thought you don't know anything there's no knowledge and that is something that could hold you back because the ego is afraid of that state it feels I become as nothing I become stupid I no longer I'm at the mercy of other people if I can't judge them anymore and all kinds of things that are obstacles that can arise unconsciously and they very quickly take you out again of that state of aware spacious presence so it's good to look out for that there is something in you that's not comfortable with it is even afraid of it feels diminished by it and that's the ego the ego feels diminished of course by not knowing the ego has to say I know even to utter the words I don't know the ego it feels like a diminishment to the ego

[Speaker 3] (7:13:45 - 7:17:25)

hello friends welcome welcome to this special live meditation with Eckhart Tolle the world needs you as a teacher of presence and from my perspective that's a very true statement a teacher of presence someone who is grounded in being and knows that their most important purpose in any given moment in any interaction is the state of their being the state of their attention the state of our here-ness our now-ness our total presence becoming teachers of presence at a time when the world is experiencing such a feeling and a sense of accelerated turbulence my language for it sounds true and Eckhart teachings are working together and we've created a new school of awakening five month program it's called becoming a teacher of presence and it begins on May 21st and many of the themes that Eckhart touches on and will touch on in this live global meditation about how the world needs you to become a teacher of presence are what we're exploring in this five month online deep dive immersion program it begins with a virtual retreat that will be broadcast from Lake Louise and then it's followed by a five month robust community journey that we have the opportunity to take together and if you're interested in learning more if you're on the player page you'll see a learn more button and if you're on YouTube you can look for the notes in the description you can click to learn more about becoming a teacher of presence the final registration date is May 16th now as we move into this global live meditation together here with Eckhart this is an invitation for us to deepen presence as a practicing community it's an invitation to how we listen how we receive right now and that also includes how we might potentially relate or not relate to the comments function that is available both on the player page and on YouTube you may choose to not engage in the comments at all if you feel and sense that it increases your ability to be part of our practicing deepening presence community perhaps by not engaging in the comments at all or if you do deepening presence and as you comment or read comments do it with a full sense grounded in being and with that here's Eckhart Tolle on the world needs you as a teacher of presence

[Speaker 1] (7:17:28 - 7:17:33)

thank you Tammy welcome to our live

[Speaker 2] (7:17:36 - 7:18:05)

meditation session I will probably be talking for most of the time but there may be

[Speaker 1] (7:18:09 - 7:18:14)

quite a few gaps of stillness in between the words

[Speaker 2] (7:18:16 - 7:18:24)

as they are now and these gaps are very important

[Speaker 1] (7:18:25 - 7:18:44)

I would even say more important than the words if you become conscious of these gaps of stillness

[Speaker 2] (7:18:46 - 7:18:52)

in between words you notice the gaps

[Speaker 1] (7:18:54 - 7:19:24)

instead of just impatiently being in your conceptual mind and saying why is he talking so slowly why hasn't he said anything significant yet if you are able to notice the gaps give them attention that is the arising of that state of consciousness

[Speaker 2] (7:19:24 - 7:20:02)

that we call presence it is a state of alertness relaxed alertness clarity a state in which the conceptual mind

[Speaker 1] (7:20:02 - 7:20:24)

has come to rest and something else arises thinking is most people's normal state of when they are awake in conventional terms and when you become aware of these gaps

[Speaker 2] (7:20:26 - 7:20:40)

thinking subsides and presence or we call it awareness arises thinking subsides

[Speaker 1] (7:20:42 - 7:20:53)

presence arises of course thinking will come back but it has briefly or materially subsided something else has emerged

[Speaker 2] (7:20:56 - 7:21:03)

and that is what we call presence it is

[Speaker 1] (7:21:03 - 7:21:09)

a state of one could say pure

[Speaker 2] (7:21:09 - 7:21:23)

awareness or pure consciousness so that is what sometimes people

[Speaker 1] (7:21:23 - 7:21:52)

hope to achieve when they actually do formal meditations meditation is a good tool but it is not enough it is not even for everybody the most important thing is to bring that state of clear

[Speaker 2] (7:21:53 - 7:22:08)

alert presence into everyday life then the way in which you interact

[Speaker 1] (7:22:10 - 7:22:33)

with other people the way in which you perceive the world respond to situations is very different from the way in which you would habitually react to situations if you were completely identified with the conceptual mind

[Speaker 2] (7:22:33 - 7:22:39)

that's the egoic state

[Speaker 1] (7:22:39 - 7:22:56)

complete identification with the conditioned mind, conditioned by the past that's the ego identification with that it's vital for us to go beyond that state of consciousness, that egoic state of consciousness

[Speaker 2] (7:22:59 - 7:23:10)

because it creates a lot of suffering in the world a lot of trouble you create suffering for yourself

[Speaker 1] (7:23:10 - 7:23:14)

you create suffering for others it operates on an individual

[Speaker 2] (7:23:14 - 7:23:21)

level, it operates on a collective level it is a

[Speaker 1] (7:23:21 - 7:24:08)

to a large extent dysfunctional state of consciousness it had its purpose, we had to go through it but now we need to emerge out of it to the next stage in human evolution if we get, this is a very critical transition from the egoic state of consciousness to a more enlightened state, an awake awakened state almost all the problems that we are facing both on an individual and collective level

[Speaker 2] (7:24:09 - 7:24:18)

arise from the human mind the greatest danger

[Speaker 1] (7:24:18 - 7:24:28)

humanity is facing does not come from without, it comes from within the human mind and the havoc

[Speaker 2] (7:24:28 - 7:25:02)

that the egoic state creates in the world so the danger comes from within so this is presence in that state of presence

[Speaker 1] (7:25:06 - 7:25:53)

who you are or who you perceive yourself to be shifts from deriving your sense of self your sense of identity from a narrative in your mind which you call my life that's the normally egoic state you derive your identity from the movement of thought in your mind it tells you the story of me, you call it my life that is the deriving your identity from the stream of thinking ultimately me, what's going to happen to me

[Speaker 2] (7:25:53 - 7:26:04)

and then there's all the past that has created that me the past that has created me but it's

[Speaker 1] (7:26:04 - 7:26:57)

in ancient spiritual teachings such as Buddhism that's called a fiction, you live it's a mentally created fiction that becomes your personality, your person your sense of self there are certain characteristics that are dysfunctional for example it needs conflict, it loves conflict it says I seek peace but it acts out conflict it loves enemies because it defines itself through the other it demonizes the other it criticizes the other judges the other makes the other as possible in order to strengthen its own fictitious sense of identity that is the ego that is what we need to go beyond

[Speaker 2] (7:27:01 - 7:27:29)

entire nations can do it to other nations too so there's the your identity then is no longer derived from this narrative this ultimate mental fiction your identity comes from a deeper place a place of beingness or presence and at first it seems

[Speaker 1] (7:27:29 - 7:27:49)

perhaps a little disconcerting because when you're not involved in conceptual thinking, who are you? when you don't remember your past or not at least don't derive your identity from your past, who am I without that?

[Speaker 2] (7:27:50 - 7:28:38)

in this space of stillness of alert presence, alert relaxed presence who am I? you are that sense of beingness or presence that has no form it is just the light of consciousness itself so what's left of you is a sense of a sense of aliveness of beingness of presence stillness, but alive stillness and that is your deeper identity

[Speaker 1] (7:28:38 - 7:30:10)

I call it your essence identity so connecting with that essence identity is the vital step of transcending the egoic identity and then you can feel that this presence is not just an absence of thought or an absence of sounds the stillness is not just an absence it is a very powerful sense of presence there's an enormous power in that stillness in every human it's already there potentially underneath the stream of thinking so to speak like a vastness of the ocean underneath the turbulent surface of the ocean there's the vastness of the ocean underneath the turbulent waves on the surface which is the stream of thinking they're not separate the consciousness that you are is also your thoughts your thoughts are not separate, they are a manifestation of form that this consciousness takes but it's only a surface phenomenon the consciousness itself is far deeper than any thoughts in your mind or even any emotions

[Speaker 2] (7:30:10 - 7:30:40)

there's a depth to who you are that is unfathomable it's and when I say you that connects you with something much vaster than what you normally call you I don't want to give it any name right now but it connects you to

[Speaker 1] (7:30:40 - 7:30:49)

a vastness that you are an expression of but if you don't know that then you

[Speaker 2] (7:30:49 - 7:30:55)

realize you live like a fragment disconnected from other fragments in this world

[Speaker 1] (7:31:01 - 7:31:09)

and then as you get little taste of that state of consciousness

[Speaker 2] (7:31:09 - 7:31:20)

that we call presence for example now you feel yourself you feel your presence right now beyond any

[Speaker 1] (7:31:23 - 7:34:27)

beyond any thought that's connected with your life situation or whatever it may be whether what age you are becomes irrelevant what gender you are becomes irrelevant what you have achieved or suffered in this world it transcends all that it is more powerful than any of that it liberates you from all that it's not that the person disappears completely of course the person the personal self is still there it continues to operate in this world but there is a continuous knowing that there is more to you than that and that is vital so you continue to operate as a person in this world but no longer deriving your identity from the personal sense of self you can operate as a person you need to in this world in this world of time past and future you can operate in this world without losing yourself in this world and without losing yourself in identity that ultimately is a very shallow and fleeting thing that you call me the person so that thing continues to operate for a while but your challenge is while you operate in this world as a person not to lose connectedness with a deeper dimension and that is bringing presence into every situation that you deal with every interaction in this world and that is a skill that skill develops and it is quiet presence itself is timeless but it is a skill for you to it requires some practice a high degree of alertness to bring presence into everyday life whatever you do here whatever function you have in this world function and for example not to confuse your function with your identity it is a function I am a teacher of presence you are a teacher of presence or you are becoming a teacher of presence by living in that way by bringing that consciousness into every situation so that you don't lose yourself in the doing whatever it is you are doing in the situation and you don't lose yourself sense of identity that is to do with your function

[Speaker 2] (7:34:28 - 7:34:38)

and to reduce other people to their function in this world so when you when you

[Speaker 1] (7:34:39 - 7:38:41)

talk to somebody whatever purpose the interaction has let's say it is a very simple thing it is it is you are in a restaurant and you order a meal and or you are the server in the restaurant and you are talking to the customer is all there is to this interaction the customer talking to the server or is there a deeper is there some presence there that causes the interaction to be deeper and more meaningful than just a customer talking to a server that reduces you reduce yourself and you reduce the others to some temporary

function and so you lose your sense of the humanity in the deeper sense of the other because you have reduced the other to a mental concept and you are relating to the mental concept this is the waiter, the waiter is the server and you by doing it to another you do it to yourself also you reduce yourself to that particular in that particular situation you are the client, the customer, could be any situation so what's the difference then when you bring presence into that moment in that moment you may still be talking, there is a menu you are looking at the menu I would like a minestrone soup and you are looking at the server and yes all that functions in a normal way but while you order this meal, I'm giving just one example out of hundreds of thousands, while you order the meal you can sense what I've been pointing at in our session today you can sense within yourself this presence underneath the thinking there is a space of stillness behind the thinking and you are aware of it and that's you, that's your presence and you speak the words and then you listen to or you look at the other person and you can sense the same dimension of consciousness in the other the other also is essentially that presence, the other also is essentially that consciousness that is the essence of who or what you are so you sense the consciousness of the other through sensing the consciousness within yourself beyond the personal selfhood and that brings an added vital dimension into the interaction and it's not something that perhaps is immediately noticed by the other the waiter may not notice that you can sense his or her being however

[Speaker 10] (7:38:43 - 7:38:44)

the

[Speaker 1] (7:38:44 - 7:43:38)

server in this particular example it's possible that he or she may be so absorbed in their mind that it just does not penetrate but it's also possible that the response the person that you are connecting with at this deeper level not through words just sensing his or her presence or some other pronoun, you have to be careful with pronouns these days so it doesn't matter which one you sense their presence and it may well be that you get a response so the person may suddenly feel so good about you, doesn't know why because everybody deep down they love being recognized in their beingness beyond their personality, there is an unconscious longing in humans to connect with a deeper level that is beyond the person, the personality there is an unconscious longing in every human being to become free of being trapped in their personality the person, they want to be free, they don't know that but they feel I can't stand it anymore, so they go to drugs or some other things just to have a moment of freedom for themselves so to speak, but it doesn't last and not only that, they fall below the normal state of consciousness instead of rising above the normal state of consciousness you don't want to free yourself from from yourself by moving towards sleep or unconsciousness that's happened with many drugs, or why they make you feel better feel so relaxed so good you can't think about your problems anymore so how wonderful and then of course you

come back and you haven't risen above thought, you haven't risen above the ego you have fallen below the ego, yes it's been a moment of freedom but it didn't last and it is not our purpose to go that way our purpose is to rise above to rise above to transcend the egoic self so that your identity increasingly is derived from that beautiful sense of presence of beingness and not the story of you and so you become a teacher of presence by in a wider sense by bringing this state of consciousness into every interaction teaching itself can be interpreted in different ways usually when things of teaching is imparting information a teacher teaches gives information facts, or teaching can be teaching somebody how to acquire a skill how to do this, how to do that teaching presence could involve words in certain situations, it can be very helpful to say something to a person if the situation is right maybe I'll come back to that a little later, to say something but more than words a teacher of presence lives endeavours to bring presence into every situation in life this obviously applies to people who have helping professions people in helping professions psychotherapists doctors, nurses teachers, social workers body workers people in close contact with other humans in helping professions some of them already in some way without knowing it bringing presence into what they do but others are just stressed and can't it becomes it's so hard many teachers are stressed

[Speaker 2] (7:43:38 - 7:43:41)

doctors are stressed, nurses are stressed

[Speaker 1] (7:43:42 - 7:43:45)

social workers are stressed not everybody

[Speaker 2] (7:43:47 - 7:43:48)

I was

[Speaker 1] (7:43:48 - 7:48:29)

for the first time in my life I was a patient in a hospital last year and so I experienced the nurses primarily more contact obviously with nurses than with doctors and some nurses seem quite stressed they're doing their job but it's tough and I've seen a couple of others were actually bringing presence and they probably don't they've never heard of the word presence something has arisen in them naturally and spontaneously when they relate to people you're not just to them particularly two I found that I had contact with you're more to them than a patient again, they don't reduce you to a conceptual identity called patient and you can sense that they give they relate to you as a being, a human being and so that without perhaps knowing it without having a word for it spontaneously in the course of their work some presence has already arisen and that's beautiful and this may be the case with many of you also that already in your whatever work you do there's

already that dimension coming in perhaps not all the time but already you're able to bring that dimension in or perhaps a better way of putting it is to say you're allowing that dimension to come in because when I say you are able to bring that dimension in that seems to imply you need to do something and that's not quite it it's not that you need to do something to the other it's allowing the presence to flow through you it's not a doing as such you have to be careful that in any situation the ego can come back in so for example when we say I become a teacher of presence you become whenever you use words referring to yourself through words it's dangerous because when you say I'm a teacher of presence and not realizing that it's only a function but it's not an identity it's a function and it could easily happen that you create another conceptual identity of I am a teacher of presence, you have another conceptual identity and then you compare yourself to others which is what the ego itself does and then you say I will show you the path let's just listen to me ego comes in very easily through the back door so being a teacher of presence is a function, it's not an identity your identity is presence itself your identity is consciousness itself and so as I said some people especially in helping professions are already bringing some presence into what they do without having a word for it and if they do it more consciously this can deepen but it doesn't have to be just the helping professions because anybody who has contact with other human beings in their work, you may be a hairdresser, you may be a flight attendant, you may be a lawyer the incredible opportunities because you are relating to others of course it's important there to differentiate between the function that you have on the level of your conceptual interaction and the deeper transcendent consciousness that can flow into that some people have very difficult jobs with other people

[Speaker 2] (7:48:29 - 7:48:39)

for example lawyers for example lawyers tend to

[Speaker 1] (7:48:41 - 7:48:58)

come into contact with their so called clients with other human beings when they are at their most unconscious because lawyers tend to come into contact with people involved in some kind of conflict

[Speaker 2] (7:48:58 - 7:48:59)

with others

[Speaker 1] (7:48:59 - 7:52:09)

and often divorce lawyers for example so if you are a divorce lawyer you are more likely to encounter people at their most unconscious they may be in other situations they may be significantly more conscious than in the situation if you encounter them if you are a lawyer so this is an even greater challenge for you to stay conscious there because you

typically you will encounter other humans at their most unconscious and so a lawyer for example needs to be really intensely present it's a huge challenge but also a wonderful challenge if you can live up to that challenge and bring presence into interactions but even in professions like a realtor maybe not quite as bad as a lawyer but when people are involved in signing contracts they become reactive they become aggressive and the ego comes in so again being a realtor is also maybe not quite as challenging as being a lawyer but can be challenging too all kinds of jobs flight attendants these days, very challenging job, it used to be relatively easy but now humans have become so toxic in many so unconscious to various challenges they encounter collective challenges and others so that can be very very very challenging job too and again here wonderful opportunity for bringing presence and again I have encountered some flight attendants my frequent travels who are able to bring that presence, who give you attention beyond reducing yourself to a passenger which is a conceptual identity they don't reduce yourself they relate to you as a human being and some do it and others don't quite manage it and so this is a skill that is vital, the challenges that you encounter in relating to other human beings is exactly what is needed for you to strengthen the arising presence if you were not challenged you could meditate every day and it's fine, you feel quite good and you think okay I'm present but the moment a real challenge comes the presence, you're not deeply enough connected with that dimension and you lose it again and the difficulties that you encounter

[Speaker 2] (7:52:09 - 7:52:17)

you challenge with other human beings are perhaps the most important

[Speaker 1] (7:52:19 - 7:52:53)

ingredient in the arising of presence, you need the challenges and you may have noticed that many of your challenges of course some are physical challenges or financial challenges, all kinds of living situation challenges but many of your challenges or I could say your suffering comes from other human beings

[Speaker 10] (7:52:53 - 7:52:55)

because

[Speaker 1] (7:52:57 - 7:52:59)

humans can be so difficult

[Speaker 2] (7:53:03 - 7:53:05)

and but that

[Speaker 1] (7:53:10 - 7:53:29)

that for most, there may be a few humans here and there whose spiritual path is to be a hermit to withdraw from life to live out in nature there may be, there are a few whose destiny is to be

[Speaker 2] (7:53:29 - 7:53:42)

not very much in contact with other humans but most of us our spiritual path is through relationships with others we evolve

[Speaker 1] (7:53:43 - 7:53:54)

through, we no longer demand that other humans should be more conscious, we realize that what matters is

[Speaker 2] (7:53:56 - 7:54:01)

what matters is your state of consciousness, not the other person's state of consciousness

[Speaker 1] (7:54:05 - 7:57:25)

so it's a this is very vital to be able to hold presence in challenging situations and life is full of them fortunately because you need them holding challenges holding presence in challenging situations so whenever a challenge happens small or big always realize in any situation the most important thing is not what's happening the most important thing in any situation is the state of consciousness with which you meet what's happening this is easy to forget people always think the situation that I'm dealing with right now is the most important thing this is really important it's it's importance is secondary the really important thing is with what state of consciousness are you facing that situation what state of consciousness do you bring to this situation and so if you can reorient so to speak yourself and remind yourself continuously the moment a challenge happens be aware of your state of consciousness that is primary the situation is always secondary and the state of consciousness needs to be one of non reactivity reactivity comes from the egoic self that says you shouldn't behave like that, this shouldn't be happening, this is wrong that mustn't be, I don't want to be here I want to be somewhere else it's always opposition to what is reactive and in presence you respond to situations if a response is called for but you don't react, react comes from the conditioning of your mind so you react in the old predictable way and then you recreate situations through your reactions because in the way in which you react to a situation that then determines to a large extent how this situation develops, does it get worse or does it get better so many people amplify conflict a challenge comes into their life some small conflict they unconsciously react and the reaction amplifies the conflict and then gets bigger and the other person perhaps caused the conflict gets even more unconscious and they become even more reactive and this is part of the old egoic consciousness where very often it's

not the situation that's so bad, your reaction makes the situation so bad

[Speaker 2] (7:57:26 - 7:57:32)

and it blows it up and that's karma one could say, it's a karmic reaction

[Speaker 1] (7:57:33 - 7:58:23)

karma by the way means action and karma is a law of action and reaction so any unconscious human being you meet a person who is angry at you for some reason are you angry immediately in turn do you react with anger too, which is a normal thing for humans, one person is angry accuses you of something and you immediately instead in any situation my state of consciousness right now is what matters are you able to just observe and be present bring that relaxed clarity to the situation instead of amplifying it

[Speaker 2] (7:58:27 - 7:58:33)

and that determines what happens in the future so

[Speaker 1] (7:58:34 - 8:02:09)

it also collectively it applies also when we have a collective problem how do we deal with the collective problem through presence or through reactivity and if we deal through by the way when you deal with something through presence it means there is wisdom this is another important word wisdom arises out of presence wisdom is different from intelligence, intelligence is the ability to use the conceptual mind that has its purpose, it's fine but there is something deeper and more important potentially in every human being and that's not intelligence, it's wisdom wisdom is this faculty that arises out of presence and then you can deal with situations truly intelligently rather than reactively and you do not make the situation worse by your reaction to the situation so you need wisdom what the world needs is not more intelligence very soon AI is probably becoming more intelligent than humans and the human challenge is to access the dimension where wisdom arises that's computers don't have that they can be very good at thinking probably they are making incredible advances but not wisdom so we need to as we are being almost replaced by artificial thinkers this coincides with the transition of human beings to a higher state of consciousness than thinking of course they can still think but they are not trapped in thinking and so it's terribly important and again coming back for a moment to that situation collective situation there is a collective challenge we have the pandemic situation as a huge collective challenge was there wisdom in the way in which we reacted to that challenge not very much there was a lot of fear there was a lot of panic there was a lot of anger and many measures were taken not necessarily seeing all the possible repercussions of measures that were taken that would play themselves out in the next few years we don't need to go into details but the question is always do you create more suffering by your reaction to a situation than is contained in the

situation itself that's lack of wisdom does that and lack of wisdom means lack of

[Speaker 2] (8:02:09 - 8:02:18)

presence or awareness whatever word you want to use so using

[Speaker 1] (8:02:20 - 8:02:35)

life situations all the life situations that arise in your life become your spiritual practice when you realize it's not the situation that's the most important thing it's my state of consciousness

[Speaker 2] (8:02:35 - 8:02:44)

that's the most important thing give your attention to that at this moment

[Speaker 1] (8:02:45 - 8:02:49)

it may be relatively easy to be present

[Speaker 2] (8:02:51 - 8:02:57)

or not maybe you're challenged

[Speaker 1] (8:02:58 - 8:04:05)

maybe not by some external situation but maybe you're challenged by your mind if you're not challenged by some external situation like you're in bed it's 2.30 in the morning and you wake up or you couldn't go to sleep and dreadful things are happening in your mind oh my god you're not challenged by an external situation because it's a warm bed and you're fine in the now but you're challenged by your mind so many times the challenge may not come from external situation but from your mind and ultimately everything comes from your mind in a deeper sense because every event becomes a mental thing you experience it as a mental event anything in the external world is recreated

[Speaker 2] (8:04:05 - 8:04:40)

in your mind it becomes a mental event so everything is ultimately your mind so when you encounter a difficult situation

[Speaker 1] (8:04:41 - 8:04:48)

and you don't react in the usual old way but you stay present and you look

[Speaker 2] (8:04:48 - 8:05:04)

see the situation and this presence arising it's a difficult person and you don't react

[Speaker 1] (8:05:04 - 8:10:49)

in the old predictable way your lack of reaction is a teaching also I've sometimes found when people were difficult no matter various situations difficult people, angry people accusing or just being in a bad mood and when you don't react they get very disconcerted because they want, they almost need the reaction, the ego itself or their pain body needs the reaction and if you don't react then they become a little confused and then the whole thing collapses even a little thing in traffic for some reason, traffic makes people very unconscious too when they are driving and they get angry at other cars other drivers they don't know them they get angry it's very strange so they personalize all that and occasionally I found people got angry at me, I'm sometimes maybe a bit slow driving and then they shout something and then I look at them they expect please shout something back, almost unconsciously they expect I could see this it was pointless to react what is the point in shouting something back there's no point whatsoever so I just looked and then some thought I was deaf and they shouted louder and but the situation very quickly collapses if it's not being fed, it's not being reinforced many conflict situations if you deal with it only factually take the ego out of it, which is the reactivity presence then arises and presence arises, you can deal with the situation factually, what can we do here, this, that or maybe nothing then very quickly a situation that potentially could have become enormous conflict written and gone on and on begins to dissolve so as a teacher of presence in a wider sense a lot of the time your teaching is dissolving conflict, not avoiding conflict or anything, it's nothing to do with that, but dissolving conflict through non-reactivity and not bringing a self into it and you stop complaining about other people for example, when they don't do what they're supposed to do which happens a lot or they do something that they're not supposed to do, which happens a lot too and so you don't bring so an important thing that a teacher of presence does is they dissolve conflict they don't feed it and if you don't feed it it very quickly collapses now if conflict collapses it's not food for your ego so your ego does not want conflict to collapse, it might say that it wants peace, but it acts differently the words say I want peace no, the ego doesn't want peace it wants more conflict so when you when you are present you are able to dissolve conflict and that simultaneously it is a dissolution of your ego too because the ego wants the conflict, but you don't you the essential you the you that is transcendent to the ego does not want conflict, it loves peace it loves the state of love so so the teacher of presence teaches not very often, a lot of the time not through words not even necessarily through doing but through bringing a certain state of consciousness to the situation and it dissolves conflict, imagine if that happens on a world scale if there were world leaders conscious enough present enough to dissolve conflict instead of amplifying conflict, because what happens on an individual level also happens collectively the amplification of conflict that's how for example I mean if you know the history of century century first world war it started with one little thing, well tragic for the person, but an assassination, the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand whoever his name was somewhere in the Balkans and then people,

various nations the leaders of nations reacted and it became bigger and bigger just one event reaction, and the others reacted against their reaction, before

[Speaker 2] (8:10:49 - 8:10:50)

they know it

[Speaker 1] (8:10:51 - 8:12:08)

you have the most unbelievable devastating conflict that ever happened on the planet until then like 30 million dead or something, just unbelievable it all happened from one little thing unconscious people amplifying conflict at every stage and this could happen again to some extent it is happening again in the world because not many leaders are present or conscious very few let me see trying to think of a conscious leader it's not coming to me right now but it must be someone so all these things are vitally vitally important and even just this one little thing of not not contributing to conflict but dissolving conflict would change the world it changes your life and if people who have a certain amount of power are able to practice that then it's the end of useless

[Speaker 2] (8:12:09 - 8:12:19)

warfare and terrible suffering that humans create for other humans

[Speaker 1] (8:12:19 - 8:12:44)

and for themselves so that's the path, our path is the path of awakening to presence so important it's never been more important than it is now consider the world situation but the true change starts with you and then it spreads

[Speaker 2] (8:12:44 - 8:12:47)

from you to others

[Speaker 5] (8:15:39 - 8:15:40)

thank you

[Speaker 2] (8:15:49 - 8:15:53)

there's a line in Shakespeare I don't remember which play

[Speaker 1] (8:15:54 - 8:51:53)

it says nothing is either good or bad but thinking makes it so there's a very important lesson here an essential part of spiritual awakening or we could call it the awakening of consciousness is to learn to become aware of the difference between the situation that you find yourself in and what your mind says about the situation that you find yourself in

particularly challenging situations many of you at this time are perhaps confined to a small space perhaps a small apartment not allowed to go out except to buy groceries or other essentials perhaps you have to share that space with several people or there's nobody else and you're feeling lonely or you may be experiencing that money is becoming scarce because you've been laid off no more income or you're feeling sick and there's a fever this cough now all these things that many of you are experiencing now would conventionally normally be called bad and yes I suppose on a conventional level they are not pleasant particularly if you're sick so what does it mean, what does Shakespeare mean when he says nothing is either good or bad but thinking makes it so so your very essential spiritual lesson is to be able to differentiate between a situation that you are experiencing and your mental commentary about the situation that you're experiencing the thoughts that you have concerning the situation that you're experiencing now for most people anybody who's not sufficiently aware for most people whatever they experience and the mental commentary that they have about their experience are a single phenomenon they cannot separate them so let's say you are cooped up in a small space have been there for already a week or two weeks and you're thinking about how much longer and you can't stand it anymore, this is just too awful and the self talk continues and it's telling you how awful and unacceptable this situation is and you might this self talk may generate self pity may generate anger it may generate depression it will certainly will generate fear because a lot of the self talk is about how bad it is, it's not just how bad it is now but how bad it's going to be, it's going to be worse that's what the mind is often saying and then when the mind saying that it's going to get worse then basically for you it is already worse and it gets worse and worse so since many of you have spare time these days I suggest experimenting a little bit and becoming aware of the difference between the situation you find yourself in and the mental commentary about the situation so when you feel unhappy basically suffering where you are and you're saying I can't take much more of this whatever the mind is saying or the mind is saying it's going to get worse I can't take another three weeks of this, how could I what am I going to live on and so on so the commentary concerns certain things that are happening now, it may concern certain things in the so called future so you become aware of the self talk basically most humans talk to themselves a lot or you may also be talking to others if you share a space with other people then the self talk becomes the dialogue that you have with others and as an experiment I would suggest that you ask yourself how would I experience this situation if I did not add any unnecessary thought to it how would I experience this moment, the situation that I'm finding myself in without the addition of an interpretation of the mind I sometimes call that in most cases this addition this interpretation, in many many cases it's negative there's usually not that much that the mind can comment on a very pleasant experience, it just experiences it but the mind can loves it when it there's a difficult situation then the mind can really get going and has a long story about it how would I experience this moment without the addition of unnecessary thought, that's a strange question I sometimes say that this addition of thought is excess baggage in your life and many

humans don't realize that they are making themselves unhappy for years and years and sometimes a whole lifetime because they never learn to differentiate between situations they find themselves in and that which the mind adds to the situation, so they experience the situation through the narrative of the mind they cannot say here's a situation and here's a narrative, but this is what I'm asking you to experiment with now, because you have plenty of time, or many of you have how would I experience this moment if I refrained from interpreting it, calling it either good or bad okay now this question doesn't have an answer on a conceptual level, this question directs your attention into the present moment the aliveness of the present moment, and if you don't add any thought to it, with just an experiment, you can if the experiment fails, if you don't like it then you can continue with adding, continuously adding narratives to the situation and continue to experience the situation through the veil of the narrative that comments how awful it all is that your life is falling apart, the world is falling apart it's all so dreadful that's the narrative so how would I experience this moment if I did not add, okay let's do it, or let's refrain it's not a doing, it's a refrain from doing something that is normally an unconscious mind process okay, what am I left with?

here I am, I'm sitting here looking around, breathing whatever is here in this room look out of the window, see a bit of sky, tree see light coming through the window furniture in the room, whatever else is happening here, sensory perceptions and you're breathing and you're alive presumably, although you may not actually experience being alive but you can experience it by feeling the inner energy field of the body which is alive, it's all part of the experience of this moment and there you are sitting there and you have dropped the narrative and all you are left with is the bare isness, beingness or isness of this moment that's interesting and you may suddenly feel a kind of weight lifting of your shoulders the weight that you habitually probably carry which is the weight of this is why I call it excess baggage it is a weight of unconscious thinking reactive thinking the mind creating unhappy narratives and then what you then experience is the body is reflecting back to you the unhappy narrative in the form of an unhappy emotion that's called normal living that's what when you watch a movie or everybody is doing it that's just normal, not very few people question it but there is another way and that's the way of awareness or presence so this is the perhaps one of the most or the most fundamental spiritual practice is to be able to separate the narrative from the situation and if possible as much as possible let go of the narrative and just be present with this moment as it is and of course the amazing fact is this moment is all there ever is your entire life unfolds in and as this moment, in other words it's always now it's never not now your entire life is now whatever happened in the past happened in the now and when you remember it you remember it now whatever will happen in the future will not happen in the future it will happen in the now because when the future comes it's no longer a future it's the now and when you think about the future it's a thought in the present moment in the now so life and now your life and the now are inseparable and there's an enormous power hiding in the now which means hiding in you and a deep sense of aliveness and

beingness that goes far beyond what we conventionally call happiness it's not happiness, it's deeper but you need to be challenged by life to find it and this is what's happening for millions collectively now on a personal level everybody gets challenged periodically also but now collectively we're being challenged we need to wake up wake up out of unconscious thinking out of complete identification with the thinking mind which is conditioned by the past and we need to realize that there is in us there is in you another dimension of consciousness that has always been there but habitually one could say overlooked and that is the dimension of awareness which is consciousness without thought and you probably have experienced it on many occasions briefly for example when engaged in an activity that requires you to be absolutely present climbing up a mountain or sometimes perhaps engaged in some kind of sport activity requires you to be absolutely present and then there's an awareness there but there's no conceptual thinking, there's no time for thinking and the strange thing is this awareness is a deeper identity the awareness that you are frees you ultimately from yourself, the self the limited self the conditioned self the mind made sense of self that for most people that's all they know but there's more to you and there's a deeper identity in you and that identity is awareness itself, that is consciousness itself, it's the unconditioned consciousness itself and it's not difficult to experience that, to realize that but humans don't they need the challenge to be driven there and this is why what we are going through right now is potentially very helpful so the practice is how would I experience this moment without the addition of thought and then you come to experience the pure isness of this moment in which there is no suffering there is only the isness of this because all the unhappiness ultimately was not created by the situation it was created by the narrative but you didn't know that as most humans still don't know that because they cannot separate the situation from the narrative and so whenever you feel unhappy you feel fearful you feel depressed you feel resentful what's happening, self pity, whatever it may be use that as a little wake up call say okay, how does this arise, where does this how is this feeling of unhappiness in whatever form how does it come about and then you become more and more aware of what goes on in your thinking mind the awareness is deeper, a deeper dimension of consciousness, we can say higher or deeper, it doesn't matter it is a deeper dimension of consciousness than the activity of thought, which is also consciousness every thought is a form that consciousness takes but underneath that there is a vast realm of consciousness in the same way that a ripple on the surface of the ocean, let's say that's the thought but the ripple is only a temporary fleeting expression of a much deeper reality underneath it and so you wake up to that deeper identity by realizing the fundamental difference between what is and what the mind has to say about it and then more and more you're able to experience situations with the power of your presence, you're facing a situation with the power of your presence it's not your presence but let's just call it yours you face it with the power of your presence, which is true intelligence instead of being reactive and complaining about what it ever is you're experiencing a lot of that unnecessary mind activity the narrative the excess baggage a lot of that you might have noticed is complaining you can

complain about life about other people around you you can complain about the unfairness of it all, how life has treated you or whatever it is you can complain about, whatever the politicians and all kinds of the infinite things you can complain about so a lot of that narrative has an element of complaining to it and it's not pleasant but the false sense of self, the ego, the me it loves complaining because then it feels it has a stronger sense of identity, a fictitious identity it loves to make somebody wrong another person, you can make a whole situation wrong, this should not be happening, it should not be happening, it's a travesty but it is happening this should not be happening is the narrative and that what makes you unhappy in most cases perhaps all cases, is the narrative in the mind not the situation the situation is as it is and as when you realize that, then more and more are you able to face every situation which is in the present moment the only place where any situation can arise, you face it as it is in the now, with the power of your presence and if action is required, you take action if nothing can be done you leave it alone it is as it is and you are not unhappy about it anymore you rise above it so to speak, you are no longer at the mercy of whatever is happening or not happening around you yes, it is nice when nice things happen and it is not so nice when unpleasant things happen but it doesn't touch you that deeply because you have access already, a deeper dimension within yourself, so you are no longer at the mercy of conditions because as long as you are at the mercy of conditions life is very frustrating because conditions or situations you find yourself in are never satisfying for very long and a lot of the time they are unsatisfying, a lot of the time they are challenging because life is not here to make you happy the world isn't here to make you happy it is here to awaken you to make you conscious how does it do that? it does that by challenging you and it is doing it now so and as you are able to let go of the unnecessary narrative that makes you unhappy then you automatically become present to what is and then you understand perhaps what Shakespeare meant when he said nothing is either good or bad but thinking makes it so thanks, I will talk to you again soon in the meantime please try it out, practice and see what happens thanks as you know I may have mentioned before nature can always help you to get back into presence and out of your mind out of your mind is usually has negative connotations but not in the way I use it so even in the midst of a city there's always a little bit of nature somewhere, in New York you might have to look like a tourist but the tourists are looking at the buildings and you'll be looking at the little bit of sky so the sky is always there so even to look at the sky can be a meditation you can look at the sky and whether it's cloudy if it's cloudy there will still be light coming through the clouds otherwise it would be completely dark so there is the analogy is the sky is your consciousness the emptiness of the sky the vastness of the sky is the unconditioned consciousness and the clouds are the thoughts thought formations or mental emotional formations and sometimes the sky is totally cloudy, dense layers of cloud even then there is some light coming through and there's the interesting, it's a good analogy the best thing probably that you can find in this world of sense perceived phenomena the best comparison or analogy to the inner spaciousness stillness unconditioned consciousness is actually the clear sky now the interesting thing about the

clear sky we have a name for it we say the sky in some languages you have two names one is heaven and one is sky in other languages there's only sky which can mean heaven or sky so in those translations Jesus says the kingdom of the sky in French Italian, probably Italian Spanish, German Jesus actually says when he talks about kingdom of heaven it's actually translated the kingdom of the sky and so that's very interesting because the sky is actually nothing if you ever went up in this direction hoping to get there you would never find it because ultimately the sky does not actually exist as something in this sense in the same way that a table exists or a cloud exists although we have it appears as if it were one of many things in this world, we have a noun for it the sky but if you look, there is no such thing as the sky, it's a certain appearance, there is the sunlight, beyond it there is the vastness and darkness of outer space and somehow the two coming together creates the illusion that there is something there but you could never touch it or feel I'm now in it, you can be in a cloud, but you can't be in the sky, you never know where is it I've been going upwards for 20 miles and still don't know where it is and before you know it you're in outer space, where was it?

There is no sky, in the same way that the consciousness that underlies everything that is the essence of who you are does not actually exist in this world in the same way in which an object exists in this world, although we have a word for it, we have a noun for it, we call it the consciousness believing that there is something that is consciousness but there isn't, it is an emanation from the unmanifested, so in itself, the consciousness is not an object you could never say, there it is, that actually Jesus said literally when they asked, when does the kingdom of heaven come or where is it? kingdom of the sky you can never say, ah there it is or it's over there that's what he literally said so you can't say the consciousness this is the analogy, the sky is the consciousness, not the only place where it's used, it's also used sometimes in Chinese, ancient Chinese spirituality, Taoism and so on the heaven, the sky the vastness of it, but it is intangible it does not exist in the same way that consciousness does not exist, because exist that word means x is from the Latin out, is to stand, it stands out something that exists, stands out into this world, it projects itself into this dimension but the sky does not exist, because you can never find it and the consciousness does not exist in the way that something out here exists, it is the the ground for existence it is the being before the being becomes something so there is being and there is existence, the being very different it sounds almost like an obscure existentialist treatise, being and existence but that is why people like Jesus use this use the sky as the closest he could get to explaining what the unconditioned consciousness is and so when you look at the sky, the equivalent of the vast emptiness or spaciousness of the clear sky is your inner spaciousness or emptiness and you can never say it can never become an object for yourself in the same way as I see the table or I am now aware of the consciousness you can't be aware of the consciousness because the awareness is it so there can't there is no duality, you can't make it into an object and that means when you are rooted in that dimension within yourself that is very different from the form identity, the egoic identity in the egoic

identity you have made yourself into an object of consciousness starting with, as we mentioned the other day the pool of water in which Narcissus saw himself, the ancient myth and so that was the beginning of human consciousness forming an image of itself and mistaking the mental image for who you are so you make yourself into an object of consciousness then you have a relationship with this object of consciousness which is a mental creation a mental formation and this object of consciousness becomes you and you have a relationship with yourself that's a strange thing now you will find that this your dog is so much happier than you and experiences so much more joy because the dog does not have a relationship with him or herself hasn't created a mental image that he can be unhappy with I'm not happy with the way I look my tail is too short my legs are too short so it has no therefore it's life, nothing in nature has a relationship with itself, it is itself, the tree is itself, the flower is itself, it is never unhappy about itself you can only be unhappy about yourself if you have a relationship with yourself which is the ego so if you discover within yourself that a lot of the time you are in a state of lack of insufficiency, of not enough and you feel that the answer to, the remedy is to be active in this world and achieve and do as much as possible, then you probably find that ultimately that is not the answer to your state of lack, in order to transcend to go beyond your state of lack, of neediness, of not enough spiritual practice and spiritual realization is necessary focus on the realization of being it's only there that you can go beyond that state of lack, which is ego go within and discover who or what you are beyond the passing

[Speaker 5] (8:51:53 - 8:52:18)

the book has been used

[Speaker 1] (8:52:18 - 9:21:54)

I'm told, to combat anxiety and depression how?

people who read the book begin to realize that the majority of their problems most of their problems ultimately arise not so much from the circumstances of their lives, but from how their mind interprets the circumstances of their lives, there is a story that people could continuously tell themselves in their head they talk, this is the self-talk that most people engage with, sometimes without even knowing it, we've all met people in the street who are talking out aloud and we say they're crazy they're talking to themselves but ultimately everybody is doing it inside their heads, so there is a there is a voice this is a conditioned thinking it never stops talking and for many people it's not a pleasant voice because it works on small scale in small situations as well as in significant situations, let's say you are you're becoming anxious because you're lining up at a supermarket or the airline check-in counter and it's not moving and you're becoming upset and anxious and this is awful and at that moment I would recommend that you ask yourself the question how would I experience this moment if I did not add these thoughts

to it, if I did not add this baggage of thoughts to it that says this is awful, how would I experience this moment, this is just an experiment you can conduct, okay here I am, I'm still standing here and now I'm not adding any narrative to it, I'm just taking this moment as it is and suddenly you don't experience the upset, the anger or the anxiety anymore because you have let go of the narrative which interprets this event in negative terms there are many books by Krishna Murthy, most of the books were not written by him, they are skillfully edited transcripts of his talks there are only about two books that were written by him and one of those books is the book we're just going to look at today it's called Krishna Murthy's Notebook and in 1961, 62 the impulse came to him to get a notebook and write every day a few small short entries into his notebook every day and he did that for a year and a half or so and then suddenly stopped and that was it and the entries, I'm going to read a few to you today and comment on each one they are all about the way in which he perceives nature so many descriptions of nature nature perceived through his state of consciousness of stillness so to read that, to read those brief passages can also take you into stillness and as we read them here some passages together that's an invitation for us to enter the same state of consciousness through which he perceived what he describes that is some practice to get used to until it becomes second nature to have your attention in the present moment rather than elsewhere have the main focus of your attention in your daily life in the present moment the rest of your attention, so that's the main focus, here's this, the rest of your attention is where you want to go to whatever task you're engaged in has a certain purpose the purpose is you want to finish the task and it has achieved its purpose and that's here and that's in your peripheral the peripheral vision of your consciousness, that's where you want to get to and this is what you're doing in order to get there and your main attention is not where you want to get and in the meantime you're just doing it in order to get there you can see how that already creates an inner stress I'm here but I want to be there that's a normal way of living is the main part of people's attention is there, but in the meantime they are here where they don't really want to be rather be there as shown in famous stickers on bumper stickers on cars which say something like, I'd rather be fishing when I visited Ram Dass the spiritual teacher who is now passed away, he lived on Maui on his car I saw a bumper sticker which said I'd rather be here now that's a good teaching on a bumper sticker so your attention is and this is a reversal almost of how humans normally usually live, it's the opposite that is in itself already a shift in consciousness and then of course you're also aware of the past, the certain things that may have a relevance in the present that's fine so peripherally past and future, usually future is more important because you're moving towards that and here's the central vision of present moment, in the present moment you're either actively doing something or you are more passively perceiving something you're there as a an observer or you're just there, not actively doing but simply perceiving that could be when you travel back from here already you might be sitting in a car, if you're driving you're doing something there it's particularly important to be present or you might be sitting on a plane and this is a good opportunity for being the you go into the witnessing mode there's nothing

particular to do unless you get out your laptop and start doing that's fine and sometimes situations arise that are problematic that's quite normal in life they are challenging rather than problematic and then you face the challenge, you look at it so to speak, not necessarily visually, but you give it attention that this is the challenge and instead of unconscious reactivity the challenge is your flight is cancelled it's not one of the greatest challenges a human can have but some people react as if it were and when any challenge arises is there anything I can do to respond to this situation or is that something where I simply have to say, well for the time being I accept the way it is because right now there's nothing I can do I heard for example at some airports they're so busy not sufficiently staffed people when the plane lands they're still trapped on the plane for two or three hours it has happened in Toronto and other places that's a good opportunity of surrender some people can't do that they start screaming and shouting no particular purpose, but they can't help it it happens to them so always the question is is this an opportunity for surrender or is action called for that is a practice to get used to until it becomes second nature to have the your attention in the present moment rather than elsewhere and it usually implies you are aware of your surroundings that's inseparable from being in the present through your senses a more alert human being than a normal human being but an alertness in which there is no tension often alertness in a human is associated with being tense but there is an alertness without tension but it's not enough to be just aware of your sense perceptions, that's a good thing it also can help you to avoid dangerous situations that otherwise you just stumble into and you don't know how you got there, you're more alert of your surroundings you see how animals in that sense are very alert because if they are not they get eaten by other animals many animals have this incredible alertness not the same as the human alertness but it is an alert awareness of their surroundings that many humans don't have, they walk in the street they're not really there in their mind thinking about all kinds of things except where they are and so they're not here whereas the bird sitting on a branch or the deer that's stepping out of the forest and there's a field and the deer stops for a moment and the ears, they're very huge ears, they go and it can hear probably a hundred times better than the human or a bird on a branch sitting it goes like this and then suddenly it goes and of course there's no decision making involved when a bird suddenly flies off it did not think, I'm now going to fly off this branch and I'm going to go over there, it just happens there's a flow to life there's no mind there is a consciousness there but there's no conceptualization at all but when an animal rests an animal also rests completely it is completely at rest not thinking about my life my life I have to figure something out what's the purpose of it all this is why it can be very healing to live with an animal, yes it can be quite a bit of work too but it can be very healing to live with an animal and to have an animal presence in the house dog, cat usually this unproblematic existence except when the dog or cat are neurotic which can happen but there are reasons for that you're usually connected to their early life just like human childhood, when things go wrong in childhood it leaves traces so if but usually dogs and cats normal status, unless they're hungry or want to go for a walk they can be

really rooted in being and joyful the cat purrs the dog's tail wags and it's a joy just to see it no problem with no psychological problems unless it spent too much time with neurotic humans it's a conscious practice so an animal can bring you into the present moment just to look at an animal in the present moment an animal that lives with humans may not be quite as alert as an animal out in the wild because it knows that the environment is relatively protected nevertheless dogs are quite alert and cats too so you become again the center of your attention always bring back into the present because it's first of all because it's all there ever is, well that's a good reason, because it's life itself your life situation yes it exists in time there's a past and a future as far as your life situation is concerned but it's not your life I wrote about that a long time ago but it's so important people confuse their life situation with something more fundamental more real, more immediate deeper which is called life life situation is circumstances and events in your life and most of your life situation is experienced in your mind and then life situation is relationships work situation, financial situation living situation all kinds of problems often problematic situations it's very rare that all of these situations are working smoothly and perfectly relationships family professional work financial environment living situation health situation all working in harmony and perfectly it can happen for short periods but usually something somewhere goes wrong, it has to periodically, frequently that's normal and that's good but your life situation always has this element of uncertainty instability too, although you might not recognize that when you look at seemingly solid things and your life is the experience of this moment the only thing there ever is so as we sit here I'd like to put a little question mark into your mind and like you to ask yourself whether at this moment you're thinking so you will know the answer and try it again I'll stop speaking for a few seconds and just be alert inside yourself to find out whether you're thinking, because usually you don't even know that you're thinking you are the thinking so there's no outside thing that knows that you are thinking you are just the thinking you become the thinking, the thinker and the thinker is the person and to step out of the person you have to experience that there is a dimension in you where the person is not but something deeper is there that's what we want to explore so again a moment of stillness in the power of now I talk about a mouse sorry, a cat watching a mouse hole now if you've ever watched a cat watching a mouse hole then you will have noticed that the cat could spend a long time there being extremely alert and just watching in the same way that my dog watches a treat when I put it down and say, not yet and then the dog goes and so the cat watches the mouse hole, is in a complete state of complete attention so one spiritual master I believe it was a Sufi master said his teacher had been a cat when he was asked who had been his spiritual teacher he said a cat, how is that and he said, I watched a cat watching a mouse hole and by watching a cat watching a mouse hole I realized I awakened because by watching a cat, he entered a state of alert attention in which there is no thinking like now just that, there's no just a short moment but it's not matter how long, it's a wonderful thing to realize that you can not think it's a wonderful thing to realize that you are still there when you're not thinking as Oprah said, when we started for the first time in the moment of silence and we

started to talk again, she said ok, I'm still here I just checked in, I'm still alive I'm still here, I haven't disappeared one more time be alert, you need to be alert to know whether you're thinking or not so there's an alertness like a cat and there may be thinking or there may not be thinking there may just be the alertness I also mentioned in the Power of Now that another question you can ask yourself is what's my next thought going to be I'm going to just watch out, see what's the next thought is that's going to come into my mind if you're very alert it'll be quite a while before the next thought comes, but the moment the degree of alertness decreases thoughts come flooding back in interesting experiments you can do with yourself and your mind now from the point of view of the usual thinking mind the realization that there is a dimension in you where thinking either does not happen at all or becomes unimportant to the thinking mind, that is either a threat or completely uninteresting because what could be less interesting than not thinking so from the point of view of the thinking mind the state of consciousness in which there is no thinking is either a threat oh, I don't want to go there, I'm going to disappear, but of course Oprah didn't disappear after the stillness I'm still there, I'm still alive and then when she said that I said perhaps you're even more alive now and that is pointing to something you there is an intensification of aliveness when you begin to enter that let's call it dimension in yourself the dimension in which compulsive thinking doesn't operate anymore but you have to be careful because you could easily because, okay what we're doing here is we rise above thinking we become so alert that thinking either doesn't happen or is seen as unimportant from there you can easily suddenly drop through thinking to below thought in other words you go to hot sleep so when you stop thinking there's the alertness here's the thinking level that's the normal level for most human beings while they are awake and even when they dream they're still going on here's the thinking level underneath the thinking level there's consciousness above the thinking level there's consciousness and even within thinking there's consciousness, thinking is an expression of consciousness but there are infinite varieties of manifestations or expressions of consciousness this flower is an expression of consciousness taking on the form, this beautiful form, incredible beauty consciousness being born into forms and consciousness, not all consciousness is form, there is a dimension of consciousness that is formless out of which all forms come the ground of all being and that's what we are exploring here thinking you rise above thinking or you fall below thinking we met, well I can't remember when we first met but then we really got to know each other a few years ago when Oprah was doing the webinar with me the ten week seminar on the internet and you were a part of that

[Speaker 9] (9:21:54 - 9:25:51)

yeah, that was that was I've had a lot of wonderful experiences here, but I count that as one of the great experiences of my life I didn't know Oprah at all before that, I had been interviewed once by her but she admitted later she was interviewing me to test to see if I'd be a good person to work with, with you on this someone had told her that I had

experience creating curriculum out of spiritual books, which I do from being here and I knew your work you had been here once before so actually I was driving in my car one day home from work, it was snowing and I I went to turn my cell phone on to call my husband and tell him I'd be late and the phone rang and it was Oprah, but I didn't think it was Oprah because if Oprah called you would you think it was Oprah?

I thought it was one of my friends pretending to be Oprah but it was and she invited me to do this and I would meet with her to go over, it was all happening very fast so I was living in a new earth, I was living in that book she had chosen it, her first non-fiction book she ever chose for her book club and she chose this and I was so impressed and I remain so impressed that she chose a very subtle, not easy book to grasp for her audience of millions of people for whom are on all different steps in the spectrum of awakening and it was her intent to bring the teachings into a language and a form that perhaps the most people could understand because she loved it and felt it had changed her so much so she would meet with me to help we'd dive into a chapter starting with chapter one obviously and try to talk about what did it mean to us and then she would say can you ask Eckhart to do this, this and this and get me questions and then I was writing a workbook that would go online so people could prepare for the next chapter all in that same week so if I got to the airport and the airplane was cancelled for six hours, I wouldn't care because I was just feeling the energy in my hands and it didn't matter if I was at O'Hare and there were kids going stranded, going to Disneyland on school break, like I was I was so present for all those weeks I think it's the most present I've ever been for an extended period of time and then I would come to you and say like Oprah wants some meditation exercises for chapter three and you'd say no you'd say exercises takes you away from the present moment just tell her to feel the energy in her hands so I'd go back to Oprah and say no we just have to feel the energy in our hands and we would laugh hysterically and then and she did such a masterful job the first night, eight million people tried to log on and it wiped out the entire internet at Chicago in all of Chicago and then they got it together and by the end, something like fifteen million people were together in those two hours live, Skyping in from Russia and Ghana and Brazil and Singapore and everywhere and it was a true it was a new earth and it was and she often says it was one of the best experiences of her life

[Speaker 1] (9:25:52 - 9:49:53)

yes, well she said to me it's the most exciting thing I've ever done and she's done many exciting things so thinking can happen against that background of awareness speaking can happen but it's also possible for the complete cessation of mind activity to happen and happen is not the right word to be there that you may notice it in the gaps between words or sentences you can be aware so acutely aware that thinking does not arise anymore you have risen above thinking or transcended thinking a state of consciousness higher than thinking in which thinking can operate doesn't have to transcend means gone beyond it's not eliminated you're able to use your mind when needed but you have

the choice and this is the radical step into a new state of consciousness you have the choice not to think that's an amazing thing and not everyone here tonight is able to have that choice yet but many of you are and we are here to strengthen that ability to rise above thinking when you rise above thinking you also rise above the person or the personality which of course can still operate and does operate in everyday life but another dimension is present another dimension to who you are and if you even want to use the word enlightenment what it means is that in addition to the personality the person a deeper dimension is present and whether you call it deeper or higher it doesn't matter a deeper or higher dimension of consciousness that is more essentially you than thinking more essentially you than your personal history and in that all the other things that for most of your life you have been identified with as yourself such as the physical body whether you are a man or a woman your background your upbringing your achievements your failures your knowledge your abilities your likes your dislikes your opinions all these other things that in the so called normal state of consciousness give people their sense of who they are all those things are recognized as not self of course if you know a little bit about Buddhism or a lot about Buddhism you recognize in this the teaching of the Buddha in the Pali scriptures the word is anatta not self or no self it's a recognition that all the things that had given you your sense of self are ultimately illusory and are not yourself I have a little bit of a cough but that's okay so your sense of self is no longer in all those things although they still exist for you on the level of the person and that's a big relief because you're no longer looking for yourself where you can't be found you're no longer looking to strengthen yourself by strengthening an illusory construct with the inevitable frustration and suffering that it leads to and with the inevitable misinterpretation of other people of yourself of situations because if you live through an illusory construct of your mind whatever you perceive whatever situation you are in your relationships with people will reflect that illusion and that illusory construct the egoic self the mind made self creates an enormous amount of unhappiness in your life or as the Buddha called it suffering dukkha which can also be translated as misery or unsatisfactoriness and in that illusory state when you derive your sense of self from this illusory construct you don't realize that most of your suffering is created by your state of consciousness and you think the cause of your suffering and suffering is a generic term it's any form of unhappiness, upset discontent frustration irritation anger despondency irritation you think that all your unhappiness in whatever form is caused by factors outside of you other people situations events things that happen or fail to happen when they should be happening according to your mind things that people do or fail to do according to your mind situations or places that are found unsatisfying when they should satisfy you according to your mind so you can observe this at work even when slight upsets arise in your life where do they come from or bigger upsets and then you can if you are aware enough in that moment and I recommend that you use any form of upset as a signal that more awareness is required that you need to become present and then you discover that in most cases the upset is caused by your mind and a misinterpretation of situations and people and so on the mind creates a gap between the

isness of things which it cannot accept so there is a gap between what is and what should be and then you start complaining about situations and people and you become anxious or angry or frustrated it's tedious to live like that and people live like that all their life and all that is dukkha misery, suffering, unsatisfactoriness unhappiness but the egoic mind doesn't even recognize it as such to the egoic mind it's enjoying itself the egoic mind enjoys unhappy states it strengthens itself through unhappy states so the egoic mind a lot of the time doesn't even recognize suffering as suffering it believes implicitly it's a good thing that you are angry now with that person or about that situation you have the right to be angry these people shouldn't behave like that the situation shouldn't be as it is he shouldn't have said that he should have said that or you can imply to yourself I should have in other words normal existence is like that there is a line in the course in miracles it says I'm never upset for the reason I think how do I transcend the limited me the conditioned entity it's very simple becomes still

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[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 37:21)

Limited entity is transcended. So if you find the stillness in you, that is the realm where the conditioned mental emotional entity is transcended. And if you haven't found the stillness, no matter what you achieve in life, it'll turn into something frustrating.

In other words, the whole life experience that you have, even though the world may tell you that you are phenomenally successful, the whole life experience will be a very frustrating business and what I call frustrating, the Buddha called dukkha, suffering can also be translated as being miserable or translated more freely as being unhappy at the mercy of conditions and circumstances. The weather is good, you feel great, it rains, you're miserable or whatever it is in your circumstances. So the most vital thing is to find the stillness and let's just, that's just a word.

What is, what is the stillness? What is behind, what is hiding behind that word stillness? So if you go on the internet, you can see a significant percentage of whatever people post there is angry and critical about others to the point of saying, these are all awful people, awful.

And so those are the patterns that come when you live for years and years and years and years and years identified with the conditioned mind. And then you grow old and you bang a cranky old man or a woman, but this has been going on for decades already. It just becomes more and more rigid.

Anyway, you are not going that way, but we need to see what we are up against, which is your mind. It's not an enemy, but you need to see that it's been the momentum that is there. It's been there, been growing for thousands of years.

And it's been a wonderful thing, a wonderful evolutionary development to have a thinking mind, except that it has absorbed almost everything into itself. Your entire consciousness has become absorbed by really, it's more than an instrument, an instrument for communication, instrument for dealing with things in this practical realm, an instrument for manifesting even, but nevertheless an instrument. So just as in the movie theater, even much more so in the movie theater, everything demands your attention.

External things and your mind. And this is, we are here in order to deepen our ability to live from a different state of consciousness where the thinking mind is transcended, can still operate, still does operate. But you have stepped beyond it.

You, which is the consciousness, you are the consciousness. So the entire essence of spiritual life is not, one could say, is not to have your consciousness continuously being

absorbed by primarily your mind and sense perceptions. In the Bhagavad Gita, there is the analogy of the wild horses that are drawing the carriage in which Arjuna travels and Krishna, I think.

And the horses represent the sensory organs which continuously take your attention out. Now that was 2,000 years or more ago. Nowadays, what demands, what absorbs your attention even more than externals is your mind.

And so as you walk around here, the hour retreat place, outside or inside, look at it, you take everything in, your sense perceptions, of course. But see if you can be aware of yourself in addition to being aware of whatever you happen to be aware of at that moment, people, nature, objects, the sky, walking. In addition to being aware of whatever you're aware of, can you be aware of yourself?

Not the historical self that gets restless and impatient, but yourself as the conscious, the unconditioned consciousness, which is the same as what emerges when you listen to the silence right now, that, that self. Can you be aware while you're walking, sitting, eating, listening to people or listening to other sounds? Can you be aware of the fact that you're aware, which means to be aware of yourself as the consciousness?

That's a new way of living. And that's why we're here, in order to deepen our ability to live from that level that frees you from believing that all there is to you is your historical person, the little me. And that's a wonderful liberation.

It's not that it no longer exists, the historical person continues to exist. It will also, the egoic self, if you identify with it, it becomes the ego. If you simply observe it, it's just the historical self.

That's the difference. If you lose awareness, your historical person becomes an entity that you think is you, that's delusion. But if you're aware, the historical entity is still there, your personal you, your personal history, or whatever is in your mind is still there.

But let's use a Buddhist term. You recognize that it is not who you are. And the Buddhist term would be, you recognize it as no, not self.

And that's an enormous liberation. So it's not, we are not eliminating who you are as a person. We are just adding a dimension to it, or rather, we don't do anything, we don't add it.

We discover that there is another dimension to you. And then you begin to live from that deeper dimension, whereas the historical person and the person, the personality, it still operates. But not as you anymore.

It operates as a person. That means you become aware of your thoughts. You become, you still have your opinions, but yourself isn't in your opinions, which means you hold

them more lightly.

You are not possessed by your opinions because otherwise humans that have no awareness, they don't have opinions, the opinions have them. They don't even have thoughts, the thoughts have them. So that's the shift is, the person remains, but there's a suddenly a depth to you that was there all the time.

But because of the seductive or hypnotic nature of sensory experience and more importantly, mental experience, you didn't know it was there. You didn't know the dimension of depth. You had been seduced out of the depth of who you are onto just the surface level of life, thoughts and perceptions, surface.

And it becomes a very unsatisfying experience to live on the surface of life only because on the surface of life, nothing is fulfilling for very long. So there's the continuous search. Now, because of the momentum that's behind the conditioned self, you may find that even here from time to time, although the environment is conducive to awareness, to presence, to being the unconditioned, unconditioned consciousness, nevertheless, there's such momentum to the mind.

It will, from time to time, take you over again, probably or possibly, some of you. And so even here, you may lose awareness and get totally absorbed again in the mind. Not present, absent somewhere.

And then the moment comes when you notice it. It could be a moment when you feel restlessness, impatience, irritation with something, upset, complaining, angry, all the usual things that accompany, inevitably, the personal sense of self. All the things that many persons are addicted to because it strengthens their personal selfhood, self, their personal self.

They're addicted to those patterns, addicted to being right, which means somebody else has to be wrong, otherwise you can't be right. And you can go on the internet if you have nothing else to do to strengthen your ego, no other great achievements. You feel, I did that, look at me.

Okay, well, I can't think of anything that I did. Look at me. But I can go on the internet and I can make a hundred people wrong and then wait for a response.

There are so-called trolls, trolls on the internet. They leave posts that are offensive or extremely angry and it's an ego device that didn't exist before the advent of the internet. An ego device for those who have nothing else they can identify with, that's good enough.

If I can make 10 people wrong a day as I sit behind my computer, that's good enough for my ego. It enhances itself every day through that. And the more people respond, the better.

I'm just giving examples of extreme forms of unconsciousness, which are very common, of course, but little remnants of those things, which you may occasionally discover in yourself, even here. So there is a pull to the mind. You cannot fight it.

You can only be aware of it. This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

Internally, transcendence is a state of mind. It is possible. And some people had to encounter the most severe limitations on their lives through physical disability, complete loss.

Had to encounter, in whatever area, severe limitations on their lives, prison cell, to realize that there is a freedom within where limitations can be transcended through non-judgment of the present moment, non-reaction, reaction is unconscious, response, yes, reaction is against, through bringing that openness, the yes to what is, the internal yes, not necessarily a verbal yes, but as in the inner attitude of being one with the present moment, that opens up in you that which is beyond form, and there you transcend limitations, and there's freedom. And that's what being dead means, dead to the world. It's not a negative thing at all.

You are much more alive when you're dead. Much more alive. And you are much more powerful when you are valley than when you are mountain.

The mountain aspect of you, by mountain we mean the form identity. Of course, you have that for a while anyway. You don't have to worry about that.

Yes, you have a form, okay. Be the valley while you are walking around as if you were a mountain, and that's peace. That's inner peace.

You walk around this world, which is not peaceful, as an energy field of peace. Not the peace that has abdicated consciousness and said, okay, I'm going to go back into semi-consciousness, desensitize myself, and go back into the vegetative realm, and be peaceful in that way. There could be an escape also from the world of form.

I'm at peace now, peace. That's the state you can also encounter just before you go to sleep in that last few moments. Something pulls you, something very sweet that we call tiredness.

Tiredness is something, we think we know what it is because we have a name for it and it's so common, but there's something very, what is that? And you say, I'm tired. It means there's a pull.

You're being pulled from within. That pull gets stronger and stronger. And that pull can get so strong that you'd rather give up your life than resist it.

People who get lost in the wilderness, they will lie down in the snow knowing that they're never going to wake up again, but the pull becomes so strong. Now, in conventional terms, we say they're so tired, they have to go to sleep. But what is tiredness?

It becomes so sweet wanting to go there. You can tonight have a look, have a feel, to stay conscious and feel the pull, how sweet it is to go into sleep. Just as you enter sleep, feel the sweetness of sleep.

And there are no problems there. Now, am I saying that's where we are going? No, but it's one way.

You're going below thought to the one. Our destiny is to go beyond thought and then reach the one consciously. Reach it realizing that you are it, but consciously.

So the sweetness of being is there when you go into sleep. It's so beautiful. After a long day, you lie in bed and go, ah, no more problems.

You're going below thinking into that beautiful sweetness of being. And here the evolutionary impulse of the universe is to encounter that consciously, to be one with that consciously, which is the dead state. Because when you go into dreamless sleep, you're virtually dead.

You don't exist as a person anymore. Temporarily, you unite with the source and then you come out again. But it is our destiny to consciously unite with the source.

Don't ask me why, I know that it is. It's our destiny to consciously unite with the source. Unite with the source of who we are.

And you can only do that if you go around as if you were already dead. Because dead means it's the formless. Death is just a dissolution of forms, but death ultimately is already life.

So that's why we have the old saying, the ancient saying, die before you die. Die before you die. Or we could, in some traditions, find death before death finds you.

Because death will find you. And if you find death before death finds you, in Christian terms, Jesus' teaching, you find what he called eternal life. Now, eternal, of course, means not it goes on and on.

It means timeless. If eternal meant it goes on and on, it would become very boring. It would become a limitation.

In heaven, you would be, after a while, you say, I don't want to be in heaven anymore. Maybe there's more going on in hell. There was a song somebody played to me some years ago by a music band.

I don't remember the name, but the title of the song was Heaven, the Place Where Nothing Ever Happens. So find death before death finds you. Beautiful.

Eternal life, of course, the teaching of Jesus has been misunderstood. First of all, they interpret it as being something that you're going to find it in the future, where after you die, you find eternal life. And then eternal was interpreted as everlasting.

There are even some translations of the Bible where it's called everlasting. But that's not right. It's eternal means timeless.

So I would substitute, then I would neither call it everlasting nor would I call it eternal anymore. I would just call it timeless. Timeless.

The timeless life that you are. That's hiding in death. And so as we realize that, more and more humans realize that dimension that is a new evolutionary level that humanity reaches, consciously uniting with that, that means you save the world.

The world becomes saved, the world out there. And it's an added bonus. Oh, that's good.

And if it were to collapse, ultimately, there is no death. Only the forms dissolve. That is the deepest.

That's not conventional reality, of course. In conventional reality, death is everywhere. So we've had the bad news, which is everybody's going to be wiped out of the planet.

Okay. Which ultimately is not the bad news at all. It's the good news.

If you realize that how so fleeting it is that why attach yourself to form as if that were all there is. The little problems of my life obscuring the divinity of who you are, the depths of who you are. All the little stuff of your life, allowing it to completely obscure who you are, how vast you are as an expression of the whole, as an expression of the timeless life, of consciousness itself, how vast you are.

And you're allowing little marital troubles and stock market concerns to obscure that. Ultimately, you're allowing the mind, because that's what it is. The stock market isn't the problem.

Your thoughts about the stock market are the problem. And the identification of millions of people with their minds have actually created the stock market, but that's another matter. So now, it's not that the problem is never out there.

The problem is always your thoughts about it. Out there, you may have a situation that may require action. That's fine.

You look at it, become still for a moment, and you act, action arises out of intelligent action, out of the stillness, that little space of no thought. Alert stillness. You look, okay,

and then action, if possible.

If no action is possible, you look, and you are, that's what it is. That's power. You're in touch with power.

Not your power, the power. So we do not need to fear the end of the world, nor do we need to long for the end of the world out there. Get to the end of the world in you.

The end of the world is the end of reliance and identification with the mind. Because the mind is the world. We don't, you don't even know whether there is a world out there.

Because you can only experience it through your mind. The mind is the world. Attachment to the world really is attachment to your mind, to your thoughts.

And so, that is the transition from one state of consciousness to a higher state of consciousness. The relinquishment of that attachment to every thought that arises. Is there a world out there, or is it just our mind?

Maybe it comes to the same thing. Waking up means stepping out of identification with thought, and that means death. So simple, it's death.

When you don't believe in thoughts anymore, suddenly a spaciousness arises, an awareness arises, which from the point of view of thought is called death. Thought calls it death. Amazing.

All this we could call the good news. This is one, sometimes the gospels in the New Testament are called the good news. And of course, basically, that's what it is.

The basic message was already there. It became distorted and obscured and misinterpreted. That's all very well, but it's there.

All the ancient teachings point to it. And now it comes in a new form, because the expression of it is form. That which it points to is formless.

And that out of which the expression of it arises is the formless also. So what is happening here is happening because the universe wants it to happen. Life wants this to happen, this awakening.

Awakening out of the dream of form, ultimately. Consciousness is awakening. It's a huge, vast thing.

I do not fully understand it, nobody can, but you can be a conscious expression of that movement. And it frees your life from problems. Oh, that's a little bonus.

Oh, and it gives you inner peace. Oh, that's another bonus. It makes you a loving being.

Oh, that's a bonus. You no longer contribute to spreading unhappiness in the world. Oh,

that's good.

That's good. And you actually, you change the world by being an expression of that shift in consciousness, by allowing it to happen through you. You change the world because you are all that.

And a few more doing, a few more not doing it, but realizing it. And the world changes. Now, whether in the meantime, whether the world as we know it now has to collapse substantially first before the new change can manifest and express itself also through new forms remains to be seen.

It perhaps depends on how quickly the new world and new consciousness arises in humans. And if forms need to collapse that were created by the old consciousness, from Soviet communism to Wall Street, just to take two extremes, but basically the same things, to the political system, the economic system, social or the institutions and so on. Are they going to survive?

Some may survive, many probably will not. Is that something to be feared? No.

It's enormous change coming in internally and externally. They go together. Yeah.

[Speaker 12] (37:49 - 38:06)

I wonder if you can have any advice about ego longing for something. For example, an experience that was so wonderful that I want it to be repeated.

[Speaker 1] (38:08 - 38:48)

It could even be a spiritual experience. It's not uncommon for people who have had, and then 10 years ago, I had this great meditative experience. And ever since I've been trying to get back there and- Yeah, something like that, for example.

Is it, in your case, is it one particular thing, especially, or is it something that happens frequently, thinking back on monetary experience? Or is it something that you want to mention? Tell us what it is, or would you prefer not to say what it is?

[Speaker 12] (38:48 - 39:10)

Yeah, of course, I can be open. It's spending time together with a particular person. And it's wonderful.

And I do realize that ego wants more, and it's never enough. And I do see it's kind of insane.

[Speaker 1] (39:10 - 39:18)

And that person is no longer in your life? Yeah, he is in my life. Oh, but why don't you

spend time now with him?

[Speaker 12] (39:21 - 39:37)

Because I do realize that he's another human being, and he might want something else. And it feels not healthy to have this desire to be with that person all the time. I would like to have my freedom, too.

[Speaker 1] (39:38 - 39:42)

So you are in a relationship with that person, but you're not living together?

[Speaker 15] (39:43 - 39:43)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (39:44 - 39:46)

Right. And you want to spend more time.

[Speaker 15] (39:46 - 39:46)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (39:47 - 39:48)

But he wants to have his freedom.

[Speaker 12] (39:49 - 39:51)

I guess. Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (39:53 - 53:10)

It's good sometimes to know a few details of the question, because that can be helpful. Details are very important. Sometimes I've had, before I answer your question, I don't know if there is an answer, we'll see.

Sometimes people send me manuscripts of things they have written. Often it's called my life. And often I read, and I read things like, when I was between the age of six and 10, I went through the most horrific experiences with my dad who had issues with this and that.

And I was totally, and it's all abstract. The reader cannot even imagine what exactly did happen, except we are told it's horrific. And they say, and I don't want to go into it here.

Well, if you don't go into it, nobody's going to read it. People want to know concretely what actually happened. And anyway, that's, it's helpful to know because then we can

truly relate to the question.

It's the important thing is to become more comfortable with yourself and spending time with yourself. Now, in order to become more comfortable with that, you have to go more deeply into yourself where the, what I sometimes call, I haven't used this term here so far, but recently have been using it occasionally. What I call the deep eye, not this eye, the first person singular eye, the deep eye, as opposed to the surface eye.

The surface eye is of course, the egoic identity, the things that normally people refer to when they use the word eye, they refer to me and my story and my needs and my desires and my anxieties and my ambitions. That's eye. But, and I call that the surface eye that is identified with forms and is fields, certain needs, continuous needs.

And the surface eye lives in a state of frequent and in some cases or many cases, permanent and permanent state of unease at best. Unease, not quite, not completely satisfied, except briefly just after a great meal with two glasses of wine, ah, but of course you're moving towards unconsciousness or after having sex perhaps for a little while, ah, no more desires. Of course, the desire movement is just starting up again at the back and an hour later, the unease comes back.

This is the, Freud wrote this book I read it 30 years ago, so I don't remember exactly what's in it, but I remember the title. The Unease in Culture. It's the English translation.

He's saying there's an unease that underlies civilization. Now, I assume, if I don't remember the details, he says a civilization needs this unease, but I think he's wrong. The original word for unease as used by Freud for those of you who speak German is das Unbehagen, das Unbehagen, translated into English as unease.

So there is an almost continuous sense of unease and it says, what I need. I need, I need, I need. Sometimes you don't even know what it is you need, but there's just a neediness, a free floating neediness.

And these are all symptoms of the surface I. And as long as you live on the surface I, then you can't get rid of these symptoms. They will remain.

So the practice is exactly why you're here. This is the reason why you've come here. You've come here in order to go beyond, in order to transcend the surface I.

It'll still be there, but it's no longer the foundation for your sense of identity. So you become still and the mind subsides. And then you begin to, at first, just as little glimpses, little glimpses of presence of yourself as experiencing yourself as an underlying presence, consciousness, you become aware that you are conscious of consciousness.

And at first it seems to be insignificant. Okay. And the mind says, and now what?

And you just, you just, oh, it does. Yes, I knew that. And now what do I do with that?

Now, where does that take me? So you have to give yourself a little bit more space because space is exactly what you want and allow yourself to go more deeply. And then the thoughts will keep coming in and say, think about something else.

Think about what you need. This is what you need on a truer level, but it's not so much that you need it because you already have it, but you need to be conscious that you have it. You be conscious of the deep eye.

It's already there. You don't need to bring it to you or to go do penance or work hard for the next 25 years and then find it. No, it's already there.

So you have to give yourself that space where you go within what we're doing here. I mean, by coming here, you're hard doing it because you realize that the solution to your so-called problem lies here, which means it's all about you, lies in you. Become still.

Find that dimension of stillness in you where you're fully alert, but not thinking. Five seconds and then a little longer. Go into nature.

Allow nature to help you. Look at a tree. Allow the tree to teach you stillness.

Look at a tree for two minutes and you will notice the tree exists surrounded by stillness and it's very still. And so you tune into that. So you go into, you look at the sky, the spaciousness.

I take photos of the sky all the time. I think they showed some here before. It had to be cropped a bit, unfortunately, but the original photo, there's even more spaciousness because I love the spaciousness of the sky because the moment you take that in, you become aware of spaciousness in you.

The moment you look at the spaciousness of the sky, you're not thinking. You're just taking it all in and then become aware of the presence that's taking it all in. You are that, and this presence, then you feel that more and more strongly in you, the still presence.

And that is not a place that needs anything. And there you become, you're at home then, at home with yourself. Rather than always trying to get home because it's the ego state, so to speak, it's, I'm trying to get home, but where's home?

You never feel, this is where I belong. This is where, you might think sometimes a physical place is it, but it's not it. Home, home, home.

It's wonderful that the English word and the home are so closely related. So the answer is in yourself, the more you live from the deep eye, the less you need the other. But that does, that also means the more deeply you can relate to the other, because then you can relate to the other no longer through your neediness, but through your aliveness,

through your inner peace.

And you can share that with the other. And then the other wants to spend more time with you because it's so lovely to be around somebody who doesn't need anything. And the other then feels so much, feels so good to be with you.

But that's not why you do it. That's not why you go there. But, so the, the thing is it's written somewhere.

I don't remember where, well, I do. And the, the things that you, that you need, all the things that you need, or more accurately, the things that you think you need, many of those things, when you connect with a deep eye, will be added unto you. They will be added.

Now, what does that mean, added? Added means you no longer need them. And then you get them.

You didn't get them when you needed them. This is the irony of the universe. The universe is smiling, or God.

And when you don't need, it comes, or he comes. When you need, it stays away, or he stays away. That's a, well, the ego says, well, that sucks.

And another way, another story would happen to me is the, in my twenties, when the ego was growing and growing and growing, and I was becoming more and more unhappy, if I had gone to a psychic and the psychic had said to me, you will become a great spiritual teacher, the ego would have said, whoa, this is so great. Wonderful. I'll be great spiritual teacher.

It would have been very elated. But if it had been a good psychic, he or she would have added, you are great, but you have to die first. You have to die to the illusory self.

And then, yes, it may be satisfying when you're a great spiritual teacher, but you don't even think of yourself as a great spiritual teacher. And you do not regard it as a personal satisfaction. There is a something satisfying there, but not a personal, like I did something.

And if the psyche had predicted that, the ego would have said, hmm, I'm not sure if I want it anymore. So that's, so the paradox is the adding on. Seek first that, find that, and then the things that you thought you needed will be added on.

And that's, it's miraculous how that works. And so that's good. So the whole situation has brought you here.

It's all perfectly designed to bring about your awakening.

[Speaker 15] (53:14 - 53:15)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (53:44 - 56:12)

The way in which you communicate can be done in such a way that you don't make the other person wrong. That is a very helpful thing. Don't, I was staying, many years ago, I was staying with, in somebody's, when I didn't have a, I was actually writing, it doesn't really matter what I was doing.

I was writing the beginning of the power of now. Somebody offered me a room in his apartment and he had three cars and he said, you can have one of them, you can use it. I don't use it anymore.

He would always buy the next more expensive car because he got dissatisfied with the old one. So I got one of the old ones that he was dissatisfied with to drive around. And it was a beautiful car, a few years old.

But I thought when I, one day I left the car and there was a signal when I closed the door, but I didn't realize why the sound was beeping. And when he realized, he realized the next day, well, I wanted to use it again and the engine wouldn't start. So it seems that the light stayed on.

The sound was to advert me to the light. But why I'm telling you this is, he had done some spiritual work and I was very impressed when he left me a note because he got up before me. He left a note which said, the lights were on and the battery got depleted.

You need to call the AAA too. That's all. And I was very impressed by that note because he didn't, a normal person who had not done any consciousness work would have said you left the lights on despite the fact that you must have heard the warning signs of the engine.

So I would say, well, this person has some awareness. He's not making me wrong or that it was my mistake, but he's not making somebody else wrong in the service of being more right than me. Oh.

[Speaker 15] (56:15 - 56:37)

Oh. Oh. Oh.

Oh. Oh. Oh.

Oh. Oh. Oh.

Oh. Oh.

[Speaker 1] (57:20 - 1:06:58)

In the Pali scriptures, the word is anatta, not self or no self. It's a recognition that all the things that had given you your sense of self are ultimately illusory and are not yourself. I have a little bit of a cough, but that's okay.

So your sense of self is no longer in all those things, although they still exist for you on the level of the person. And that's a big relief because you're no longer looking for yourself when you can't be found. You're no longer looking to strengthen yourself by strengthening an illusory construct with the inevitable frustration and suffering that it leads to, and with the inevitable misinterpretation of other people, of yourself, of situations.

Because if you live through an illusory construct of your mind, whatever you perceive, whatever situation you are in, your relationships with people will reflect that illusion and that illusory construct, the egoic self, the mind-made self, creates an enormous amount of unhappiness in your life, or as the Buddha called it, suffering, dukkha, which can also be translated as misery or unsatisfactoriness. And in that illusory state, when you derive your sense of self from this illusory construct, you don't realize that most of your suffering is created by your state of consciousness. And you think the cause of your suffering, and suffering is a generic term, it's any form of unhappiness, upset, discontent, frustration, anger, despondency, irritation.

You think that all your unhappiness in whatever form is caused by factors outside of you, other people, situations, events, things that happen or fail to happen when they should be happening according to your mind. Things that people do or fail to do according to your mind. Situations or places that are found unsatisfying when they should satisfy you according to your mind.

So you can observe this at work even when slight upsets arise in your life. Where do they come from? Or bigger upsets, when you can, if you're aware enough in that moment, and I recommend that you use any form of upset as a signal that more awareness is required, that you need to become present, and then you'll discover that in most cases, the upset is caused by your mind.

[Speaker 2] (1:07:43 - 1:12:05)

I may have mentioned before that one obstacle to meditation, especially for people who practice formal meditation regularly, they may not realize, although whatever method they use, whatever meditation practice they use, may be good, potentially helpful. There tends to be, however, always an underlying, unexpressed thought, feeling, perhaps, that you are doing a meditation. Sometimes you do many things every day, and one of the things you do is you're doing a meditation practice.

I'm doing my meditation practice. But what is the aim of meditation? Meditation, it's supposed to take you into a realization of being.

Now, we live in a culture, westernized culture, which is not confined to the geographical so-called West these days. Westernized culture is many places in the globe. We are predominantly focused, or almost many people exclusively focused on doing.

So it seems normal that you include, when you start meditating and even continue that practice, becomes part of the idea in your head that this is something that you have to do. There's a doing idea involved. Doing involves time.

Doing has an aim. I'm here, I want to get there, or I'm doing this in order to achieve that. All doing involves time.

So with the idea of doing comes the idea of time that you are, that you need to get somewhere with your meditation practice. For example, I want to become enlightened, or maybe you're not as ambitious as that, I want to still my mind. Now, meditation is a practice that is meant to give you access to a particular state of consciousness.

I call it presence. To help you realize that apart from doing, and of course doing is not just external doing, running around on the computer. Doing also is thinking.

Every thought you think you're doing something, you're doing, you're thinking.

[Speaker 1] (1:12:09 - 1:12:18)

Meditation, the aim of meditation is to bring you to a realization of being.

[Speaker 2] (1:12:21 - 1:29:17)

So to help you access another dimension within yourself, it's not thinking, and it's not to do with external activities, but you don't go to sleep either. So it's the realization of being, to become aware of your own presence. So to speak, of presence or your presence is just words.

Right now, instead of thinking we're doing something, I would suggest that an alternative access point to the state of consciousness that is presence is to let go of all doing, or any idea that you have to get somewhere. Improve yourself. There is a place for that, that exists on another dimension that also operates in your life, getting better at things and so on.

But then there's something else where any kind of doing doesn't really help. If, I'm not saying let go of all your meditation practices, if they're used correctly, they can take you into being also. But for many people, there's an underlying, continuously arising obstacle created by the idea that you're doing something and need to get somewhere.

So instead of taking you into being, it just creates more doing. Being and doing, those two dimensions, need to be present. And it's not just meditation is there to help you access being.

But in the rest of your life, which is most of your life, 98% of your life, even if you meditate a lot, 95% of your life is still something else. It's not the meditation. There, there needs to be a balance between being and doing.

Not as separate things, but coming together. And this is why here I'm not using any technique. And I just want to invite you to become aware of the fact that you are.

I wouldn't say that you exist. Of course you exist. But exist, the word itself comes from Latin, in Latin, ex means out.

Exist means to stand out. Now that's your body exists, your psychological self with its conditioning and thought processes and emotions exists. It's there, it manifests.

Whatever is manifested, not necessarily just through the senses, because the more important part of you, you can't see through the senses, that's invisible self, psychological self, exists, stands out, is manifested. So it's not so much becoming aware of the fact that you exist, but becoming aware of the underlying being that gives rise to your existence. Something deeper, becoming aware of yourself right now, as I speak, of the essence of who you are, not as a physical body, not as a psychological entity with a past, a personality conditioned by the past.

But is there anything deeper than your personality that's conditioned by the past, consists of all thought processes and emotions and opinions and viewpoints, likes and dislikes and so on, so on? Is there something else, something deeper, something without which all those other things could not manifest? Yes, you can't define it, you can't understand it, there's nothing to understand there.

If you examine your historical self, your psychological self, then you may need understanding, you might need to go to a psychotherapist to figure out things that you had not been aware of, your psychological self. But here, in that immediate realization of being, I am. There's no doubt about that, that there is a consciousness here.

Prior to whatever arises in that consciousness, there is a presence, a consciousness. Even when I don't think in exact, it's only really when there's a moment of not thinking that I become aware of that consciousness that I am. I become aware of awareness, which is not how it is, it's just language.

Awareness, which is who you are, consciousness, which is who you are, becomes aware of itself, there's no duality anymore. Can you feel yourself? Your consciousness, your beingness, the I am, without adding anything to the I am, which would be your name, your age, your gender, your position in society, your knowledge, your memories, these

are all things you add to I am.

The I am is the essence. If you can sense that in your daily life, in the background, then you are always connected with being, you're rooted in that deeper dimension. And then all the comings and goings in your external life, and all your doings may still be important, are still important, whether you gain something, you lose something, whether you're healthy or ill, rich or poor, but then there's always something deeper.

And from that deeper dimension of beingness, where you can sense your essential reality as that, and not the psychological personality, that means you have found that which is of primary importance and then you deal with all the things that are of relative or secondary importance, which is everything else in your life. So you are both who you are in this world, the person, the historical entity, the physical, psychological entity, yes, you are that, but more fundamentally, you are the consciousness without which the person would not even be, would there even be a world without a consciousness perceiving the world. Molecules, atoms, and empty space make up this body, this room, everything, wherever you are, molecules, atoms, and mostly empty space.

It's not a world at that level, it's not a room, and then consciousness comes and suddenly there's a world. But molecules and atoms themselves may also be just primordial manifestations of consciousness. And ultimately, humans will realize first of all through spirituality, through your own spiritual realization, at some point, perhaps even through science, we're not there yet, that all is consciousness, that the entire universe is an expression of the one consciousness, vibrating, so to speak, at different frequencies from so-called inanimate matter to plant life, to animal life, to human life, and other dimensions of existence. In the same way, the kind of water that can be solid, it's ice, seems to have nothing to do with water, it's very hard, and then water exists as a liquid, and that water can also exist as a vapor. The same thing, at least at different frequencies, one could say, and consciousness is just an analogy for consciousness, you are essentially consciousness.

And then there's a temporary appearance of you as a person, and that's fine, it's part of the miracle of manifested existence, where consciousness breaks up into countless streams, coming all continuously from the one source. To realize yourself as consciousness, you need to become aware of the space between thoughts. When I stop speaking for brief moments, are you able to stay so present that you do not add any thought to this moment?

You add nothing to it, it's just a sensation. Yes, there is still, if your eyes are open, you can still see the screen, and can see me, or the image of me, and hear the words, or if your eyes are closed, you can still hear the words. But what else is there?

Something deeper, more vital, than whatever appears in your sense perceptions. Something without which there would be no sense perception. Oh, yes, just a stillness at

first, a seemingly, a seeming nothingness.

I like that English word, nothingness. You can, the word nothing consists of no thing. An apparent no thingness when you're not thinking.

And if you were in a place where it's very totally quiet, nobody is speaking, and your eyes are closed, you can become even more aware of the no thingness. It's just a presence, an underlying presence. It has nothing to do with who you are on the level of the person, but you know.

An alive stillness.

[Speaker 1] (1:29:43 - 2:24:55)

Through thinking, you cannot be aware of those spaces between words, because thinking is object consciousness. The space between words takes you to space consciousness. So the entire secret of our gathering here of all spirituality is just one thing.

All the things that happen, your financial situation, your health situation, your relationship situation, your work situation, your living situation. Yes, these things matter, relatively speaking, but there's one thing that is more important that matters absolutely, and that is your state of consciousness. And whether or not you have awakened to what we could call, it sounds a little abstract, but it's not.

We could call the transcendent dimension of consciousness in you, the transcendent dimension of consciousness. Now, I'm not going to immediately define what that means, because actually it cannot be defined. It can be pointed to, this is what these words are for, but these words are not a substitute for it.

The words point, famous phrase in Buddhism, it's the finger pointing to the moon, but the finger is not the moon. So there's nothing that I say tonight that you need to believe on a conceptual level. I'm not asking you to believe anything whatsoever.

There is what I sometimes call the two levels of consciousness, the conceptual. I sometimes call that object consciousness. These are all the things that happen in your perceptual field and in your mental field, thinking, emotions, sense perceptions.

Things arise, things pass away, things come and go, sense perceptions, ideas, thoughts, opinions, feelings, emotions, all belong to object consciousness. One object after another happens. You perceive things, ah, oh, there, oh, and then thought objects arise continuously, a stream of thoughts, oh, no, no.

No, for most people, the stream of thoughts has such a gravitational pull that they get completely dragged along by this continuously proliferating stream of mental activity. I

sometimes call it the voice in the head. It never stops speaking.

It continuously comments on where you are, what you're doing, or takes you somewhere completely different in the so-called past or the so-called future, one thing after another, one damn thing after another, to paraphrase Churchill. Churchill was talking about history. History is just one damn thing after another, and that's true, but for many people, their conditioned mind, the experience of their conditioned mind is just one damn thing after another because it never leaves you alone.

It goes, so most humans who are not awakened or even awakening are completely trapped in their object consciousness. They are confined by it, and not only that, they are completely identified with all the arising thoughts and emotions that continuously go through their mind, and there's no separation between the thoughts and the emotions that accompany the thoughts, and you, you're not even there. When you're totally identified with the voice in the head, you are, spiritually speaking, asleep, or another word for it is unconscious.

So an unconscious person, in ordinary usage, unconscious means, of course, you've completely lost, you don't know what's going on, and this is unconscious. In conventional usage, unconscious means, pfft, in spiritual usage, unconscious means completely and continuously identified with a stream of thinking, and the emotions that go with a stream of thinking. What does it mean to be identified?

It means you derive your sense of who you are from the stream of thinking. Every thought is imbued with a sense of self, so you're identified, it has you in its grasp, and therefore, if people conventionally say, I think, I think, what do you think? As if thinking, for most people, were a voluntary activity, whereas for most, not you, but those who are not awakening yet, which is the majority of the population still on the planet, for most, that is, they are completely identified with a stream of thinking.

They are, spiritually speaking, unconscious, and that is a terrible thing, because then everything that you perceive, reality itself, as you perceive it, goes through the filter of your mental, emotional conditioning from the past, so you never see anything as it is, perceive anything clearly, and most importantly, there is never a sense of inner, true inner peace, spaciousness, joy, sense of aliveness, sense of connectedness with something that is deeper than your historical person.

You're always at the mercy of what goes on out there and the reactive patterns of your mind, so you're completely unaware of the possibility of realizing the other dimension of consciousness, which is not object consciousness, but space consciousness. I call it sometimes space consciousness. Now, what is space consciousness?

You cannot define it, because it's beyond concepts. You can know what space consciousness is in this very moment by becoming aware of the gaps between words

when I speak. I'm just slowing down a little bit.

So instead of being totally interested in the words, you're also interested, although that's probably not the right word, you're also giving attention to the empty spaces between the words, because they are needed. Without the spaces, there could be no sounds. The sound needs the space to exist.

Oh, that's interesting, to be aware of the gaps between words, or in this room, in this hall, to be aware not only of the objects in this room, the objects that make up this room, what's in it, the bodies, the objects, that which confines and defines the room, the ceiling, the walls, the floor. This is the room. You're not only aware of that.

That would be, in this analogy, object consciousness. You're also aware of the space in this room. Now, the space isn't something that you say, oh, it's there, or it's there.

But it is the most important part of this room, is the space, and it's a wonderful space, but you cannot define it. It has no actual, you can't even say that space exists, because exist means to manifest, to stand out. Exist, ex means out, from Latin.

Exist means to be manifested. That's it. But space doesn't manifest.

It enables everything to manifest in the physical realm. Without space, these things could not be here. So space is prior to existence.

Space is prior to manifestation, and that's very interesting. So there is something in you, which I sometimes call space consciousness, that is prior to who you are as a person, your personality, and you can know it, not conceptually, but immediately, and experientially, by becoming aware, either of the spaciousness outside of you, or becoming aware of spaces between sounds, spaces between words. Now, how do you do that?

How do you become aware of a space between two words? There is no how, because it's too simple for how. Quite simply, there's an attention in you, a field of alert attention, and this field of alert attention is aware of the space between words.

You notice that silent space. What does it mean to notice that silent space? It means in this brief moment of noticing, or noticing the space in this room, in this brief moment, you're not thinking, you're just aware.

Thinking, through thinking, you cannot be aware of those spaces between words, because thinking is object consciousness. The space between words takes you to space consciousness. So the entire secret of our gathering here, of all spirituality, is just one thing.

Now, amazingly, I'm going to talk about this one thing for hours, using different pointers,

also perhaps, as you might have noticed, I haven't prepared anything, so I say perhaps because I don't know exactly what I'm going to speak about, but I assume I will also be speaking about the obstacles to this realization. This is very helpful to address the obstacles that may and probably will arise in you to the realization of that transcendent dimension of consciousness, which is the most important thing, this realization, the most important thing that can happen in your life. It's not even, happen is the wrong word.

The most important thing in your life is to connect with that depth dimension. Because without that, even if you don't fully awaken, whatever that is, but to have an inner connectedness with something that transcends the personality of the historical person, the very historical person that you are has its place. It's fine.

I mean, you have to live with yourself on that level, and it's problematic. Every person is problematic. Every person's life is problematic.

Although you might not know this if you read people's Facebook posts, because they're all doing great. And they're all looking so happy, and they're all eating their wonderful meals, and you have to fake it. Oh.

Oh. Oh. Oh.

Oh. Oh. Oh.

Oh. And they look all so beautiful because the pictures are so overexposed, like the photo on the front cover of that magazine. The photos are so overexposed that everybody looks so ethereal and beautiful.

All that's left is you see the eyes and just a little bit of blurry outline of the face, but that's all. You don't know whether they're 20 years old or 60. You wouldn't know.

So that's... But life, people have a mental construct of what their life is. One is that project into the world through modern technology.

And then you have another mental construct that you live with in your life that you call me and my life. Me and my life. That's the person talking.

That's the personality talking. So, and when you start questioning people or you'll listen to people or listen to your own, the voice in your own head talking about me and my life. It's not the greatest story.

It's a problematic story. It's not easy being me. In fact, I don't think anybody is having a more difficult time than me.

And I need to think about that a bit more. How can I solve this dilemma of me, this conundrum, this... I am, it's amazing that many people consider themselves without verbalizing it in that way.

They consider themselves to be a problem to be solved. There's something, and this is very interesting. There's something in the human psyche, if you're not awakening at all yet, so in the normal state of consciousness or unconsciousness, there's something there.

There's always either in the background or in the foreground. If it's in the background, there's a sense of unease, a sense of something is missing, something is lacking. And what it is that's missing, perhaps the mind will figure out, okay, what I need to be fulfilled is this, that, that, that.

Or the mind might not even know because whenever you achieve something that you think will liberate you from this permanent sense of insufficiency, then whenever you think you found it, it doesn't take long. And then you say, oh no, because there's something else goes wrong there too. There's a new relationship.

There's a new work situation. There's a new living situation. So there's often you deceive yourself.

You say, no, I found the answer to the dilemma of me. I'm liberated now because I have found the partner that I've been looking for, the one. I have found the one.

And this delusion lasts for a little while. We don't know how long it could last for a year, probably less. You can see when you look to anything for, let's use this almost spiritual term, salvation, because you're really looking to something out there for salvation, salvation through a deeply satisfying relationship, permanently satisfying, salvation through some kind of acquisition of something adding to your life, salvation through moving to a totally different country or place, salvation through recognition from other people. Once people recognize me as when I become famous, oh, then I'll be fully myself.

Then I will have found salvation. But all these people, when they find those things, it doesn't take long, they take relationships. You go out, you go dating.

I don't know if they still do it these days, dating. Maybe dating is old fashioned because everything happens on the phone. Tinder, swiping.

Then you have a date. When you go to a restaurant, you can see, you can immediately see with a couple sitting, whether a couple has been together already for quite a while, or whether they're only meeting for the first, second, or third time. We're dating.

The others are not dating. They're already living together. Totally different energy field.

Because the ones who are dating, they still are under the delusion that they found salvation through the other person. And you can, when you observe people, you can see it, the way they look at each other. They're both in a state of hypnosis because they go.

So wonderful. And you don't even know that you're playing a role unconsciously, and the other person's playing their role. And these two roles interact.

And you think, well, this is the reality. And then you see another couple. They obviously have been together for a while.

And they kind of, they sit there. And most likely these days, they are on their phones. So they're already living together.

And so when the dating goes to the next stage, you start moving in together. Then, these days, it often happens before the wedding, if there even is a wedding. But, so you move in together, and you quickly notice that this person is not the same person that you dated.

Soon after a few days or weeks, sometimes months, but that's maximum, you find, who is this person? There are suddenly aspects of the personality that you find deeply irritating, if not disturbing. And then you question yourself, say, I must have made a mistake.

But it could also be that your partner feels the same thing about you. What happened? Well, so you're experiencing a conditioned personality.

You're no longer experiencing a part that somebody is playing. You experience the conditioning of the person. And every person is, if you live with them for a little while, everybody, you will display behavior that is not that pleasant.

They also have a pain body. If you've read my books and talks, you know what a pain body is. And we may talk about it later.

It's an accumulation of past emotional pain that lives in you, but it's dormant. And then, after a while, it becomes active because it needs to feed on some kind of drama. And when you start living with somebody, and for the first time, you experience this person's pain body when suddenly there's a shift in the entire energy field of that person.

It's no longer the same person at all. It's a dreadful thing. And you don't know what it is.

You say, well, and that's how somebody wrote an article a while ago in the paper that says why you married the wrong person. So in that sense, it's not pessimistic, but it sounds pessimistic. You always marry the wrong person.

Unless, unless you awaken to a deeper dimension in yourself that transcends the conditioned personality, then you have something more, something genuine, something that is not part of the conditioned entity that we call the person or the personality. Without that, the state of insufficiency, of lack, of not enough, of something missing, but you don't know what, or you think you know what, but that's not it, you can never get rid

of it. So if you remain trapped in the mental conditional, the conditioned energy field of the personality, then you are condemned to perpetual dissatisfaction, to put it mildly, or to use an even more generic term, unhappiness, that's a translation of a generic term that the Buddha used when he used the term dukkha, which can be translated, it's usually translated as suffering, but in more generic terms, it basically means unhappiness, misery, unease, let's stay with unhappiness in whatever form. So you're condemned to, that every situation turns into, eventually something turns up to mar the situation in some way, whether it's a person, or a place, or an activity, or something that you add to your life, that you obtain, there's always something, and that's in the nature of things, but it only happens, and that's the positive part of the Buddha's teaching is never really spoken of because he doesn't want you to believe in something. So whatever you, whatever happens, there's always something that goes wrong, so to speak, but that's not a pessimistic statement, that only applies if you are dependent for your sense of well-being, your sense of who you are, if you are dependent on all those external factors for your sense of who you truly are, your sense of identity, your sense of well-being, because nothing can satisfy you for long, and if you leave it at that, it sounds a little pessimistic or nihilistic. Okay, so what's the point in anything, says the person who superficially studies Buddhism, or other teachings? So if nothing can satisfy, what's the point in anything?

I might as well get drunk and then experience briefly that, and then the next hangover, and then get drunk again, and then eventually I'll kill myself. But that is only the first part. He says, if you seek yourself in all those things that you think will bring you salvation, if you seek yourself in those things of the world, that the world offers, then you will be unhappy.

But now, the unspoken part is, but if you find yourself in the formless realm of transcendent consciousness, then the world is actually no longer such a bad place, because you don't look to the world, which means other people, achievements, situations, and places, and acquisitions. You don't look to the world for completion of your sense of identity, you don't seek yourself anymore in the things of this world. Then the things of the world are no longer as frustrating as they were before.

And you can allow things to be, you can participate in the play of form, in manifesting, you can even enjoy relationships, because you're no longer looking for completion of your sense of self through those things. Why are you no longer looking for completion of your sense of self through those things? Because you have found yourself not in the realm of object consciousness, not in the realm of thought or sensory perception, you have found a deeper dimension within yourself, which we call temporarily space consciousness.

I also sometimes call it the deep I, by that I don't mean this I, it's a pronoun, first I, I am. The deep I, as opposed to the surface I. Now, there's the two of you exist, well, the deep

I doesn't really exist, it's a prior to existence, that you have both in you, but most humans are only aware of the surface I, and that's a terrible deprivation that really is a non-fulfillment, permanent sense of non-fulfillment with brief interludes of deluded fulfillment.

Like you can have a sensory gratification, you have a wonderful meal, and then you feel, okay, I'm really fulfilled now. Well, okay, the body is full for a moment, or you can drink, you can take in some substances, and you have brief moments of, ah, a substance, whatever, can free you of yourself, briefly, too, but I don't recommend it. But I can see why people, and millions all over the world are longing, and many cannot live without some substance.

There's an enormous pull, an enormous longing. What is it that they experience when they take this substance, whether it's alcohol or other things? They experience briefly, never lasts, a sense of self-transcendence.

So the substance can briefly free you of yourself. This mind-made thing that you live with this problematic sense of I, this problematic me and my life. Oh, dear, how am I going to solve this problem?

Well, you can't. So alcohol can briefly free you because you take a few drinks and you feel lighter for a while. Ah, because it slows down your mind.

You can't think that much anymore. And because you can't think that much anymore, life becomes somewhat less problematic. Because if you don't remember your problems, they're gone.

All you're left with is immediate situations that you either deal with or you don't deal with. But the place where your problems live is in your mind, and they only exist if you think about them. Of course, they refer to situations that is true.

But every situation can only be experienced or faced or solved or simply accepted in the present moment. Nothing ever arises in your life that's not in the present moment. So the rest and the present moment you can deal with.

It's just here and now. Either you take action or you don't. But this is the present moment.

But then you have a whole superstructure of the problematic, my problematic life that lives in your mind. And that's an incredible burden to live with. And everybody lives with this burden if they have not awakened to the deeper dimension of the deep eye.

They are trapped in their surface eye. It's a terrible prison. I can sometimes watch people, how they are trapped in their personality.

And everything they say and the way they perceive things is totally colored by the conditioning of their mind. And they're identified with every thought that comes into their head. If you just question something, an opinion, they express an opinion.

And you say, no, I don't think that's right. And you give, they immediately get defensive or aggressive or angry or, sometimes people get violent when you doubt their opinions. They know you're wrong.

Wrong. People sometimes kill each other because they can't agree on a subject. Why?

Why? Because you derive your sense of identity from thought. An opinion is a thought or a group of thoughts in your mind that you identify with.

When you identify with it, it becomes part of the ego. So we're talking here, of course, I haven't used the word so far. We are talking about egoic consciousness.

When you're identified with thought completely, you are in egoic consciousness. The ego is operating in you and it pretends to be you. And so you are, spiritually speaking, asleep.

You are a totally conditioned entity. And so every opinion that you have, anybody should question it, that this person is questioning your very sense of identity. And that's how you react.

You feel threatened in your sense of identity. It's an absurd delusion, but millions live like that. So the identification with mental positions is a very important part of the egoic consciousness.

Now, does this mean as you awaken to the deeper levels, the transcendent dimension, does that mean you no longer have any opinions? No, it doesn't. You continue to have opinions and of course, thoughts also, but you do not derive your sense of who you are from those thoughts or opinions.

Why do you no longer derive your sense of who you are from those thoughts? Because you have found something much more real, much more fundamental than any thought that tells you who you are. A thought is, by the analogy I often use, is a ripple on the surface of the ocean.

You, as a personality, and the personality consists of the conditioning of your mind, you're like a ripple on the surface of the ocean. And you exist as this ripple. So some ripples are bigger than others, but it doesn't make that much difference.

Some ripples are even waves. They might have a private jet, so there's a wave, I'm a wave, I'm not a ripple on the surface of the ocean. And so the ripple considers, it looks at other ripples and feels uneasy and it's never complete.

And deep down it knows that its existence is short-lived. So it hopes to become a little bigger ripple by looking to the future, because if I get this, that or that, I'll be a bigger ripple. But it also knows deep down that the future that it looks to for fulfillment will eventually kill it too.

So the future is a two-edged sword. It promises fulfillment, but it really will kill you. That's time.

Well, we are all suffering as a physical entity. We are all suffering, of course, from that disease. The prognosis is not good because we all have this virus called time and it's already consuming our bodies.

And you don't have to wait long and finally it kills you. They haven't found a remedy yet against time. So the ripple lives an uneasy existence on the surface of the ocean, looking for some kind of completion and fearing other ripples or wanting to use other ripples.

Come, let's join the two together. We can become a bigger ripple, but it probably won't work. And then let's say the ripple in a moment of complete dissatisfaction with life, when it says nothing makes sense anymore, it finally comes to a stop in its incessant search for fulfillment.

And it comes to a stop in its incessant doing and looking to the next moment for some kind of fulfillment and the ripple for a moment stops. But it doesn't stop because it has taken... I don't know if this analogy still works if I continue with the ripple, but I talked about transcending a sense of self through taking in a substance.

It frees you from a moment from this sense of insufficiency. The ripple feels a little bit better in just taking something and it doesn't think about its problems anymore. Ah, it doesn't always work because sometimes it can awaken the pain body.

Certain substances like alcohol can awaken your pain body, in which case, because it lowers your level of consciousness to an even lower level than your normal level. I'm not talking to you personally. It lowers your level when you drink, lowers your level of consciousness to an even lower than the normal level.

And then this gives the pain body an opportunity to completely take you over. But with other people, they become temporarily quite happy when they drink or take other substances. You can smoke.

It slows down your mind. It goes, ah, and it feels so good. Your problem, the whole superstructure of problems begins to subside because you're not thinking about the problems.

Therefore, they disappear. So you have glimpses of self-transcendence and that's why people feel drawn to it because without knowing it, people are longing to become free of

themselves. They don't know it, but there is a longing and this is built into the evolution of the human being.

This longing for self-transcendence is built into the evolution of human consciousness. Every human experiences it, but they look for a solution to this longing in the wrong ways, completely wrong places. Time is ultimately not helpful as far as your awakenings is concerned.

Time is not helpful. In fact, it's a hindrance in your awakening. Okay, so no time is required for awakening.

Okay, now let me, the mind says, let me try to figure this out. That doesn't make sense. That doesn't make sense.

Meaning I've been meditating for nothing all these years. Meditation, if it works as it should, ultimately the purpose is, the aim is to be present while you meditate, not to seek some future condition. This is a fundamental mistake that meditators make is they imagine a future condition that they want to arrive at or achieve.

And they think, if I just practice more and harder, I will eventually achieve that awakened state. And that belief is actually a hindrance. So, because then you are doing a meditation.

And if you're doing a meditation, you miss the one thing that is the awakened state and we could call that being. The realization of being. There needs to be a cessation of doing, an end of doing in order to realize being.

You have the two dimensions in your life. Doing, it requires time and being, that requires no time. Now, most humans are unaware of being.

They are lost in doing. And the primordial doing is thinking. And then you miss the now, which is inseparable from being.

So, I invite you as we speak, or I speak, all the speaking happens. I don't know who is speaking, something is speaking. And invite you here and now to become aware of being here and now.

Now, how does, some of you may just, as I say these words, which are only pointers, like signposts, as I say these words, some of you may be able to sense their own beingness. You sense that you are. And if you cannot, if you have no idea what I'm talking about yet, you're still trying to understand it mentally.

Let me take you then gradually into being. Let's become aware of this moment. And the first thing you become aware of in this moment is sense perceptions, visual, auditory.

And then some of the others do tactile and so on, but the most predominant sense

perceptions are the visual and the auditory. You hear and you see. So this is the, you're becoming aware of the present moment, which taken the form of sensory perception here and now.

And you look around the room, or you see this person, so-called person sitting on a chair. And you can take in the totality of the room. The question that arises is, are you able to take in the totality of your sense perceptions at this moment without any mental commentary?

Just be like a, maybe like a one-year-old child hasn't learned the language yet and just looks in wonder and amazement at the world. And you don't have to look like that, I'm just... So you look around at the innocent perception without, is it possible for you, only you can answer that for yourself, but not through words, through just knowing.

Are you able to be here in this moment, allow your sense perceptions to be there? Being aware of all these things without commenting mentally, without interpretation. Just let it be, like the Beatles song, let it be.

Now that's, there's a shift in consciousness that's already happened, because when you interpret your sense perceptions, that's the conditioning of your mind. It's a person perceiving things. But when you don't interpret, there's still a knowing there, but not conceptual.

There's a deeper knowing, but the person isn't there really at that moment when you're not commenting, not interpreting, not imposing some kind of interpretation on the world. Then the person that was there before when you were commenting has been replaced by awareness or presence. So there was a person, but then the person comes to an end temporarily.

And they simply, who or what is perceiving this room when you're not commenting according to the conditioning of your past? Who or what is perceiving this? Awareness itself.

So something has, something has receded, the person, and something else has arisen to replace it, so to speak, awareness. That awareness is very still. Stillness is sometimes, in spiritual discourse, stillness is another important term.

It's just another pointer. It's stillness. And that stillness is not a sleepy stillness.

It's an alert stillness. And so a shift has taken place from being a conditioned entity, conditioned by the past, and now the shift has happened, and suddenly just, you are that space of awareness. And so the next step in presence, you're not just, yes, you are aware of your sense perceptions, and you're not labeling, but you're also aware of the awareness itself, through which you are able to be aware of sense perceptions.

You're aware of your, let's say, words are very limited, but we have to use them. You're aware of the being of yourself, the presence that makes sense perceptions possible, the presence of consciousness that makes sense perceptions possible, and you can sense that, not as a subject-object relationship, although when we talk about it, it sounds like a subject-object relationship because language operates in that way. Language has a subject and an object, so as you use language, you say, I am aware of awareness.

That creates a duality that's not really there. When you talk about it, there's an I that is aware of awareness, so there's two of you, but there isn't. It's only when you start talking about it, it's you become aware of yourself as awareness itself.

Awareness becomes self-aware, whatever you want to call it, but that is an amazing thing that you are able to enter that, even if it's just for brief moments. For brief moments, you can become free of the person. Oh, my God, that heaviness, that burden that people carry around that they are so identified with, that they are that heaviness, and that's why many, many persons, their identity is intimately bound up with this burden of problems.

That they have to figure out how to solve my life problems. So for many people, their identity is, I am a problem to be solved, that's seeking a solution, and then you go to a therapist. Come on.

Come on. Come on. However, if the therapist is present, that makes a huge difference, and I don't know.

I'm sure there are some therapists here, and some of you are probably doing fantastic work because you are able to, even though your client or patient is talking, perhaps you are able to be present while you listen instead of interpreting everything, but be the consciousness. Oh. And then perhaps some awakening can happen if you embody presence.

So the little, the big secret, it's not a secret, but it seems to be a secret, to be aware that you're conscious, to be aware of yourself as consciousness, as awareness, as presence, to sense the beingness of you, which is not the you, the limited you. It's actually the beingness of the universe in you. Only presence can dissolve the past.

Do you accept this is what you feel? This is what they do or say?

[Speaker 11] (2:24:59 - 2:25:37)

My question deals with parents, with practice and presence. I felt love for them after many years, not feeling love and feeling guilty for that, but I still have huge problems to meet them. When I meet them, if they are in the same room, even if I try to be aware of my breath and my inner body, after a while, I have huge pain body attacks.

[Speaker 1] (2:25:39 - 2:25:42)

Is that triggered by something they say or?

[Speaker 11] (2:25:42 - 2:26:02)

I can't even say that. Sometimes it's the way I manage to go through the meeting quite fine, and my mother leaves the room and I break down. And yeah, I don't know what it is.

[Speaker 1] (2:26:04 - 2:51:04)

German parents can be difficult. I know. American parents too.

So on one level, there's already an acceptance of them on a mental level, the acceptance of who they are, the acceptance of their limitations, they behave the way they behave, is the pain body is still there inside you, of course, and the pain body reacts. It may also be that the mental level, the mental acceptance is not yet complete either. To see that they act the way they act, speak the way they speak, not because of who they are, but because of their past conditioning, which is their mental emotional conditioning is speaking through them.

They can't help that. If there's not enough presence, everybody is controlled by their mental emotional conditioning. They can't help it.

They are afflicted by that disease, which is identification with unconscious conditioning. I'm not the only one who calls that disease. Even in the ancient teachings of Zen, they sometimes call it the disease of the mind.

And there are some Zen teachers who have said they are here to cure that mental illness. I've said that's what Zen is about. It's curing that mental illness.

So you need to, on the mental level, as you sit with them, you need to know that continuously that what you are observing is not who they are. You're observing a form of mental conditioning underneath that there is the being. And you may sometimes get a glimpse of it.

My mother was very much identified also with her mind. And occasionally I looked into her eyes and suddenly there was a light shining through when she stopped talking for a little while. In other words, the mind catching a breath after talking for 10 minutes incessantly.

And then for a moment I could see, oh, there's their being. Her being was shining through. And I have one or two photos where her being shines through.

And then of course it gets obscured again. And then you get the same, get the

suspicions, the complaints, the accusations, all the stuff associated with unconscious thinking. So on the mental level, you need to know that, be present enough so that you don't forget that what you're observing is not who they are, but you're observing the past in them, the conditioning.

And then comes the emotions that you feel. Of course, there's your past, the past, the living past in you from your childhood, all the things they did or failed to do because they couldn't help it. There wasn't enough presence to change it.

So that's something for you to find acceptance as you accept them. And then you accept what you feel at that moment. Whether you can even label it, we don't know.

Is it sadness? Is it anger? Is it heaviness or mixture of all of that?

A feeling of wanting to run away, a contraction, whatever it is, that's all there. You don't need to even analyze it because you just need to feel the entire energy field of that, and it doesn't feel pleasant. And it's the past in you.

So there you're observing the past in them, acting out, and you experience the past in you. And so what do you do with two pasts? You have the past out there and the past in here.

Only presence can dissolve the past. So you need to access the power of presence in yourself and how do you do that? A quick way in a situation like this is the acceptance of whatever arises inside or outside at this moment.

You accept, this is what you feel. This is what they do or say. There's the acceptance of the inner and the outer.

Because it is already happening. Why? You have to accept or you suffer.

In a way, if you don't accept, you suffer more. If you don't want to feel what you feel, that's more suffering because you're resisting. Acceptance does something that I could describe as, let's say, here's the emotional field and it doesn't feel good.

And acceptance means just to say, okay, that is, I can feel that. I'm verbalizing, acceptance doesn't even require after a little while, you don't need words anymore. You can just see what is, be with it.

And at that moment, a little bit of space opens up around that emotion. A little bit of space. That space comes from your acceptance.

The acceptance gives it space. And that's already a tiny bit of freedom. You've given it a little bit of space inside yourself.

When you say, yes, this is what is. And that's a beauty. You have given both them space

externally to be and you've given yourself space internally.

And then as you notice that actually, it feels already a little bit better than before because there's space around the emotion. And then you go into it more deeply and you accept even more, you continue to accept. And that space grows a little bit around it.

And then you encounter the strange phenomenon of an emotion that is not pleasant existing in a spacious field, so to speak, that's around it. And then you realize that who you are is you are that field. And you can allow the emotion to be in that field and you can allow your parents to be there and say what they say and do what they do.

They're repeating the past, space comes in. So acceptance brings space and space is the transcendence of conditioning. Space is the transcendence of the past, the transcendence, transcendence of the personality and the person and it's freedom, space.

That's the practice. And so the best place to practice is with your parents. There are many other places where you can practice, but the ultimate mastery you will achieve when you can practice with your parents, that's the graduation, you graduate.

It's the PhD in presence. With, don't jump into it too much. Don't, if you say, okay, I'm going to spend a week with our parents now, it's too much, too much.

You should give yourself short time periods at first. Say, I'm going to come for coffee and cake. That's what they like to do.

At least my mother did. I'll come for coffee and cake and I'll stay for an hour or you know, if you can, I don't know how that works practically, but, and then you practice, you give yourself one hour to practice. So that's a little, and you know, it's only an hour.

I have to be present for an hour and it's your spiritual practice. So the, as you know, I've written the quote in a book. Ram Dass said, if you think you're so enlightened, spend two weeks with your parents, two weeks.

The ultimate test. So happy practice. It is madness to argue with is.

It is. Intelligent action arises if the starting point is alignment with what is internally. The nature and function of challenges and difficulties in the evolutionary process.

We can use the term challenge, which is already has a positive spin to it. Something happens and you call it, it's a big challenge. But without the positive spin, you would say it's really bad.

It's, oh, it's so bad what has happened. Then you become more spiritual and say, I'm faced with a challenge. Okay.

Now, challenges come in many forms. There's no human life that is not profoundly

challenged in one way or another. Some humans are challenged by physical challenges, difficulties.

Other humans are usually challenged by dreadful psychological challenges and their own minds. The personal challenges in your personal life, collective challenges that affect millions of people at the same time, all in various ways. We've just had one.

So it seems that many things are almost designed in one's life to stop you from evolving or becoming more conscious. And many people say, if I only had surroundings, if I lived in a place that was peaceful and calm, and my needs are met, my basic needs are met, I got pure food and everything else, so I don't have to worry about things anymore. If I could only live in this perfect environment, I could really make spiritual progress.

If I only had that, but I don't. And no matter what stage you're at, always obstacles arise continuously. Sometimes things go well and then another obstacle goes and then they go well again.

Oh, obstacles come in many, many forms, physical, relationship, financial, home situation, all kinds of things. Pandemic is a collective one and other collective ones most likely coming soon. The strange thing is evolution happens only when faced with obstacles.

That happens on every level, physical level, every level. It's only when an obstacle is encountered that there's a call for more energy and then more energy flows in and whatever frequency of energy could even be physical. For example, if you want to have a stronger body, it's not going to happen if you lie on your sofa every day, drinking beer and watching Netflix.

You can say, I want a stronger body. Yeah, well, it's not happening. Now, what do you have to do to have a stronger body?

To put it in strange terms, you have to, at first, you have to make life difficult for your body. For example, you go jogging and you think, I wish I was watching Netflix on my sofa, but the body doesn't like it, but you say, and then you lift a weight. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh.

You're making life difficult for your body, very difficult, but only then it happens, your body then demands more energy and an influx of energy comes that eventually is translated into muscle growth and so on. And then a point comes when actually more energy has come, then you suddenly enjoy that. But the enjoyment is preceded by experiencing difficulty and obstacle.

On every level, humans evolve. Many, many people here, I know that from what people have told me, it's always the case, many of you would not be here if you had not encountered very difficult life situations. Either through loss or breakdown of

relationships, loss of loved ones, physical, serious physical illness, accident.

Many people have told me, I would never have come realize what this is about if I hadn't gone through this difficult period in my life. It's then, there's an influx of energy that comes and at the highest level, it is an increase in consciousness. As you're faced with difficulties, some difficulties can be removed on a practical level.

Many other difficulties require an increase in consciousness for you to overcome them or transcend them. I've had correspondents from people in prison, for many, some are in prison for life. And they've said, I have awakened through coming into contact with this teaching.

I have awakened and I am free in a prison cell. So they have, it is, in your comfort zone, it is very unlikely that the awakening will happen to any human being, as long as they remain in their comfort zone. Perhaps if they had, this is the last incarnation as they've already gone through an enormous amount of evolution in previous lifetimes.

And then perhaps at a very early age, they can already awaken. But most humans, they do not awaken as long as they're in their comfort zones. Oh, it's good enough.

I mean, comfort zone is not all that happy mostly, but at least it's not too bad. But when you're taken out of your comfort zone, that's where evolution happens, the evolution of consciousness. So in other words, you need the bad to evolve.

Sorry. And life doesn't leave you alone. Even after awakening, you've got challenges come.

Oh my God. But what changes is, and this is important, that you no longer demand that the world should leave you alone and should make you happy. It can't.

As long as you think it should, and there's always something wrong when you're being challenged by this or that. You think there's something deeply wrong with my life. I'm being challenged.

Or in other words, I'm experiencing all these difficulties. And then you realize, you drop the demands that the world should make you happy because the world isn't here for that. It's here to make you conscious, to awaken you.

And it does that by confronting you with difficulties. One after another. Now, some difficulties are so bad that they kill you.

That's true. They could happen. And then you get another chance after that.

It was perhaps a philosopher Nietzsche who said, what doesn't kill me makes me stronger. There's some truth to that. And so the, when challenges happen, important thing is, how do I meet this challenge?

With what state of consciousness do I meet this challenge? And that determines the further development of that particular situation also. If you're able to meet a challenge consciously instead of reactively, then quickly it becomes transformed also externally as a challenge.

To meet it consciously means, in the first instance, to accept this moment as it is, no matter what it presents you with, no matter what this moment, what form this moment takes. You accept this moment as it is, because you might as well, because it already is. It is madness to argue with is.

It is. Of course, then you, what can you do about it? If you need to take action or can take action.

Action, intelligent action arises if the starting point is alignment with what is internally. This is what is, and then if action is needed, right action will arise. But when, if you immediately, you go into reactivity, you make the situation worse than it is.

It, you often amplify something bad and becomes even worse and worse through reactivity. You can verify this when dealing with an unconscious human. If you react to their unconsciousness, then you yourself become more unconscious and you make them more unconscious and you get huge drama.

So, and again, collectively too, when faced with a difficulty, how aware can you be when you are prior to taking action? Are you just reacting or are you able to be aware? Which means, is wisdom present?

That's, we haven't mentioned this word before, but it's inseparable from what we're talking about. Wisdom is the higher intelligence that operates through you when you're in touch with the vertical dimension. All you have when you're not in touch with the vertical dimension, you might have the clever human mind that can work things out in a very limited way.

But wisdom is not there. Wisdom can seize the totality of the situation and in taking action, it considers immediately other possible consequences of the action and the totality. And you do not through breaking things down, but there is the same way in which you, you remember we talked about the two modalities of knowing, conceptual and direct knowing through awareness.

And that applies here too, when you look at a problem that needs solving. You look at, is there wisdom in what you do or just mental cleverness? And anything you do when you react to a problem, then if you will make it worse, or you solve one problem and curate four or five others in the process of solving one.

So the world drama gets amplified through the egoic reactivity that always says, this should not be happening, not aligned with the present moment. So wisdom is what the

world needs and wisdom can only come through awareness. And that is the deeper modality of knowing.

Intelligence is not enough. The world is full of intelligent people, so-called. I mean, really, if you really look, is that intelligence?

And they're creating that, what are they doing? They got their university degree. So I suppose in conventional terms, we have to call it intelligence.

And then they're creating havoc on the planet. No wisdom. An increase in intelligence will not save us.

On increasing knowledge, what's most, wisdom, only wisdom can, and wisdom is inseparable from awareness, the arising of awareness. It comes, it's from the dimension of the vertical dimension of depth, not through thinking. So when you look at a situation and you are able to be alert and still, you look.

And then the realization of what action is, the right action, comes.

[Speaker 9] (2:51:25 - 2:51:58)

Welcome to the second part of this special video series on Conscious Manifestation 2020. In this second part, Eckhart Tolle addresses how once we've developed a level of presence and awareness of thoughts and emotions, how do we work with anxiety or fear that keeps erupting, that we keep feeling in our felt experience? Here's part two of Conscious Manifestation 2020 with Eckhart Tolle.

[Speaker 1] (2:51:59 - 3:48:57)

Now, what about the fear? What about the anxiety, the anxiety that has been in you? For many people, it's in the background, most of their lives, some fear, some anxiety.

And when they're being challenged as now, the anxiety that is a kind of background, distant background noise for some people is almost always there, but sometimes obscured by the second, that suddenly becomes very pronounced, this anxiety in the face of a challenge, the anxiety that had already been there in the background, the fear, that now comes out fully and you are in the grip of it. And now you become aware of the link between your thought processes and your emotions. And you realize that your unconscious thought process, such as boring, actually fuel the emotion that we call fear or anxiety continuously.

So a vicious circle arises, and then the emotion that you feel, which you feel it, tend to feel it in your stomach, in this area here, you feel it, a contraction, almost a painful thing dwelling in your stomach or solar plexus area. But it can affect the whole body, the whole body can be tense, it interferes with the harmonious functioning of your body. So

it's very, this anxiety lowers your immune system on the physical level, even mainstream medicine recognizes the fact that what they call stress, which stress is mostly fear and anxiety, makes you much more, lowers your immune system and you're much more susceptible to illness.

It doesn't mean if you're not anxious, you will never catch an illness, but you're much more susceptible to being sick when you are in an almost continuous state of stress or anxiety. So then the fear, of course, rise this up back into your mind and creates more emotionally charged fearful thinking, which is not just fearful thinking, it's now emotionally charged fearful thinking. And that creates even more of that emotion.

This is why it's called a vicious circle. The fearful thinking feeds the fearfully emotion with energy, one could say the fearful thinking vibrates at the same frequency as the fearful emotion. So it is food that the emotion loves.

So it wants more of it. Once you're on the grip of worrying, anxious thinking, you don't want to stop. Well, you might want to stop, but you are not even there when you're completely identified.

It does not want to stop. So you are trapped in this fearful vicious circle of emotion, fearful thinking, creating the emotion of fear and the emotion of fear rising back up into your mind and creating emotionally charged fearful thinking. And when you are in that state, you cannot think clearly, whatever thought that arises, what do I have to do now?

What can I do now? It's very unlikely that you will have a creative and useful thought. Whatever your action you take on the basis of fearful thinking is likely to be not wise, not effective and probably wrong and leads to more suffering.

Whatever, in whatever way you interpret the world through the veil of fearful thinking, in whatever way you interpret the world when you're in the grip of fearful thinking is going to be a complete misinterpretation. But to you, when you identify with it, it's the reality. So the first thing is to become aware of thoughts and emotions.

And then, so that means the awareness has arisen. It's there. Then once you recognize the futility and destructive nature of certain types of thinking, you're able to increasingly let go of it and replace it, not immediately necessarily with positive thoughts, but it's better to, because you still have a negative emotion there.

So if you immediately replace the unconscious fearful thinking with positive thoughts, there's a conflict between the emotion that is still there, which is the fear and the thoughts that are floating on top there. And so, and you will feel that there's something not right because the emotion says you're in a critical state and your mind has a thought that all is well, life is good, I'm going to be abundant. It's unlikely that this will be effective.

So again, realize what kind of thoughts go through your mind, recognize the futility and destructive nature of these types of thought, and then replace these thoughts, not immediately with positive thoughts, but with awareness. Replace, instead of engaged in negative thinking, be more present as much as you can, be more in the present moment, because after all, that's all there ever is. Mind doesn't seem to know that.

All there ever is, is the present moment. There's nothing else ever in your life. So you might as well give it some attention.

You might as well make it the focus of your life because that is, it unfolds in this now moment, everything. Future never comes, it's always now. When the future comes, it's the now.

When the past happened, it was the now. When you remember the past, you remember it now. When you think about future, you think about it now.

There is only now. So you might as well give it your fullest attention, make it the focal point of your life, and then see what you can do with the so-called future. But first you need to come into a relationship with the now that is helpful, sane, and that is friendly.

Become friendly with them. When you enter the now, you see the now is not really that, is not a threatening place most of the time, except when there's an emergency happening and you have to do something, an immediate life-threatening or whatever it is. But the now is actually a much more benign place than the mind would be able to recognize.

But you need to have your awareness there. You need to be aware. You need to be present in the now in order to recognize that the now can actually be your friend and it's not your enemy.

The now is your friend. You become friendly with the present moment. And that's, however, so you begin to recognize and begin to cut the link between your thought processes and the emotion because you let go of these fearful thoughts.

You recognize their futility. Instead, you're much more present. Thoughts will occasionally still come in and then you recognize them, let go, be more present.

However, in that presence, the emotion of fear may not and probably will not immediately disappear because it's been there for a long time. So even if you no longer feel the emotion with your thinking, you become present and you may notice, yes, I'm aware of, more aware of sense perceptions, the aliveness of this moment. You can see perhaps beauty in things, the things that you didn't give any attention to before.

However, you can also still feel this anxiety or fear living in you, still there. Even when you're no longer feeding it with your thoughts, you can still feel it, there it is. And that

becomes part of your experience of the present moment, that anxiety.

Now, what do you do with it? The normal tendency would be to say, I want to get rid of this. I shouldn't be feeling this.

I don't want to feel this. And some people just cannot tolerate the anxiety. So they need to, they might go to their doctor and say, please do something about this anxiety.

The doctor will then give you a prescription. In some extreme cases, those things may be temporarily helpful in some extreme cases, but a lot of the time you would have missed an opportunity. And that is the opportunity of evolving through facing pain or suffering.

If you face the emotional pain that you feel, it's anxiety or fear, and not even, not try to run away from it, or say, I can't stand, become so uncomfortable being in your own skin, can become so unpleasant and uncomfortable that you just want to run away or say, please give me something so that I don't have to feel this anymore. But actually it doesn't help to want to get rid of it. It just creates another layer of anxiety or problems on top of the emotion.

Now, I suggest as an alternative approach is to make the emotion that you feel that still lives in you part of your experience of the present moment and accept it in the way you accept the totality of the present moment. And that's a new way of living, a very powerful way of living, a very powerful way of connecting with a deeper level of consciousness in you, of finding enormous power that dwells in you if you can accept the present moment as it is, internally, externally, and internally. So it's not going to kill you.

The anxiety is there, but it's not going to kill you. It might kill you if you react to it and create further anxiety. And you then allow the anxiety to be there as it is.

Completely. It's almost like saying, it sounds a little strange, it's almost like saying, I don't mind being anxious. Sounds very paradoxical.

But it's a very interesting experiment you can conduct. Any form of unhappiness, of course, some unhappiness is telling you that something is wrong in your life, it's a different story. But habitual unhappiness that arises in you, no matter where you go and what you do, unhappiness arises in you.

No matter where you go and what you do, fear and anxiety are there. And this applies to countless humans on the planet. Now, as an experiment, as I said, what happens when they say, I don't mind being unhappy, I don't mind being anxious.

But of course, you're not fueling the anxiety with your thinking, you're aware of your anxiety. So you've reached that step where you're no longer giving it further fuel or food, and you're becoming aware of the anxiety. And then, as you place your attention on it, which is part of the attention that's in the present moment, you become aware that it's

actually, there's very intense energy in that fear.

Almost a burning energy in that fear, but the energy is not a flowing energy, it's trapped energy. It's like being in a, like a boiling kettle, you're holding the lid down, the energy is trapped, but there is enormous life energy in that fear. And if you can completely accept your fear in this moment, without feeding it any longer with your thinking, just being aware of it, that's what it is.

You may find, in a very subtle ways, a change happening. And the change is, it's a transmutation of this energy, fear, when you accept it completely, a transmutation of this energy into intense presence. So the same energy that before was fear, when it's completely accepted, it suddenly goes, and there's enormous power that was in there, trapped.

And suddenly it becomes fuel for your consciousness, becomes transmuted into presence or awareness, when it's completely accepted. And then it's no longer fear, it's just in suddenly intense awareness. And that intense awareness is like a, one could almost say a higher intelligence that suddenly begins to operate in you.

You're no longer just reliant on the conditioning of your mind. There's an intense presence there. And it can, now it doesn't mean it happens once and then it's never fear again.

After that experience, you have to experiment. It may not last very long, the initial transmutation, then you may fall back into fear. And the fear may repeatedly try to rise back up into your mind and make you think fearful thoughts.

And from time to time, it probably will succeed again. And you fall back into the same pattern, but then more and more at shorter and shorter intervals, you wake up again and you realize that this is what's happening. And so, and then again, you come to a place of just acceptance and then notice that the transmutation happens again.

And this is how, it is not just fear, it can be with any kind of suffering in your life. When it's completely accepted, a transmutation begins to happen. And that is how suffering is actually an essential part of the evolution of human consciousness.

Because if you reach a point where suffering can be transmuted into a higher consciousness, awareness or presence, it becomes fuel for presence. So it's bringing your inner self into alignment with the present moment. A very powerful spiritual practice.

Why is it so powerful? Especially when the situation is challenging and you still say it and you mean it. Because everything that sustains the person, the exclusively personal sense of self, in that act of complete surrender to what is, the personal sense of self gives way to a deeper transcendent sense of self, which the Buddhists call no self.

A deeper consciousness suddenly shines through. So really, it's a kind of denying your form identity. Doesn't mean you don't have it anymore, but you are no longer trapped exclusively in your form identity.

The form identity is strengthened the more you can be in opposition to what is, the stronger your form identity, me, the person, the me. The more you are in opposition to what is, the stronger the me becomes, your form identity. And if you can have enemies, lots of enemies, it loves, that gets even stronger.

They're all against me or us, if it's a collective ego. Collective ego loves its enemies, can't actually survive without them. Every collective ego needs the others.

We're not us, this is us, and that's the others. So that's the wonderful thing that the person, the exclusively personal sense of self becomes weakened, subsides, and something else emerges when you are no longer habitually oppose what is, something emerges that is deeper than the personal sense of self, the transcendent dimension, presence, whatever we want to call it. Some people call it your higher self, or you could call it your deeper self.

Words, doesn't matter. But something emerges that is from beyond the person. And that is a place of great power and aliveness and possibility.

That is where you are connected with a vastness and with everybody else too. So it's when you feel, when that transcendent dimension arises, you feel a greater sense of connectedness, no longer the separation with, not only with nature, but also with other humans. You no longer feel the otherness of the other.

It's just yourself in another disguise that's really becomes your experience. Whoever you meet, there's yourself in another disguise. Isn't that a wonderful way of being with other humans that essentially you can sense not only your connectedness, but you can also sense your inherent oneness.

With others. So that is why this presence practice, honoring the present moment, welcoming the is-ness, that's why that's such a powerful practice. Yes.

I suggest that you bring a certain spiritual practice, if you even want to call it that, it's not really anything separate from normal everyday existence. I suggest you bring that little spiritual practice into your normal life. And that is invite these brief periods of no thought into ordinary human life, into your normal everyday existence.

And this could be a simple thing like, whenever you look up at the sky, the sky is a beautiful thing, I love the sky. I've taken hundreds and hundreds of photos of the sky on my iPhone. Most of the photos I have on my iPhone are of the sky.

And whenever you look at the sky, and you don't need to become a sky gazer, no, just a

brief, a few seconds out of the window or outside, and for that moment, are you able to look without the addition of thought, without adding thought to the sense perception? So all you have, not the sky may be completely clear, it may be completely clouded, or there may be clouds floating around, it doesn't matter. You take it in, whatever it is, and there's a moment of looking, three seconds, five seconds, 10 seconds.

In that moment of looking, there's no commentary. It doesn't say, oh, it's going to rain, or not another dreary day, or, oh, I wonder if it's going to stay like that for the rest of the day. None of that.

But this can only happen if there's an alertness there. There needs to be an alertness that keeps thought at bay. And this is not willpower.

It's simply an alert presence. It goes, one could say, a raising of your frequency, and it goes, shh, and then you look, and there's a, the background to the sense perception is no longer you as the person, but you as awareness or consciousness. You are looking as consciousness.

You're not looking as a person. The moment you comment on what you're seeing, you interpret what you're seeing, you become the person. So, and I'm only giving one example.

You can make it a habit several times during the day to look at the sky in that way in which you don't add thought. Another practice I suggest, a tree. And even if you live in London, the lovely thing about London is there are lots of trees around, and not only in the parks, but many streets also have trees.

And so look at a tree every day, or whenever you see a tree, give it five seconds, give it 10 seconds, and see if you can look at that as presence rather than as a person, just that sense perception and presence. And then you can do it here and now. You can either be aware of something specific and aware of awareness.

Those are always the two. You're looking at the sky, and you're aware of who is looking or what is looking, the two dimensions. As you're sitting here, you're aware of the room.

You're aware of the voice. You're aware of the lights. You're not, whatever it is, what in addition can you be aware of in order to be the presence?

You're aware of yourself as the awareness. And you don't need thought for that. Thought would interfere with that.

So take in this, here's the room, here's the person sitting on a chair, there's a screen there, and take in the totality of this room without adding thought to it. And that's beautiful. You don't need to interpret it.

And just, it's still there. You know what it is without calling it anything. And then it deepens.

The strange thing is when you don't add thought when it's not needed, sometimes you need thought. When you don't add thought when it's not needed, there is a depth even to your sense perceptions. So when you look at the sky, it's more than just the sky.

When you look at a tree, you don't reduce this mystery that ultimately the tree is because who knows what the tree is. But by calling it tree, you don't know what it is. You just attach a label to a mystery that applies to virtually anything or to anything.

When you call it something and you say, oh no, that's what it is, you don't know. It's a convenient label, but it covers up the mystery. It covers up the depth of aliveness that is in everything.

As Krishnamurti said once, the moment you teach a child the name of the bird, the child will never see the bird again. No, this does not mean that you should refrain from teaching the child. The child needs the words.

It wants to know the words. It says, what's that? Oh, that's a sparrow.

Sparrow, okay, okay. What's that? But you see how the moment you give the label, it obscures the depth that's there behind the label.

And it's only when you then can relinquish the label, then there is a greater depth to what you see even to sense perceptions. There is an aliveness in the flower that some people can only get a glimpse of this kind of perception when they take something and they go, wow, or they look at the sky and say, wow, isn't that amazing? They took the little substance, but what that little substance did, it momentarily made sense perceptions so strong that there was no room for thought anymore.

So there was just the experiencing of it. And that can be a liberating thing for certain people who are totally in continuously immersed in the voice in the head, but it's not a long-term solution, the little substance. So this is an amazing practice.

It is also when, if you want to get in touch with the level where intuition arises, where a fresh creative idea arises, where any kind of creativity arises and made to do with whatever work you do, any creative contribution, if there's something, a problem to be solved and nobody has the answer, if you are able in all those situations to step out of thought, instead of thinking, they need to think harder to find the solution. And then you go and you can't even sleep at night anymore.

And you go, well, what's going on? Many people look at their own lives as one big problem that they can try to solve somehow. So people seek, for many people, their sense of identity is me the problem that's to be solved.

And if I could only solve this problem of me, I would be okay. And of course, yes, you can't really solve it, but you can step out of it and then it solves itself. I don't know what happened and I don't know why, but I feel this deep peace and I have nothing.

I've suddenly feel, Jesus called it the peace that passes all understanding, which means you cannot explain, well, although I'm trying to explain it, you cannot explain why this person should suddenly be so peaceful. So I believe that no matter whether you are a Christian or whether you are not a Christian, there is a deep truth embodied in the central image of Christianity. And the central image of Christianity is a man who is on the cross, an extremely serious man.

An extreme form of suffering. And ultimately that means every human being, one could say Jesus is the archetype for every human. Every human being is crucified by life.

Every human being goes through the suffering and with the suffering comes the possibility of transcending the ego by entering a state of complete surrender and acceptance. Ultimately, you step out of your thinking mind and what's left when you're no longer thinking about yourself and your life and what went wrong, in fact, thinking subsides. And what's left of you when you're not thinking about yourself or about anything?

Is that even possible? Is that even possible? For example, at this moment, are you able to experience as you sit there being in that space of not needing to add any thought to this moment?

Can you allow this moment to be as it is so completely that you do not add any interpretation to it? Just be it. So what is left of you right now?

You're not remembering your story because you are still completely yourself without the story. Isn't that surprising? Even without remembering all your past suffering, there is a sense of being, in fact, it's stronger.

You don't remember all the things that went wrong in your life. Okay, that's gone. You don't even remember your email address, it's gone.

Or your telephone number, you don't need it right now. When you need it, it'll be there. You don't need it, that's gone.

So instead of I am this and I am that and I am that, what remains is a sense of beingness, which is I am. But nothing is added to the I am. This is what's left of you right now.

What is left, there's a stillness. When thinking subsides, you have not lost consciousness. You have not become, you have not gone down.

You have not fallen below thinking. You have risen above thinking. There are two ways of becoming free of compulsive thinking, which is how the ego arises.

There are two ways of becoming free of compulsive thinking, the compulsive thinking that makes your life miserable, not the thinking that is useful, not the thinking that is a useful tool for creating and manifesting and inventing things and so on. There's a beautiful thing, thinking is an enormous advance for humans, evolution of human consciousness, but the way it has developed now, humans are possessed by thinking. They do not think, the language you use, you say, I think, you don't think, thinking happens to you.

And the thoughts that happen to you are thoughts that you absorb from the surrounding culture. You watch the media, the mainstream media, and you take that in and then you regurgitate, this is what I think, or you're against it, this is what I think. Thinking happens to you, you don't think unless you are aware.

And awareness or presence is a dimension of consciousness that is deeper, or we could say higher, than thinking. Awareness is when thinking stops and you have not gone to sleep. In fact, you are more alert than before and you can look around wherever you are, for example, here and now in this room, you can look around this room and perceive everything, visually and listen to everything without adding any thought to it, just be still and perceive.

There's still a knowing there, but it's not conceptual knowing. There's a deeper knowing there. Become familiar with the state of being free of thinking and just aware, but that requires a certain alertness.

Without the alertness, you drift back into thinking. So what the true spiritual teaching shows you the way of rising above thinking so that you can begin to use thinking, not you as the ego, but you as the higher consciousness that you are, can use thinking as a tool instead of being used by thinking, by thought. So there are two ways of being free of thinking.

One is rising above, which is why we're here. The other is falling below. If you want to fall below, you have to walk out of here, go to the bar next door and order a few whiskeys.

And then you can experience becoming free of thinking also gradually, but you're falling below thinking. Oh, it feels so good. I can't even remember my problems anymore.

It feels good. You start singing. And there's a joy of life.

No need to think, just be. I have another one. And then, of course, you're moving towards unconsciousness.

And this is not the way we are going. It is not the destiny of humanity to regress to a pre-

thinking stage just because you want to be as happy as your dog. You say, well, the dog isn't thinking, and so I'm going to go there too.

The dog hasn't arrived at the, the dog is a beautiful manifestation of consciousness, but it's not a thinking consciousness. So you need to discover in yourself the ability to be free of thinking initially for brief moments. And this is a good moment.

When you perceive the world around you without mental labels, just an alert presence in the background of your sense perceptions. The conditioned thought processes never stop. They go continuously.

There's a voice talking to you, or you're talking to yourself, or you're having a monologue, or you're having a dialogue. Some people argue with themselves. It's all the voice in the head, never stops for most people.

And that is, spiritually speaking, that is a state of unconsciousness, completely identified with the conditioned mental-emotional patterns, which make up the so-called person, personality, the ego. So if you are completely identified with it, every thought has you in its grasp. Every emotion that arises has you completely in its grasp.

And you're thinking, you think you're thinking, but you're not thinking, thinking happens to you. You don't have a choice if you're unconscious. There's no choice.

All your thought processes happen to you. You're at the mercy of the conditioned thoughts in your head. And all the reactions that come with it, every situation you encounter, there comes a conditioned reaction to the situation.

It's the person or the personality that reacts. And you don't even have a choice. Why don't you have a choice?

Because you're asleep, spiritually speaking. This thing, it's taken you over. It's a dream-like state also.

And you can see, often people are completely up there. They're never really, they're not really here. You can see sometimes the complete absence in a person's eyes.

They're not really here, they're asleep. But they're thinking very hard. And even at night, when there's nobody around to talk to, you're still, the voice is going on.

And it's telling you, I have these problems. Oh, what's going to happen next? Oh, awful, sick, my God.

I can't take any more of this. What's my life come to? I imagined something different when I was 20 years old.

I imagined something very, very different. Why did it all go so wrong? Well, that's a, well,

many people actually have that feeling that something, it has gone drastically wrong in my life.

And with others, it's a mixed bag. Some things went okay, and others didn't. It depends what their mind, and your mind tends to focus more on the negative than the positive, much more memorable, the negative than the positive.

If you go on vacation and everything goes perfectly fine, okay, you'll remember some nice moments and sunsets. But if something went drastically wrong, you'll remember that for the rest of your life, and you talk about it continuously. You tell the story of what went wrong.

If everything went fine, you don't talk about it, you'll be at a wonderful holiday. Oh yeah, okay, so that's the end of it. But you know what happened?

We went into our room, and there was these cockroaches crawling on the floor, and then the water was coming through the ceiling, and then they stole all my bags. Oh my God. It's so interesting.

And then you know what he said to me? He said, how dare you? And I said, how dare I?

What about you? You are the one with the biggest ego, I said. And then he started hitting me.

And whatever. And the stories go on and on. And so a lot of things, the negative things are much more memorable, that the ego focuses on that.

It loves its enemies, and every negative situation is the ego's enemy. And then it can claim, it can enhance its fictitious identity. The more enemies you have, the stronger your fictitious sense of self becomes.

Entire nations do that too. They need their enemies. Except Sweden, it's so peaceful.

Oh. All the non-peace-loving people have left Sweden a long time ago. They were called the Vikings.

And they occupied other lands. So, then we have, in Indian spiritual philosophy of psychology, there's a word that's been around for a long time. It's called Turiya.

Turiya means the force. First, second, third, fourth. Turiya is the force.

It's the force is, it refers to a state of consciousness. They divided the human consciousness into these four parts. There is dreamless sleep.

There is the dream state in sleep. There is the state of wakefulness, which is ordinary human consciousness. And Turiya is the awakened state of consciousness.

That's the fourth state of consciousness. They've been talking about that for hundreds of years, thousands of years. The possibility of this dimension of consciousness arising in humans, the fourth state.

This is what this is all about. And it is not some distant possibility that you may achieve in some future lifetime. As many people still believe that.

Many Buddhists, I've met Buddhists who say, I think I'll need another 15 lifetimes. And then, in fact, my teacher told me, they say, he told me 15 more lifetimes and then I'll be enlightened. Oh, wow.

Okay, that's right. Well, you have plenty of time so you can stay unconscious now. It's okay.

But the strange thing is, the awakened state of consciousness is already there within you. It's just covered up, hidden. Are you able to give your fullest attention to the doing or are you so consumed by the desired outcome that you create continuous stress in the doing of it?

And here we come to a new word that we need to, okay. It is a shameful matter to be poor and humble when the way prevails in the state. Equally, it is a shameful matter to be rich and noble when the way falls into disuse in the state.

Here, Confucius uses the term the way, which in Chinese, of course, is the Tao, the Tao. Now, the Tao doesn't, Confucius doesn't mention it very often. The Tao, of course, is the, that which cannot be named or explained.

And yet I'm attempting to do it right now. The Tao is that, that which the organizing intelligence, the intelligence that underlies all physical or other phenomena that underlies the entire world, something that is transcendent to the appearances, that is beyond appearances, but is that which always brings things back into balance and harmony. It's an underlying vast intelligence, the Tao, which emanates, as I said, it emanates from God, and God is the ultimate source of everything.

So the Tao emanates, the Tao underlies everything, the entire, it's the intelligence behind phenomena. It exists in many, in many, it's called different things in different traditions. One could say, you could, in Christianity, it could be the Holy Spirit that is there.

You have it in Egypt, in ancient Egypt, that's where they have a beautiful personification, a visual, pictorial personification of that very thing, the underlying principle behind things. It's the, and that's, it's a good, the goddess called Mart, M-A-R-T, Mart in ancient Egypt. And I've shown you here, I think it might still be on my iPad, the pictorial representation of it.

[Speaker 14] (3:49:02 - 3:49:16)

Oops. Oh, technology is very difficult.

[Speaker 1] (3:49:33 - 3:56:11)

This is a, this is Mart, the wings, vast wings that enfold the entire world. This is what protects the entire world from destruction and collapsing. So this is the organizing intelligence, the intelligence, it limits it when you call it intelligence.

You can say it's the love behind it all that holds it together. That's the, that's Mart, the wings represent that power, that's the Tao. And now he is talking about a country or a state.

It is a shameful matter to be poor and humble when the way prevails in the state. The way is the Tao. When the, when in a state, humans are relatively speaking in alignment with the underlying harmony of it all, then things go well.

And then he says it's to be poor and humble when there's connected, when you are in an environment where the Tao is recognized and humans live in accordance as much as possible in accordance with that underlying harmony, then why be poor? Then you should thrive. But it is a shameful matter if you are rich and noble when the way falls into disuse in the state.

In other words, when there's corruption and all kinds of destructiveness in the state that you live in, if you are then, if you are rich and, if you are rich and noble in a state that is corrupt, that is shameful. So if you get very successful in a corrupt environment, then it must mean you are corrupt too. If you're, but you should be successful in a state where there is, that is more aligned with the Tao, then there's no reason to be poor.

Again, there's nothing wrong with being poor, but you can, basically he's saying, if you're well, if you're well-off, wealthy and powerful in a corrupt country, then that's shameful. If you still remain poor in a country where the collective is aligned, which is very rare, the collective is aligned with the underlying Tao, then you might as well do well. If you're not, I wouldn't totally agree with him.

It's shameful not to do well, because it may be your choice not to participate too much in the country and just live in your little hut with rice and water. That's fine too. So very often spiritual teachings seem to stress different points according to who is speaking to at any particular time.

So who was asking him this question and who is he speaking to? So often you need to take that into account when sometimes certain teachings may seem to be contradictory. Who is the teacher speaking to at that point?

We don't know that because all the disciples was, they wrote down what he said. And again, the teachings of Confucius are very much to do with using your life here as a spiritual practice. He's not very much in favor of totally withdrawing from society and living, just being in meditation.

And becoming a hermit. You learn more, interacting with other humans is the most important element of your spiritual practice. And basically the teaching is to use your interaction in society with other humans, with your next of kin and et cetera, everybody as spiritual practice.

That's, and beyond that, he does not talk about metaphysical things. He does not talk about, as I said, doesn't talk about God. And here, when somebody asked him, Zilu asked how the spirits of the dead and the gods should be served.

The master said, you are not able even to serve man. How can you serve the spirits? And then somebody asked him, may I ask about death?

And the master says, you do not understand even life. How can you understand death? So he doesn't get into how to serve the spirits or the gods, serve man.

You learn by, through your interaction with other humans, not some other worldly thing. And think that if you practice sacrifices to the gods, you're a superior human being and nothing changes in your interaction with your fellow human beings. So what the criterion for inner change is your interaction with other human beings.

That's the ground for practice, that's Confucius. It's not other worldly at all. It's using this world in order to become more conscious, a fully developed human being.

[Speaker 14] (3:56:25 - 3:56:35)

Oh, here, again, this looks a bit complicated, but.

[Speaker 1] (3:57:48 - 4:00:45)

Somebody asks him about benevolence again. What is benevolence? The master said, love your fellow man.

And what about wisdom? What is wisdom? Master said, know your fellow man.

Love your fellow man, that's benevolence. Know your fellow man is wisdom. I wouldn't use wisdom, it's practical intelligence again.

So you love the other, the human, because if you recognize that in them, that is beyond the merely human, the being beyond the human, as I put it, because you recognize the being beyond the human that you are as consciousness right now. But you also, you know the other on the level of their personality also. You can see, for example, the

conditioning of their personality.

You recognize, for example, that perhaps maybe this person is dishonored and dishonest and wants to cheat you. And you recognize the conditioning in the other, you see it, that you know him as a person, but you still love him as a being beyond the person. You can have the two levels.

You don't become totally naive when you're in a state of loving kindness to other human beings. And then you get taken in by everybody who wants to manipulate you or use you for their own egoic purposes. Say, oh, yes, yes.

You're not naive when you love you. You know the difference between the conditioning that operates in the other as the person and that which is beyond the person, which is maybe latent. The other doesn't know it in him or herself, but you can sense it in the other.

That's the loving kind. In that sense, even if somebody wants to defraud you, you can still be in that state of benevolence towards that person. But you recognize, you see the conditioning of the personality, which may be quite obnoxious.

Many personalities are really obnoxious and toxic, but don't confuse that with the essence of the other, the so-called other.

[Speaker 14] (4:00:49 - 4:01:00)

And here we have, this looks complicated, but I'll read it.

[Speaker 1] (4:01:00 - 4:39:03)

It's not really. Somebody asked him, may I ask about the exaltation of virtue, the reformation of the depraved and the recognition of misguided judgment? That seems to be a difficult question.

So you're asking about three things. The record, he's asking, first of all, the exaltation of virtue. The master said, what a splendid question.

To put service before the reward you get for it, is that not exaltation of virtue? He often phrases his teachings as questions, but he means, yes, it is. So to put service before the reward you get for it, is that not exaltation of virtue?

So you are virtuous as a human, if you put the service before the reward you get for it. Now that's an important principle that is also part of the perennial philosophy. This does not just apply to a particular service you give to another or that includes that.

It means whatever action you perform, not place excessive emphasis on the result that you want to achieve through your action. As it's called in the Bhagavad Gita, the fruit of

the action. You do not, you perform an action without excessive attachment to the expected outcome.

That is what he calls the reward. And that is a conscious action, which implies that you give your fullest attention to the action itself. You give it, you do it fully.

You focus your attention fully. You are not distracted by what you want to get or achieve through the action. Yes, of course, the action has a purpose.

Anything you do has a purpose and the purpose necessarily is in the future. You want to achieve this or that through what you do. But if there's an excessive emphasis in your mind on the future thing that you want to arrive at or attain, then the action is no longer given fullest attention.

In fact, that's where stress and anxiety arises because your mental focus is on where you want to be already or the reward you want to achieve through what you're doing. This is the point in the future. This takes attention away from the doing.

It diminishes the quality of your action. That's very important when you interact with human beings and let's say you're a salesperson and you want to sign the deal with other. Now how, if that, if you're in your mind, you give undue importance to the result, which is to sign the deal so that you get your commission through the sale, maybe you're a realtor or whatever, or you're a car salesman or whatever.

Then the quality of your interaction with a human diminishes and the other human actually can feel that unconsciously or consciously that you are only interested in them as a means to an end. And the end is getting the reward for what we're doing. And because the quality of your interaction diminishes, the quality means you're not giving your fullest attention to the other as a human being.

The other is only a means towards an end. And the other can sense that he or she is only a means to you. It's only a means towards an end.

And you are actually much less likely to get the deal signed because the other does not feel fully recognized. He feels you're only interested in using him or her to arrive at the reward, the fruit of your action. But if the reward is very much secondary, yes, you know you want to, you would like to, let's say you're a car salesman, you would like to sell this car, it would be nice, but you give your fullest attention to the interaction as you talk to the human being.

The fruit is secondary. That means that's the more conscious way of dealing with things. And it doesn't even necessarily imply other human beings.

It could just be you're engaged in creating something with your hands or intellectually. Are you able to give your fullest attention to the doing or are you so consumed by the

desired outcome that you create continuous stress in the doing of it? So as you know, here we are mainly concerned with entering the realm of being, of presence.

There hasn't been a lot for you to do, just little doings, walking from here to there, eating your food, some talking, some thinking, which is a doing. But mostly this has been and still is about connecting with being, the dimension of stillness beyond thinking out of which all thinking arises. Now, when you leave here, many of you, if not most of you, are going back into more doing again.

So your challenge will be not to lose the rootedness in that deeper dimension while you're engaged in whatever you do. And the world will do all it can to challenge you, to pull you out of that rootedness. And it will tell you, not in so many words, but it will in the form of events and people and happenings and things not working.

And so it will tell you, this is all important. Give me your fullest attention. This really matters.

It may matter, but as I put it, although things matter relatively, they may be relatively important, whether or not you miss your plane, whether you're not, you find that great job or you lose that great job, or whatever happens, it's all relatively important. But only one thing is of absolute importance, and that is your connectedness with being so that that dimension is with you, as you in your daily life. That's the challenge.

A few things will be helpful in this. One is letting go of the unconscious assumption that there should be no problems and difficulties. And if they are, that they are undesirable obstacles that really shouldn't be there in the form of events or people or situations.

But if you look back on your life and I look back on my life, it's always been challenging. There are brief moments when it's not challenging, and that's great, but you know very well that life won't leave you alone. It'll challenge you one way or another.

If you look at the world situation, it's the same. There's all kinds of challenges in the news. First there were the communists, there was a Cold War, and then there are suddenly other huge challenges arising, and it goes on and on.

So in the words of the first sentence in the book called The Road Less Traveled, which I never read because the first few sentences were so good I didn't need to read the rest of it. And the first sentence is, now this might go against certain new age beliefs, and it might at first sound negative because the first sentence is, life is difficult. That doesn't sound very inspiring.

And then the next sentence, although I don't remember, it literally says, and if you know that, you're completely okay with the fact that life is difficult, then it's no longer difficult. So that's all I read. Because that says it all already.

How does that work? How is life, when you know that life is difficult, it's no longer difficult? You try to work that out.

Well, here's the explanation. It's really only difficult if you think that it shouldn't be difficult because then you're in continuous resistance to things and people and events. But once you accept it's an essential part of life of being difficult, then whenever the next difficulty rises, you say, oh, there's life again, being difficult.

In other words, what does that do? It creates an acceptance of what is. If you carry around the assumption in your head, it shouldn't be difficult.

There should be no difficult people and obstacles and problems, and things should not get canceled, and plans should not be interrupted, and nobody should fall ill, and then people shouldn't die, certainly. That's a travesty. These things should not, they're all dreadful.

This is an underlying assumption. Things should go smoothly. And of course, sometimes they do go smoothly.

But the irony or the paradox is that once you recognize the fact that life is difficult, that life is not meant to make you happy, it's not meant to make you unhappy, but it makes you unhappy if you have a wrong attitude towards life. Happiness comes with accepting the fact that challenges are an essential part of the evolutionary process for all life forms. So challenges for you, even if you don't call them challenges, challenge is a nice term because something positive is already implied within it.

If you call it problems or bad stuff happening, then it doesn't sound so good. Challenges are here to awaken you. And even if you're awakening, continuous life continues to give you challenges, and then the awakening accelerates and deepens.

And at whatever stage you're at, you won't be free as long as you're here of challenges. So if you recognize that, you no longer need to be in a hostile, confrontational relationship with life. I don't, sorry about the term.

You're not pissed off all the time with another thing happening. I'm so pissed off with life. Just can't go on.

And people just can't take anymore, just. Then you can, there's a kind of accepting, not necessarily welcoming, but sometimes welcoming every situation that arises. That is, so if you welcome it, there's a book by Byron Katie called Loving What Is.

That means you are in an accepting relationship with whatever arises. Of course, it all arises in the present moment. Anything else that arises is in your mind.

So you need to differentiate between challenges, problems, difficulties that are actual, in

the form of people, events, or situations, and challenges, problems, and difficulties that are fictitious, that are purely created by your mind, creating pseudo problems. For example, when you worry in the middle of the night, huge problems. Are those the real challenges of life?

No, these are fictitious problems created in your mind, dwelling on things, things that happened but should not have happened. Those are not the real challenges of life. Those are the challenges of your mind, the mind-created problems.

So you need to very clearly differentiate in your life between actual difficulties, challenges, or problems. There is a person who is shouting at you, that's an actual. Or there is the thing, you just missed your flight, and you can't get on the next one, or the next one.

Or financial challenges, relationship challenges, family situations, work situations, actual things that happen that need to deal with. But then there's a huge amount of suffering that is generated not by the actual challenges of life, but by the fictitious problems that the mind creates, sometimes around the actual challenges of life, and sometimes out of, no, out of thin air, things that could go wrong. So, on the one hand, you have your mind creating a lot of useful, useless suffering through unconscious thinking, and then you have the actual situations in your life.

So, you don't have to endure your mind, but when it says life is difficult, that shouldn't really include your mind, because that's something you can do something about immediately, you don't have to live with a dysfunctional mind, millions still do. That is something that can be transcended, and this is, of course, what we are doing here, what you are doing as part of the awakening, is a huge amount of the life is difficult, a huge percentage of that difficulty is created by the mind. That we can deal with, that can change, that does not have to be.

Once, when you do that, then the next part is actual situations will still occur. Once you know that, then you can come to a more surrendered approach to life and actually, almost or actually welcome the difficult people in your life, the difficult situations in your life, loss, and so on. Without demanding unconsciously, not in so many words, perhaps, that demanding this should not be happening and there's something dreadfully wrong when things go wrong in your life.

And that makes life really difficult. This is what the man means at the beginning of the book, the author, when he says, life is difficult, but when you know that life is difficult and you fully come to terms with the fact that life is difficult, it's not difficult anymore because the greatest difficulty is the mental resistance to things that arise and the underlying assumption that they should not. So once you have then a surrendered relationship with the present moment, because everything arises in the present moment, then it's not really that difficult anymore and you can, even in the midst of turmoil, still

be connected with the realm of being within yourself.

So there's always a core of stillness, if only in the background. And no matter what happens, that core of stillness is there, if you want to call it stillness. It's also, as we saw, and as you know, it's also the source of satisfaction, where true satisfaction or a true sense of wellbeing that goes beyond physical wellbeing, a true sense of wellbeing comes from.

It's the transcendent dimension. So life will challenge you with its difficulties, the small and big. Small happen probably every day in some form.

So you don't get upset anymore when things don't go according to plan. You don't get upset and complain or irritated or angry when people don't behave the way they should behave. And that makes it so much easier when you no longer demand that these things should not be the way they are.

Nobody should, they shouldn't cancel flights. Weather shouldn't be in such a way that they can't fly anymore. And the body shouldn't get old.

Nobody should have catch an illness. Now, a lot of illnesses are produced, or you're much more prone to have an illness if your mind is very dysfunctional because it lowers the physical resistance. It affects the body.

What the mind does obviously affects the body. Even mainstream medicine is beginning to recognize your mental emotional state affects your physical state. So if your mental emotional state is very dysfunctional, your body's resistance to illness decreases.

The likelihood increases that you catch something. There are other causes of illness. So nobody can be totally free and say, I'm never going to be ill.

The body is a physical vehicle with a certain lifespan. And as it approaches the later stages of its lifespan, it's just like an old car. Things start to go wrong with it.

It's another form. And the older your car gets, the more things need to be replaced. And the time comes when it's just not working anymore.

So welcome or welcome back. And there's a chair here, which, as you may know, means it's time for one of our dialogues. And it's time for me to briefly incarnate as a talk show host.

And I always, I have to resist the temptation when people, when I have dialogue partners, when they come on stage, say, welcome to the show. I have not had many scientists as dialogue partners. I had Peter Russell, who is not a scientist, but who has a good scientific background.

But otherwise, I don't recall having, well, I had a conversation with Deepak Chopra, who

also has, of course, a scientific background, but is not a scientist as such. And the reason may be that my science IQ is very low. It could be due to an undeveloped left brain, who knows?

Not only that, I know that I never do well, well, I only tried it once, to be honest. I never, I don't do well in IQ tests. But my consolation is that IQ tests do not measure the whole spectrum of intelligence, but only a very small segment of intelligence.

And basically, IQ tests are not how intelligent you are, but how good you are at IQ tests. So I have some books here. My guest today is a scientist, Lothar Schaefer, who was born in Germany, but has taught for, I believe, 40 years at the University of Arkansas as professor of physical chemistry.

And about maybe a year ago or so, I received this book that he wrote, not long ago, with a foreword by Deepak Chopra. And the title of the book is, "'Infinite Potential,' "'Infinite Potential.'" The subtitle is very interesting. It says, "'What Quantum Physics Reveals About How We Should Live.'" That's very intriguing, because nobody had thought of quantum physics as being able to reveal to us how we should live. So I get so many books sent, every month, manuscripts, books, and it's not even possible to read them all or even a few pages sometimes. So, and then when I travel, the books accumulate. And when I get back home, it's a huge pile.

And my intention is always that eventually I will get to it. And of course, then they pile up more and more. And that's one of my challenges.

But for some reason, I don't know whether it was Deepak Chopra having written a foreword, I opened it and immediately responded. Something within responded. And as I read, continued reading a few more pages, then I didn't start from the very beginning at first, but now, of course, I have read the whole book, even almost the whole book twice.

But when I first looked at it, I didn't start from the very beginning, but somewhere a little bit into the book, and I came across a passage that I want to read to you in a minute that sounded so similar to what I often say in talks. And I know that that's not where he got it. So I didn't get it from him and he didn't get it from me because when he wrote the book, he had never even heard of me.

So then obviously it was something that is produced like everything by the one universal consciousness that came to a realization and expressed it in a similar way. And I'll read that to you in a minute, but before that, just one brief look at another book he wrote a few years ago. It has a very interesting title, In Search of Divine Reality, Science as a Source of Inspiration.

Now, before you read this book, I think he would agree, I would highly recommend that you start with this book because this is more challenging. It's a very erudite and

scholarly examination. It's wonderful.

My intention is to get my teeth into it this summer when I have plenty of spare time. So I'll be reading it, but I have opened it here and there and it's wonderfully fascinating. And for those who are familiar with the German language, there's a German version of it.

It's not exactly a translation. It's a reworking, it seems. And the title is somewhat different from the English title, Versteckte Wirklichkeit, which translates as hidden reality.

And the subtitle is How Quantum Physics Can Lead Us to Transcendence. Now I'll read that. This was one of the first things that jumped out of this book when I first opened it.

So this is a little passage that I will read to you. And then I will invite Lothar up on stage. He addresses here the interconnectedness of seemingly separate things.

You can think about this in the following way. If you've ever flown over an ocean or a large body of water, sometimes when the weather is right, you can see some white patches on the water below. Tiny white dots that suddenly appear like out of nothing, move around, one this way, one that way, and fade out of existence again.

It is really a beautiful sight and a fascinating play of forms, and it is easily understood. The white patches are the crests of waves in the agitated ocean. Now, here's the interesting thing.

You can't see these waves because you're too far up. You can only see the crests, but you have no doubt that the waves are there. You may even say that you know it.

And if anybody tried to tell you that the white spots on the water were some sort of big white fish, you would not believe it. Furthermore, when you see how each of the patches is going its own way and couldn't care less about what the others are doing, you can't be fooled into thinking that the waves are isolated, independent appearances, because you just know that the waves in an ocean are not independent, but conjoined in one giant movement of the whole. This is a useful experience because now when you look out into the world and see the things and people around you, you will not be fooled into thinking they are separate and independent appearances because you know that they are the patches on the surface of an agitated ocean, the ocean of potentiality.

In this non-material ocean, which seems alive and more mind-like than thing-like, the waves constantly build up to new empirical possibilities and perhaps even to new forms of thinking that may find consciousness in a human mind. After each transition from the possible to the factual, as one of the great pioneers of quantum physics, Werner Heisenberg, described it, the evolution of tendencies or possibilities for future actual events starts anew, but now from a different starting point than before, so that the universe is evolving. Physicist Hans-Peter Dürr, longtime coworker of Heisenberg's, has

called this a learning process.

With the experiences that it makes through us, the cosmic potentiality is learning. It constantly manifests and reabsorbs. There is a continuous flux from the evolution of tendencies to their actualizations, empirical events, and from empirical events to new tendencies.

Each new state of potentiality carries in it, like a stigma, the memory of the last state. You are a white crest on the surface of this ocean. So the one manifesting through you, thinking through you, perceiving through you, then going back within and then re-emerging.

Wonderful image. Now, the interesting thing is that Lothar Schaeffer, our guest, did not arrive at this realization through going within, but going, examining matter and going so deep into matter where matter wasn't matter anymore. And so going, and he came to the same conclusion that mystics, or I myself, arrived at by going within.

Very interesting. Now, I'm going to ask him in a minute how that happened, the process by which he arrived at that conclusion. So I'd like to welcome Lothar Schaeffer.

He will come up here in a minute. We don't have any music to play while he comes up to the stage. And...

[Speaker 15] (4:39:04 - 4:39:09)

And... And... And...

[Speaker 1] (4:39:09 - 4:39:15)

And... And... And...

And... And...

[Speaker 4] (4:39:16 - 4:39:18)

Is it on?

[Speaker 1] (4:39:18 - 4:39:53)

Yes. Okay. So thank you for this wonderful book.

And you told me that, or you wrote to me, sometime after this book came out, somebody mentioned my name to you. And then you said, who is that? I guess I never heard of him.

But then you looked at a book and you saw certain similarities and you were surprised. And then I think you sent the book to me or the publisher sent it, but with a letter written

by you.

[Speaker 4] (4:39:53 - 4:41:00)

Well, you know, it doesn't sound likely, but I didn't know of you. Well, you know, you hear names and so on, but I didn't know of you. And now I've nearly read all of your books and I'm thinking, how does it happen?

I mean, you have written things, and I can say before me that I've written, but I didn't copy them. You get the strong feeling of a connectedness. Yes.

And none that is under our control, but there is a mental background, spiritual background. And if you open your mind, you have to open your mind, then you can be connected. And then also you can be connected with different minds and so on.

This is in a way not classical science, because classical science was materialism.

[Speaker 1] (4:41:01 - 4:41:04)

And still is, this is materialism, right?

[Speaker 4] (4:41:04 - 4:41:15)

Yeah, the classical science. Classical science, in a way, has been found to be insufficient, but most scientists still are classical. They don't like the change.

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (4:41:17 - 4:41:29)

So despite all these discoveries in quantum physics, the mainstream science is really still, the philosophical foundation is the classical science.

[Speaker 4] (4:41:30 - 4:43:46)

Yes, the business is still. So, you see, in the beginning, Newton, he said, God in the beginning formed matter in solid, massive, hard, impenetrable particles. So very hard as never to wear or break in pieces.

Nature is lasting. It's materialism. The early French scientists, they said, there are two kinds of stuff, extended stuff and thinking stuff, but it had to be stuff.

And it was, of course, a progress compared to the terrible things that happened in the spiritual world before that. It was a liberation. Mm-hmm.

And it also led to development, led to technology, all the things we have. I mean, they developed within this framework up to 1900. And then was the beginning of quantum

physics.

And quantum physics is a kind of idealism. It says that there is a part of the world that we cannot see, but it is real. But before that happened, physics became so successful then it entered biology.

And in the theory of evolution, having or not having stuff is the essence of life. If you don't get it, somebody else gets it. If he gets it, he eats you.

No, you get it, you eat him. And it has often been said, but I think it is wrong, science has nothing to do with ethics. No, if this is what the world is like, then having or not having stuff and being aggressive is what you should be.

That's a virtue. Somebody is a kind person, forget about him. He'll already be toast before he knows.

[Speaker 1] (4:43:46 - 4:43:50)

Yes, survival of the fittest.

[Speaker 4] (4:43:51 - 4:43:51)

Survival of the fittest.

[Speaker 1] (4:43:51 - 4:44:16)

And that becomes an underlying assumption, philosophical assumption that spreads. And even people who know very little about Darwin or his theory, it seeps into everybody's mind and as a substratum of their minds, there is that mindset, that philosophy.

[Speaker 4] (4:44:20 - 4:48:59)

And that in a way is still prevalent now. And it is what we teach our children. It is what we teach in schools.

Quantum physics says it is wrong. Why do we not teach quantum physics in high school? I don't know that it is conscious, but unconsciously, we don't want our children to know this.

We want them to become good consumers, not spiritual minds. It's bad for business. But quantum physics, quantum theory, also the extension to chemistry, quantum chemistry, is a sort of idealism because it says that the basis of the world is not things, but its forms, non-material forms.

If you, as science has done, pursue the nature of things of matter to the foundation, then all of a sudden you end up with elementary particles, molecules, electrons, and so on.

And then all of a sudden something happens. When such, these things are particles, they have a certain mass and so on, it is constant.

But when they are on their own, like in a vacuum, they're never completely alone, but in a vacuum there are much fewer interactions. When they do not interact, when you have an electron and it doesn't interact, it vanishes, it becomes a wave. That wave is extended in space.

You can't see it. The thing leaves the empirical world. The wave doesn't have units of matter or energy.

It's just a form. It's a pattern of information. Out of this form, the particle can jump out again.

I'm not sure physicists know exactly where it gets the mass, maybe a Higgs field, and it doesn't matter. We can think that all material particles, all things are made of particles, all these particles came into existence like this. So the entire visible world is an emanation out of a realm of forms, ultimately.

The forms have no units of mass or energy. They're just information. We don't see them.

They appear to us as waves. So maybe we can think it's like an ocean, they're wave-like, but we don't really see, and that is also important because it says there is a part of the world that is non-empirical. We cannot see it.

Science cannot say anything about it. You don't know how mad scientists can get when I say something like that. That guy, it's like a traitor.

Because what does it say? It says there is a part of reality where science cannot enter. Science can deal with the empirical world, and yes, it deals with this very well.

You make experiments, you observe, you learn a lot. Then there is a part, the visible comes out of the non-visible. We can only guess or have like, blessed person like you have an inspiration.

We can say it probably consists of something that we have to call forms. Maybe there are waves, and when there are waves, we think they're hanging together like waves in an ocean. It means the hidden reality is a wholeness.

The forms are patterns of information, so you can think if there is information. Normally, information is meant for a mind. Does it mean there's a cosmic mind?

[Speaker 1] (4:49:02 - 4:49:12)

Would you compare what you call the forms to what in the human beings, also something that you cannot see, thoughts?

[Speaker 4] (4:49:13 - 4:50:01)

Are those the thoughts of the universe, those forms? Now you can start thinking. I've sometimes said this way.

In 1900, before the beginning of quantum physics, the age of classical physics, you could not believe in science, have a religious faith, and be logically consistent. At that age, it was stupid to believe in something. Now, I don't want to say it is not reasonable not to have a spiritual faith, but you can believe in science, in the order of the world, and have a spiritual conviction, and it is logically consistent.

Nobody can tell you what you have to think. I mean, that's up to you.

[Speaker 1] (4:50:20 - 4:50:34)

The love in the dog, that which has no form, their consciousness, and that can connect you with your own consciousness. That the consciousness is indestructible. The essence of the dog remains.

[Speaker 13] (4:50:38 - 4:51:06)

Hi, Eckhart. Hi, Eckhart. I wanted to ask you a question about my dog that we just had to put to sleep.

And I know we're talking a lot about the human, and dying, and being already dead, but we just can't reconcile with taking her life, you know? And I wonder if you could talk a little bit about that.

[Speaker 1] (4:51:13 - 4:51:22)

So you were present when the dog- Yeah, when she took her very last breath, and- And how was your state of consciousness while you were with the dog?

[Speaker 13] (4:51:22 - 4:51:54)

Really present, but... It just, her form just went so fast, and she wouldn't have never died. I mean, her will was so strong.

I mean, she was just tremendous, and we were being encouraged to do that. Just to not let her keep suffering. And I just, I mean, I think it's one thing to have your own life, but to take her life is just- Yes.

[Speaker 1] (4:51:55 - 5:08:52)

Well, you wanted to spare her this further suffering. That's the death, a body dissolving, a form dissolving, is painful, whether it's a human or an animal, because there's love there. Now, the love is, on the one hand, yes, there's a form.

Of course, you love to touch the dog. You love to hold the dog, to feel the dog's aliveness, the softness of it. But what you really love in the dog you can't see.

And I'm just, we're talking about dogs now, but we could talk about any life form, including humans, but let's talk about dog. What is it when you look into the eyes of the dog, and there is an inner response, an inner response, which is love? And this is why people, it's easier for many people to look into the eyes of a dog and feel love than it is to look into the eyes of a human and feel love.

There are millions of people who find it easier to feel love looking into the eyes of a dog. And that is because there's less in the way, when they look at the dog, there's less that obstructs the dog's connectedness with the source, which is the one. In humans, there's the mind in the way.

So many people find it harder to feel love when they look at a human being, perhaps they may have one or two with whom they do feel it, but many don't even have that. Why? Because in the other human, there is a screen of concepts and that activates your own screen of judgments and concepts.

And that prevents the flow and the realization of oneness from happening. The moment you look at a human, most humans are, we'll come back to dogs in a minute, but don't worry. Most humans are trapped in mental noise, continuous judgments in the mind, stories, judgments.

So if you could free yourself from that, it requires enormous presence for your own soul structures, not to become activated when you're looking into the eyes of a human being whose mind is very, very active. So that requires great presence and not many people have that yet. So they love, there are millions of people in this world whose only, the only being for whom they can feel love is their dog.

That's, you could say, oh, that's tragic, isn't it? Well, it's not tragic. At least they can feel love there.

At least, of course, it would be wonderful if you could feel love for humans also. A little bit more difficult, possible and necessary ultimately, but we know now what the barriers are. Once we know why we can't feel the love for humans, then we can do something, which is relinquish our judgments.

But it remains for the time being that dogs provide an access for many humans into feeling the connectedness with being. That is why I call them sometimes guardians of being, dogs, because they, when you look into the eyes of a dog, you feel that the dog's connectedness with the source. In a way, then, you could say the dog, or any animal really, is closer to the source than humans, closer to God.

Humans have gone further out into further differentiation and complexity. And there you

have the dog, but there's enough consciousness in the dog to meet the human. The dog's already quite close to the human consciousness without having suffered yet the influx of conceptualization.

So that's the beauty of it. So what you love in the dog is not ultimately the external form. The love in the dog, that which has no form, their consciousness.

And that can connect you with your own consciousness. The consciousness is indestructible. The essence of the dog remains.

Where exactly it goes, I don't know. But it may go into the universal dog essence that underlies the divine idea of dog, Plato would have said something like that, or Socrates. It goes back to the source, the dog source.

We know that the formless essence of life is indestructible. And so you can sense as you are with that, what all the tears may be there, sadness may be there, you experience the dissolution of a life form. And the dissolution of a life form leaves, especially in the moment of death and a little bit after, leaves behind an open space in you.

And that open space is the formless. I sometimes describe it as, let's say here's the texture or the tapestry of your life with all its ingredients, people that you know, where you live. Let's imagine your life as a tapestry, intricate.

And one aspect, important aspect of the tapestry is the dog. There it is. And there the tapestry shows you petting the dog and feeling love for the dog.

And suddenly you're looking at this tapestry and suddenly the dog begins to dissolve in the tapestry. What's happening to it? It's dissolving.

There you were petting it and suddenly there's a little empty space in that tapestry. That's very painful. It's that the empty space is left to the body as the form has dissolved.

But what was the ultimate, what was it or what is it that gives life to this whole tapestry? What is it that makes it alive? What is it?

And that is behind it, there's a light and that shines through all the forms. In fact, it gets obstructed by the forms but it still can shine through somehow. And because the light shines through all the forms, it's alive.

I'm using the, continuing to use the analogy of tapestry. It feels it has an aliveness for the simple reason that the aliveness is given to all the forms by a light that shines through it, through the forms. Gets somehow obstructed by the forms but the obstruction of the forms creates a diversity.

So ultimately every life form obstructs the universal light but that gives it individuality.

But some of the universal light still shines through. For a moment, let's use another analogy related to it which is the cinema film in the cinema projector.

When you put a film is put in the projector, I don't know whether they still do it but there's a film, there's a light behind the film and the film runs through the projector and that creates the images on the screen. Now, all the reality that these images on the screen ultimately have is the light behind the film. Without the light behind the film, there would be nothing happening there.

Now imagine a character in that, just we're taking this analogy a little bit further, almost too far, but let's do it. Let's imagine the characters in the film who are acting out their drama and conditioning with maybe a tragedy or a comedy or a mixture but the characters are all acting out their script, talking, let's say one of the characters suddenly becomes aware that what is my reality? There's a moment of cessation and he or she is not acting out the script.

He stops for a moment and can feel, he can suddenly feel that light shining through. Oh, I'm really that light. I'm not ultimately that character.

The light gives it, and so all the figures in the movie are ways of obscuring to a greater or lesser extent the light that comes through but their likeness is the light. Without the light, it's nothing. Okay, let's go back to the tapestry.

There we have a form has dissolved. Now at first, if you concentrate on the lack of what was there that was so lovely, then you get stuck on that level where you equate the loveliness and the love with the form that has dissolved. But if you go look more deeply, then you see that where that form was, there's actually now more light shining through.

And that happens when you completely surrender to the fact of death, whether it's a human or a dog, any form of life. When you completely surrender to the fact of death, then you're not just sad because the form has dissolved, that may still be there, but you also sense a deepening in yourself because you sense that where the form was, the light now shines through more fully. So the empty space that's left behind, this is why death is ultimately potentially always sacred.

There are remnants of this in ancient cultures when people see a dead body. In our culture, of course you don't because we hide them. When they see a dead body, they make a sign of respect, even if they disliked the person that just died.

But when the coffin comes past and it's open, there's a dead body, they show respect because there's some obscure recognition of the sacredness of death. Why is death considered sacred? Because when the form dissolves, the formless can shine through more strongly and then it can be transformative in you, but it requires surrender to the fact of death.

And so it can be a transformative thing, which doesn't mean you're not sad anymore. You're still sad because the form has dissolved. But if you go into complete acceptance of the fact of death, which is going to happen to you, this form, to this form, and this, and this, and this, and this, and this, and this, and this, and this, and this, each form is going to pop sooner or later.

Some sooner, some later, and leave behind. If you saw that in a speeded up version of life over the next 70 years, as we sit here, let's say we have a film camera that compresses. Let's see, we're not moving from here.

Another strange analogy. I'm trying to get some, to see something. That's why I'm doing all this.

Just hang on. Now, if we had a camera here, let's say we're staying here and instead of going about our lives, we just dream our lives over the next 70 years. Let's say the camera stays here for 70 years.

And instead of going about our daily life, we just dream that we are going about our daily life. It's basically the same thing, by the way. Because in the end you die and say, okay, what was all that?

So if you had that camera here, you would be amazed. Let's say it runs, it compresses 70 years into three minutes or five minutes. And you would then see the film.

Then you would see bodies dissolving one after the other. One here, one there. Gone.

All gone. It happens to all life forms. So we need to see that and face that fact of death.

To some it comes sooner than later. To some it seems premature. Sometimes it seems it's too soon.

The dog was not ready. I'm sure the dog was ready, but you were not. You were not ready for the dog's death.

For the animal, death is easier. The animal can surrender into it, although there is a will to live, yes. But the animal can surrender.

Surrender is the key. Death is universal. It's all around you, continuously.

Everything is dying around you and being born. Dying and being born. We don't seem to see that very clearly.

You may have to travel to India to get a true view of the fact of death because they burn the bodies out in the open. And anybody can just sit there and meditate. And you would just go, wow, wow.

First you'll cry and then you'll cry a bit more. But then after a while you come to, because we're talking about the realization of something in you that's beyond death. And that is what you loved in the dog and still love.

And that cannot go away. So let it become this meditation for you and a transformative experience. And let the tears still flow if they flow.

There's nothing wrong with that. But surrender to the fact of death and realize that only the form dies. That which gives life to the form is not subject to decay or death.

You can sense that in yourself. And then you can sense it in the dog. And then the death of the dog is not as heavy as it would be if you were only identified, if you equate the essence of the dog with the form of the dog.

So what you love in the dog is the dog's consciousness, which ultimately is one with your consciousness. It's life itself, an expression, a beautiful expression, temporary, of course, of the one life. And then you honor that and are grateful for that.

You also are that.

[Speaker 13] (5:08:53 - 5:08:57)

So it's best to honor the process of taking her life as well?

[Speaker 1] (5:08:58 - 5:57:15)

I mean, I think that's what bothers us the most. That was a compassionate thing to do. We feel so guilty.

Yes, but that's, again, that requires surrender and see that it came out of love for the dog, not any other reason. And it's therefore compassionate. Now, the mind will construct further thought processes out of that, but you don't need that.

People who are unaware of the true self within do not recognize this soul in them that is using the senses. As the senses are limited to the mind level, they are incapable of comprehending atma, which is above the mind. Now, Krishna, the personification of God here, explains a little bit more about human life, human existence, and says, I will now explain more about the individual soul, which is called jiva in Sanskrit.

I'm now using for one or two sentences, which I scribbled in here, this translation, which I thought was slightly better in this case. A spark of my eternal spirit becomes in this world a living soul, and it draws around its center the five senses and the mind. So this is, again, the divine God, the one consciousness talking.

A spark of my eternal spirit becomes in this world a living soul, and it draws around its center the five senses and the mind. A body comes into existence. The atma, which is a

part of divinity, atma, a part of this God within, enters into a body in the womb before birth.

Thus, it enters the world of matter. And in this translation, it says, it draws around itself the five senses with the mind as the sixth sense. Now comes a very poetic way of looking what happens.

Like a breeze wafting the scent of perfume, the atma, when it migrates from one body to the next, carries with it the mind and the senses. So the atma is the consciousness, and it carries with it this scent of fragrance of previous existence. That means it brings along the intellect, the ego, the sense of being a separate identity, and the lower mind, thought mind, transferring thoughts and tendencies from previous lifetimes.

The individual soul, because it has drawn the senses around itself, experiences the pleasures, desires, and pains of the world. Now, important part comes now. People who are unaware of the true self within, the underlying atma, the underlying timeless consciousness, do not recognize this soul in them that is using the senses.

As the senses are limited to the mind level, they are incapable of comprehending atma, which is above the mind. The yogi, however, the yogi is the person engaged in spiritual practice or spiritual living. The yogi, however, possessing the eye of wisdom, the yogis, however, possessing the eye of wisdom, do see me, their atmic self, within.

The eye of wisdom. The translator here put in brackets, intuitive faculty. Now, this is according to the Bhagavad Gita, the faculty of becoming aware within oneself of that which is deeper than the person, it calls the eye of wisdom.

And the translator, to explain a little bit, as I said, put in brackets, the intuitive faculty. And really, this is what my teaching, it's not my teaching, it's just what it's all about, is of course, becoming aware of yourself as consciousness, so that there is the dimension, the timeless dimension suddenly is realized within you. And you do it at any moment by becoming aware that you are aware, like right now.

Can you become aware at this moment that there is a presence there, that you are awake, that there is an underlying presence, even when you're not thinking, without which you couldn't exist? There's an underlying aliveness, a presence, whatever you want to call it. You don't have to think to know that, in fact, it's only when there is a gap between two thoughts, you become aware that you haven't disappeared, or that you don't remember your personal history.

You don't even, at this moment, you don't even remember your name, you don't need it. But there is an essential aliveness or presence there. And that is the eye of wisdom that suddenly arises, knowing yourself as that.

You could also say, what's left of you when you stop thinking? Now, you can't think about

that. The usual tendency when I ask a question like that, that seems difficult to comprehend is you start thinking about it.

So when I ask what's left when you stop thinking, then you might say, oh, I have to think about that. But that's never the answer. So there is that which has assumed form in you, which is the person with its history.

And there is that which is timeless and formless that underlies it all, that is actually the essence of your sense of identity, atman, and that is self-realization. It says here, to obtain this eye of wisdom, you must do two things, surrender your ego and purify your mind. And that is done, I would say, by realizing that you are not your mind.

Because if you're identified with every thought that comes into your head, as many humans still are, then basically you are your mind. And beyond the thoughts that go through your head, there is nothing else. That's all you know.

And the thoughts that go through your head are conditioned by your upbringing, by your past, by your environment, the country you live in, the time period you live in, your family background. All those things determine what kind of thoughts go through your head. And all those thoughts that go through your head habitually make up who you consider yourself to be.

That's a certain story arises in the mind, and that becomes the mind-made self. And that is the reality for most humans. And it's also a fact that for most humans, that is a very limited reality.

They don't realize how limited their worldview is, how limited all their opinions are. They don't realize that they're inhabiting these little presents in their minds. That's their reality.

And when you're totally trapped in your mind, then you create a lot of conflict because then you, all the other minds become like enemies to you. And then you can become an extremist, whether political or religious, or you just have a lot of conflict in your personal life. You're just totally stuck in your little, in your head.

Cannot recognize your connectedness with nature, your connectedness with other human beings. You're cut off by concepts, by thoughts. And so that's most people's reality.

And spiritual awakening is realizing that there is a dimension in you that is far deeper than that. And that here, according to the ancient teachings, it's Atma, which is the God within, the divine within, whatever you want to call it. And that's a liberation.

That's, even just having glimpses of that is liberating, that there's more to you than the little person that before was running your life. And with that, an intelligence comes into

your life that is greater than the intelligence of your conditioned mind. And that's what all spiritual teachings are about.

I was putting away some clothes this morning, hanging up some clothes and folding something. And we talked yesterday about somebody asking a question about repetitive things. You get up in the morning, you do your repetitive tasks every day.

And most of one's life consists of little tasks. There's rarely anything big. And if there is, it doesn't last long.

What would be big? A wedding, a funeral, or in North America, Thanksgiving, turkey dinner, Christmas, a promotion, or suddenly they write about you in People Magazine, hopefully something good, or some big thing, you're going to talk or give a talk to a few hundred people. But even a seemingly big thing consists of just one little thing at a time.

Now, if you had the idea, this is just a little example. I'm coming back to the clothes in a little while. One could say that folding up clothes and hanging up shirts is an insignificant thing that one would only do in order to get somewhere else.

And in this case, if I thought, okay, I have to get this done because this really big thing is waiting for me there. All these people are waiting for me to talk, give a big talk. Then in the meantime, all the little things leading up to it would be regarded as something that you have to get out of the way or pay little attention to because I have this big thing coming up.

And then this big thing coming up is a mind form, would become a mind form, a big thing called, big people wanting me to say something significant, but who knows if I can say something significant. That would have led to not only not paying much attention to the little things, but also most probably to a sense of anxiety because the mind has created a big thing. Now, if I had that, then it would not be enjoyable to do what I do because if every time I got anxious before a talk, that would be dreadful.

I'd rather not do it. So why is there no anxiety? Because I realized that even a so-called big talk is consists of little things.

You approach it, you take, they pick me up in a buggy and then drive. And then I step out and then it's one step at a time. And then I sit in a little room for a few minutes and look around and breathe.

And then I come here, it's still one little step at a time. And then I sit here and then one word comes out and then another word comes out. It's just, that too is just small.

It's only the mind that creates differences and says, I'm waiting for the next big thing. And for other people, a big thing could be the next vacation they look forward to. In the meantime, they're just trying to get to that future moment or the next or getting

married, looking for someone to get married, finding the right relationship.

That would be the big thing, wouldn't it? If I could find that, the partner, the ideal partner for me. And then you're looking towards that.

And in the meantime, little attention is paid to the intervening periods. But the strange thing is most of your life is the intervening periods. 95%, no 99% is something that happens while you wait for something else to happen.

And it's an unconscious way to live. So as I was folding up my clothes and I realized how extremely pleasurable the activity is and not because of the simple movements of putting it away, but there's an underlying stillness with it that goes with that. And so as you notice that, as you do little things, in other words, 90 something percent of your life, if you're aware, not only of what you are doing, of course, yes, that's part of present moment awareness is to give attention to what you're doing so that the doing is not just the me.

It's a means to an end. The greatest fallacy and big dysfunction in people's lives is that almost all they're doing is a means to an end. That implies future, of course, is a means to an end.

And unconsciously the end is regarded as more important than the means. But of course, the end, which is in the future, is always in the future. The moment it comes, it's the present moment.

But the mind pattern that has lodged itself firmly in people's minds is always that the next thing, and it's a thing that I really need to get to. So the moment the so-called future comes, it appears as the present moment. Something else almost simultaneously or very quickly afterwards, something else appears looming up in the so-called future.

Oh, I need to get there. Of course, there are things that you need to achieve and go towards and that involves time and so on. But if that absorbs almost 100% of your attention, or even if it absorbs 80% of your attention, that's you're out of balance.

Because if future absorbs 80% of your attention, you only have 20% of your attention left for the one thing that is ever real in your life, which is the present moment. So the present moment is just okay. That's why many, many people don't actually, very rarely feel really comfortable with the present moment.

It's rare for people to regard the present moment even in a friendly way. Many people live continuously in some kind of almost confrontational or denying relationship with the present moment. And then their entire life is then not aligned with the present moment, which is life itself.

Because the only place where life can appear to you is in the present moment. There is

nothing else ever. And so your life is not aligned.

Your life with a small L is not aligned with life with a capital L. And that out of alignment creates an unhappy existence. And millions of people leading such an unhappy existence create an entire culture or civilization, every aspect of which reflects back to you that unhappy, basically unhappy state that all those millions are in.

So all the things that the culture produces, the civilization produces, the structures, the economic structures, political structures, educational and so on, they will contain these elements of that state of consciousness that created them. So that's the dysfunctional element in politics, in economics, in educational system, and so on. Which all that, all those things that you can see are not working very well because they are products of a certain collective state of consciousness.

And the collective state of consciousness is made up of millions of individuals that produces the collective state of consciousness. So if you try to tackle exclusively the products of that collective consciousness in the form of the economic structures, the political educational system, and so on, then you're working only on one end of the spectrum and it's not the causal, you're working on effect. And what you can do is limited.

There are, yes, you can initiate changes, but what is the state of consciousness in the individuals and in you as you try to initiate changes? So the causal is the individual so that the individual no longer lives in a way that produces unhappiness and is dysfunctional. This mind-made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive.

To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. In the old consciousness, the predominant state is one of waiting for the next thing. And in the new consciousness, even when you're waiting somewhere, you're not really waiting, you're just being where you are.

And you can use every opportunity when there is an external waiting, you're waiting at the airline counter or bus, at the traffic light, at the supermarket, to meet somebody, you have an appointment, somebody to arrive, so much waiting. I read somewhere that the average person who learns, who starts driving at the age of 20 and drives a car every day throughout their lives, how they worked it out, I don't know, they spend, I believe, it was four or five days of their life waiting at the red light. If you sum it, add it all up, it's four or five days of your life, you spend waiting at the red traffic light.

And most people are not happy unless it's just one instance of waiting and so much, so many other occasions when you are waiting and mostly people are not comfortable with waiting. They get restless, uneasy, complain, they shouldn't be waiting. Well, maybe not, but you are waiting.

Things should be different if people only were more efficient and punctual and did their job properly and were aware of the time, but they're not. So whenever you're waiting, see if you can, your state of conscious can be one of just being present, enjoy being where you are. Start with a supermarket.

And if you once, if you notice the shift from the restlessness and discontent and complaining, the anger, even irritation with having to wait at the supermarket and then say, okay, is that a pleasant state? Do I really want, am I, is it possible to be here in a different way? Do I choose to be in that unpleasant state?

Am I forced to be in that unpleasant state? Is somebody forcing me to be irritated? No, I'm just irritated.

I can't help it. Well, that's just a thought that may not be true. I can't help it.

And then you realize that you can help it and you simply drop your irritation and come into the present moment. Irritation is just a thought. This should not be happening.

Or I'd rather be out of here than in here, but you're in here. And this is just a tiny thing, of course, but as we mentioned before, life is made up of tiny things. And if one tiny irritation is followed by another tiny irritation somewhere else and followed by another tiny irritation somewhere else, and every tiny irritation leaves behind something, an energy, and that gradually it builds up.

And then you get more prone to irritation and not just irritation, then add up 100 little irritations and then you become a potentially angry person. Who's just waiting for the next thing to be angry about. Hopefully you can find something to be angry about.

So you can just drop it. You drop it by realizing it's futile. You're actually creating it yourself.

It serves no purpose. There's an underlying assumption, and this is a childlike way of looking at the world or a childish way of looking at the world, an immature childish world that says, if I get really irritated, things are going to change. In the same way, a child might think if I cry hard enough, something will happen.

And of course, in the case of the child, often it is the case, and then the parents come running. But if you're an adult and you cry hard enough, not necessarily cry as such, but metaphorically speaking, unhappy, you believe the same thing is going to happen, but it's not. In fact, people run away from you.

They don't come and say, oh, you have that energy of get away from me. So it's practiced with those little things, so you can not only be free of irritation, you can also actually use those opportunities to be present. Then you're welcome every time you're waiting.

And if you don't succeed, that's okay occasionally, but you're welcome every time you go, oh. One very small anecdote happened to me recently. I was at a supermarket waiting, and the cashier was the slowest that I've ever seen, perhaps in my entire life.

And not only did she not know what she was doing, she also engaged every customer in a long conversation. And even I, who, is usually okay with these things, could feel a small amount of irritation creeping up. And then immediately I let it out and it went away, and then another one came.

But by the time I finally reached her, the irritation fortunately was gone, and I was present again. And when she saw me, she said, oh, I've been waiting to meet you all my life. And I was so glad that the irritation wasn't there anymore.

And she said also that she hadn't been there for very long, not worked there for a long time yet, so she's still learning. And she had recently moved back to Canada from after spending 10 years in Maui, Hawaii, where time is not so important, of course. People have a loose relationship with time, island time.

So that was an interesting encounter. So it can happen, irritation can still arise. If you don't catch it.

So you have to be alert so that you catch it before it takes you over. And then realize you don't want it. What for?

And it's gone. Related to that is unhappiness. A lot of so-called unhappiness is also a childish way of trying to change things.

By being as unhappy as you can about them. And the underlying unconscious or semi-conscious assumption is if I'm really unhappy, somebody, perhaps God, is going to do something about it, or I'm going to prove him wrong. I'm going to show him how dreadful it is.

And then finally, this is an unconscious assumption behind the unhappiness, because you believe if you're habitually and frequently unhappy, you believe that it has a purpose. It's an underlying assumption. Perhaps you wouldn't verbalize it in that way, but you believe that it works for you.

Of course, it doesn't, but things are going to change. But just need to be really unhappy so that God finally, even if you don't believe in God, this can still be the mechanism, the underlying unconscious assumption behind it. It's something that's going to happen.

And of course, the opposite is true, because the more unhappy you are with something, the more you are stuck in the situation. There are some patterns in the mind that everybody inherits that even for advanced presence practitioners like yourselves can still reassert themselves because they are so normal. Well, by the way, my definition of

normal is insane, as you probably know.

And you may be able to catch yourself many times during the day when this normal, one of these normal patterns reasserts itself and of course, one of the most prevalent patterns is reducing the present moment to a means to an end. It could be a simple thing like you get up in the morning and you're getting ready to go to work. What, how, what is the quality of your doing during that time of getting ready to go out?

Or here, you got up this morning, getting ready to go to breakfast and then come here. Here, how do you experience that time? Are you able to be present in what you're doing or is the doing no more than a means to an end?

And that's a huge difference, whether you, this, will you fold your pajama after, and put it on your bed? Is that, do you give it attention? Is it a pleasant thing to do?

Do you acknowledge the being of this pajama and feel the texture and give it some loving attention and then you put it away? Or is it, what's the next thing? And the next and the next, because I need to get, I need to, if you're not, you may, if you don't, this habit is always there.

The present moment is a stepping stone that not much more than a stepping stone to the next moment, which is always a mental projection because it never comes. The next moment never comes. Does it?

No, I don't think it does, because when the next moment comes, it's the present moment. So the next moment doesn't come, it can never arrive. There's only this moment.

But if your habit is to treat this moment most of the time as a means of getting to the next moment, so not being fully in it, but mentally being somewhere else, and then I just need, so the basic attitude is, I just need to get this moment out of the way. Then I will get to a better one. And that is a very deep-seated pattern that prevents you from being present.

But it's only when I voice it like this that it becomes apparent to you, because otherwise you won't even see it because it's so normal to live in such a way that unconsciously, it's not, you don't tell yourself in your mind that I just need to get this moment out of the way because the next one will be better. That is an unspoken and unconscious assumption behind what you do. And it's not only, people also treat entire life periods in that way.

Then it's not only, of course, most fundamentally the present moment, but they also treat entire chunks of their life in that way. For example, you're waiting for the weekend. So it's only two more days of having to go to work.

And then there comes, or you're waiting for something else. Getting a better job. Finding the person who is going to make me happy.

And in the meantime, I'm just ticking over. It's just, I'm just waiting for, well, what's the expression? I'm waiting for the big break or whatever.

I'm waiting for the big thing to happen. And finally I can start living when that happens. Whatever form that takes, when that happens, then my life will really start.

And that's another way, another manifestation of the same dysfunction. Reducing an entire chunk of your life to a waiting room. And so for many people, they're almost their entire life with very brief episodes, often connected to falling below, thinking with brief episodes of little bit of relief.

They live in a waiting room and this somehow, I don't know if anybody remembers, it's probably not popular anymore. There used to be a genre in theater that was called the theater of the absurd. Samuel Beckett and other authors.

And often they showed, there was a famous play called Waiting for Godot. And there are two men waiting for this guy to arrive with a, nobody knows who Godot is, but they spent the entire play, it's a theater play, the entire play, they're waiting. Godot, who knows some critics say, well, Godot, God, Godot, they're waiting for God, but it's not set.

But the entire period is spent waiting. And I don't think Godot ever arrives. And they're similar.

And this is just to show the absurdity of ultimately everyday life. So you have to be really vigilant to see whether, either as concerning the present moment, reducing the present moment to a means to an end. And if you do that habitually, chances are that you also reduce huge chunks of your life to a means to an end or a waiting room.

And of course, sometimes life does get better. Of course, it doesn't, if you are now living in unpleasant surroundings, perhaps it's noisy or it's cold, too cold or too warm or cramped or whatever it is, you have might have a job that's repetitive. You're waiting to get out of that, feel lonely.

One relationship has come to an end. The other, another one hasn't started yet. I'm just waiting.

And so you're hoping that things will get better. And sometimes they do get better, but the habit pattern is deeply ingrained. And even if the situation gets better, then you'll be waiting for something else because no situation can ever completely satisfy you.

No person, no condition, no situation. Waiting for retirement. I can maybe take early retirement.

And then what? Play golf. Lie on the beach.

And many people are very disappointed when they retire and don't know what to do with themselves. And they lose their sense of identity that they, it was always a false sense of identity, because it is derived from their function, but at least they had a false sense of identity. And now they don't, I won't have any.

And then to happen, they can't, they don't know the possibilities of human life. So be vigilant. If you feel that an improvement is highly desirable in your life situation, that's okay, but it's much more likely to happen if you give more attention to the present moment rather than trying to get away from the present moment or denying it, always making it into a means to an end.

If you give more, your fullest attention to this moment, the so-called future is much more likely to improve the so-called future, because there is no future. When it comes, it's the present moment, a little strange paradox different.

[Speaker 6] (5:57:47 - 6:00:37)

I want to welcome you to the first ever Google Plus Hangout with Eckhart Tolle. He will spend the next hour answering questions on awakening and living with greater presence and purpose in modern life. Before we begin, we're going to take a short period of silence.

So I'm going to invite you to sit comfortably. You can either close your eyes or keep your eyes open and focus your attention on the breath as it comes in and out of your body, or simply focus your attention on the feeling of presence and aliveness. We'll take about one to two minutes now, and then we'll begin.

Welcome again to the first ever Google Plus Hangout with Eckhart Tolle. Eckhart Tolle is a spiritual teacher who is the author of numerous books, including The Power of Now and A New Earth. He's one of the great spiritual teachers of our time who is currently offering his teachings through Eckhart Tolle TV, an online community dedicated to putting into practice the teachings and exploring what it means to live and embody a new earth.

We are also joined today by people from around the world who will be asking questions and engaging with Eckhart, and we're very happy for you to join us. So I'm particularly happy, Eckhart, that you have taken the time to be here with us today for this unique experiment.

[Speaker 1] (6:00:38 - 6:00:41)

Nice to be here. Welcome, everybody.

[Speaker 6] (6:00:44 - 6:00:59)

Before we begin with questions, I'd like to introduce the group of speakers that we have from, again, all over the world. So we will begin with Angelica. Angelica, would you please introduce yourself?

[Speaker 9] (6:01:00 - 6:01:15)

Hi, my name is Angelica. I live here in Germany, in Freiburg. I come originally from the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean.

That's why the name Angelica is a Spanish name. Very nice to be here.

[Speaker 6] (6:01:15 - 6:01:16)

Thank you.

[Speaker 7] (6:01:23 - 6:02:18)

Dale? Hi, everybody. Welcome to this Hangout.

Isn't this fantastic that we can all be here together? Many thousands of you, I'm sure, watching. I'm in South Australia, as you can see from the flag behind, right across the other side of the world from Vancouver, where Eckhart is at the moment.

I first discovered Eckhart's teachings when I was riding a hand cycle because I'm in a wheelchair and I can't move my legs. I was riding a hand cycle all the way across Australia, from Melbourne to Darwin. And Eckhart's audio book, The Power of Now, popped up on my iPod somehow and I synced it to my computer.

So I started hearing this wonderful man speak and here I am today. That was about four years ago or so. So yeah, I'm very happy to be here and it's great to meet everyone.

[Speaker 6] (6:02:19 - 6:02:24)

Thank you, Dale. Jan, would you introduce yourself, please?

[Speaker 10] (6:02:25 - 6:04:12)

Yes, my name is Jan. I live in Phoenix, Arizona. Was born in Columbus, Ohio and moved here when I was two years old.

So I've lived in Phoenix most of my life. The way I was, the universe brought me Eckhart's work after going through quite a lengthy time of emotional difficulties. I went to the Health Institute in San Diego just for survival.

And while there, I went to their bookstore and picked up a book off the shelf called The Power of Now. And during one of my classes at the Health Institute, they asked, what is the most important book in your life? And I said, well, The Power of Now.

And I still say that. However, when I first picked it up and took it back to my room to read it, I had to lay it down and say, I have no idea what this man was talking about. However, what I did is I went and I bought the audios, brought them home with me, and I left them play in the background over and over and over until there was space in me to receive what I was hearing.

Then I experienced the changes in my being and discovered that there was another way to live. And I was so happy. So I'm still with Eckhart after six years.

His work and his contribution to this planet, I am so grateful for. And he doesn't know it, but he even assisted me in helping me care for my mother for six years who had Alzheimer's. To that, I'm all so grateful.

Thank you, Eckhart. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Pam.

[Speaker 8] (6:04:13 - 6:05:36)

Hi, my name is Pamela Peterson, and I'm one of the lucky people that, for some strange reason, Eckhart thought we had a good question. I've been a fan of Eckhart since about nine years ago when my mother, who passed away last year, introduced me to his book. She was a very metaphysical and spiritual person, and I've been involved in that.

That's interested me since my 20s. And so it was at a difficult time in my life, and Eckhart, thank you. You helped me get through that very, very well.

And I needed you again this year, and pulled out my old copy, and also found the CDs. And I agree with Jan, the tapes are great. The audio books are wonderful.

That really brought it home to me in a better way. And it was this January, when I was listening to the tapes, I decided to see if you had a website, because it's been a long time. And I found Eckhart Tolle TV, and it said, ask a question.

And I thought, wow, I've had this question about, to ask Eckhart, and so I did submit the question. Quickly, I live in Florida. I am from Chile originally, and I've been in the United States since 1979.

I knew Angelica was Spanish when she said Angelica. So that was cute. But I'm now living in Florida, and thank you for having us.

And thank you, I hope some of my family and friends are watching. So hello to everybody.

[Speaker 15] (6:05:37 - 6:05:38)

Wafa?

[Speaker 5] (6:05:39 - 6:06:43)

Hello everyone, hello Eckhart. My name is Wafa. I come originally from Jordan.

However, I moved 12 years ago to the United States. So right now I'm sitting here in Indiana. I began observing the mind and becoming conscious of thoughts several, many years ago.

A business mentor suggested that to me. In 2008, I became acquainted and I started to know about Eckhart through Oprah's web class, which I became, I'm very, very grateful for. That took me and took my practice of awareness to a total new level.

And I have to say, this is what happens when you begin observing and watching your thoughts and feeling your body. Eckhart comes and visits you at home or something as wonderful. So I am very grateful for everything.

I'm very grateful for this occasion. And I'm very happy that Eckhart continues to be open to accommodate new technologies such as Google Plus and Google Hangout. So thank you everyone for having me and I'm looking forward to our conversation today.

[Speaker 6] (6:06:46 - 6:07:24)

And my name is Soren Gordhammer and I host something called the Wisdom 2.0 Conference, which looks at how do we use, live wisely and purposefully in an increasingly digital age. And I think this is a good example, I hope Eckhart, of technology and wisdom coming together and using technology to serve awakening versus using technology to limit consciousness and increase the pain body. So I'm happy to be here as well.

I think we'll start out with Dale from Australia since I believe you're the furthest away. Your question for Eckhart, please.

[Speaker 7] (6:07:25 - 6:07:40)

Thanks Soren. Eckhart, my question is from presence, I have been helping my young son to recognize his thoughts. And do you think he can truly identify his egoic thoughts at this age?

He is four years old, Eckhart.

[Speaker 1] (6:07:42 - 6:07:54)

Okay, can you give an example of how you do that to help your son become aware of his thoughts? Can you give us a practical example of what that looks like in practice?

[Speaker 7] (6:07:55 - 6:09:59)

Certainly, at any time he may be playing, he may be grumpy, he may be really happy. So at various times, I ask him, what are you thinking at the moment? What's in your mind?

And he says, ah, there's not much in my mind at the moment, daddy. Sometimes he draws me a picture and I say to him, what was in your mind when you drew that picture? And he says, nothing.

He says, when he's grumpy, grizzly, frustrated, bored, and he's moaning, I say, what is in your mind now? And he says, ah, lots of things are in my mind. And so there seems to be some direct correlation that when he's content and peaceful, that there is some smaller amount of noise, and he can identify that at the moment.

And in fact, Eckhart, I've been able to see a direct correlation with when, particularly when he's unhappy and really frustrated, and he's angry at me, really angry, I will say, just watch, where is that coming from? Is it coming from here or is it coming from here? And I have a picture of a face with some eyes looking upwards to a space above the eyes, and I say, what's in here?

And he says, I'm not doing that, daddy. No, I don't care, I don't like you. You're not my friend.

But he goes away, or I leave him there at that place, and I retreat out of it carefully, and I just say, that's okay, that's okay. And then 30 seconds to one minute later, he comes back and he says, it's all gone now, daddy. So it's really quite, I see the difference in him, and I was just wondering what might be happening there.

[Speaker 1] (6:09:59 - 6:13:20)

What do you think? Well, that's wonderful that you're able to do that, and it's working, obviously. He doesn't, your child does not need to differentiate between egoic or non-egoic.

The main thing is that awareness is arising by asking him the question, by making him aware of what kind of thoughts are going through his mind, and he's already beginning to do it for himself. So this is a great example for everybody, because it happens so quickly these days that children get completely taken over by the mind. So you're doing wonderful work.

Don't, as you probably know, you don't need to bring in the word ego at all. What really matters is that awareness is arising, and awareness is a space of consciousness that is deeper than thought. Thought arises within the space of awareness.

Now, most people don't know that. They are not in touch with that dimension. It is as if that dimension didn't exist for them.

All they know is the thoughts that they are continuously identified with, and what you are doing, I hope soon will become one of the main things that children learn at an early age at school. It would be, I would say, the most important subject to learn at school before anything else. And of course, together with everything else, it's to learn what awareness is and to experience awareness in oneself.

So it's just, you're doing wonderful work here. Just one more question to you. The pain body, which is what I call the pain body, is an accumulation of emotion that builds up in humans.

And I would say humans already come into this world with a greater or lesser degree of pain body. So that is closely linked to the thought activity in the head. So does your son have pain body episodes?

Perhaps a little bit of that you mentioned when you said, I don't want to, I don't like you right now. And of course, at that moment, who is it that is speaking? It is the pain body, which is the emotional aspect of ego.

So I sometimes recommend that parents also find a way for children to observe that deeply negative emotion that can arise in them. Sometimes it could be a temper tantrum or whatever. And when it has subsided, you ask the child, what was that that came into you then?

What did it feel like? What would it look like? How would you draw an image of that so that an awareness arises there also?

So what is your experience with the pain body with your child?

[Speaker 7] (6:13:22 - 6:14:44)

Yes, when he hurts someone unintentionally, so when he makes a mistake and he might poke someone in the eye, or he might tread on the dog's tail and the dog might yelp, he takes that incredibly personally. He's a very caring little boy. And when he hurts someone like that, it's like he can't handle that.

It's like this embarrassment, like there is immense pain that comes immediately to the surface, and he can't deal with that. He then gets very angry at the whole environment that he's in. And I really feel for him compassionately.

And that brings me to immense presence. If I'm off with the pixies somewhere else, it makes me, hey, it's okay. And I just put my hand out and I say, it's okay, it's okay.

And he said, no, I don't want anything, anything. I said, it's fine. No one is hurt.

No one is angry. Just watch, just watch. It's okay.

And I calm it right down. And he goes through that pain. You can see him go through it.

You can see his energy change. And then he bursts out of it. You can see it within three seconds.

He comes out of it like he's surrendering, like that pain body has been identified and it disappears.

[Speaker 1] (6:14:45 - 6:15:16)

It just fizzles away. So yes, that's a good question. He does have that happen.

Yes, wonderful. So it's a great blessing for the child to have a conscious parent. I didn't have that benefit.

My parents did the best they could according to their level of consciousness and I'm grateful to them, but they were not conscious parents. And I think many people, especially my generation can say that, that they probably did not have conscious parents. It's a wonderful blessing.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Eckhart.

Thank you.

[Speaker 6] (6:15:20 - 6:15:24)

Pamela from Florida. Pamela Peterson, would you like to be next?

[Speaker 8] (6:15:25 - 6:16:57)

Sure. As I was saying earlier, I had my first encounter with Eckhart nine years ago and it helped me greatly. I was reading the book, The Power of Now, which I think was your first book that explained your experience that you had a very painful experience that brought you this awakening and enlightenment and an understanding of life the way I see it that is just incredible.

And so I had forgotten about it a little bit through the years and again picked it up this year when I felt I needed it again and got into it more deeply with the tapes and again went to the website. And as I was listening to the tapes and was thinking about you and about how you came to all this knowledge and real quickly, the book talks about the power of now in essence for anybody that hasn't read it, the power of now has to do with living in this moment right now, not in the past or in the present or in the future, in the present. So it occurred to me that what does Eckhart, if he felt the guru of living in the moment, what goes through Eckhart's mind every second of the day when the key is, the

secret of this enlightenment is to just really live in this minute and not think about the future of the past.

So what's going through your mind every second of the day? Are you, you're human also, are you able to control the mind chatter better than most of us or is it a battle for you every day too?

[Speaker 1] (6:16:58 - 6:22:03)

Well, it's not a battle anymore. I'm glad to say a lot of the time I walk around and do things and in the background, there's just a spacious presence and some thoughts of course arise, sometimes thoughts that are not particularly interesting. The thoughts no longer draw me in, thoughts that come like clouds, that you have a blue sky and then clouds come drifting past.

I'm mostly, I feel that I am the sky rather than the cloud. So people who are not yet disidentified from thought, they are every cloud that goes past that draws in their attention completely and then they follow it where it wants to take them and that leads to more clouds, so to speak. So I don't have that anymore, fortunately.

Sometimes, of course, you have to use your mind when certain practical matters need your attention and there's no problem with that. You apply the mind to a specific area and see what is it that needs to be done now. But it's amazing how much one can actually do without too much mental interference that you can start, I recommend that by the way as a spiritual practice, one of the main spiritual practices, one is the developing the ability to perceive things that are around you without unnecessary mental labeling.

Everybody can practice that and it's actually not that difficult. You just look around and feel rather than you as a person immediately interpreting things and having a mental commentary about what it is that you're perceiving, instead of that, you are simply a conscious presence and as conscious presence, you perceive the world without needing to interpret it and yet you are not totally ignorant in that state. There is actually a deeper intelligence that comes in and that then operates in your life and one aspect of that deeper intelligence is it appreciates deeply what it is perceiving and listening to and looking at.

So as the deeper intelligence comes in, with that comes a deep appreciation of the aliveness of life that is all around you, including other human beings. And so to know these things, there is a knowing there and this is how I experience it on a daily basis and how many people also are beginning to experience their daily life. There is a knowing there that is non-conceptual.

So when you look at another human being, you can know that human being without

having any concepts in your mind. There's a deep connectedness that comes with everything that you're perceiving when you're not continuously compulsively labeling it mentally, which is I call it the voice in the head that comments on all your life experiences, which of course is the conditioned mind. And very often for many people, the commentary is negative.

It's the conditioned mind dwells more in the negative than the positive because when something really positive arises, the mind subsides and you go, oh wow, isn't that beautiful or that's lovely or you feel love or you feel joy. And you observe when you feel joy, there isn't much thinking at that moment. So thinking is fine when you need it.

So I walk around a lot of the time in just being present with what is and accepting, this is part of it of course, accepting the present moment as it arises. It is always not really problematic. If a challenge comes, it's addressed.

So it's a very kind of childlike way of perceiving things with an added dimension to it, an added dimension of depth and knowing. A very lovely way of being. The first time that happened to me, of course, as I describe it in the introduction to the power of now, is that night when I disidentified from the mind and I woke up in the morning and I looked around.

That was the first time when I had a real experience of that. I looked around the room and I suddenly saw everything is so alive and beautiful. But there was very little thinking anymore.

And so there was a peace in the background. And that kind of has stayed with me since then, although the intensity of it can vary, but it's always there somehow. And it's lovely for most people, this is a gradual realization that one can live in that way.

May I just ask you, what is your experience of your mind on a daily basis?

[Speaker 8] (6:22:05 - 6:22:30)

I'm definitely not where you are, and I would love to be there someday. I always say that I would love to be Zen-like. I've been saying that for years, which means that things just come by and go and I just perceive them, but they don't affect me, and that would be wonderful.

But I'm still stuck a little bit in the mind chatter, but I'm more aware of it today. I'm more at peace because I don't give it as much importance.

[Speaker 1] (6:22:31 - 6:24:22)

Yes, thought loses the ability to draw you in totally, so it no longer has that gravitational pull or the seductive power that it usually has, and there's a little bit of spaciousness that

arises. And this is really the most important thing. So I'm glad, with a little help by the way, to anchor you in that state of presence, as I point out in The Power of Now and other places, to anchor you in the state of presence.

It is helpful to feel the aliveness inside your body as you are going around and perceiving things and even doing things. And even as we sit here right now, everybody can experience it for themselves as we sit here right now. We can be aware of what's going on there.

You can see me or whoever is there on the screen. You can hear the words. You're peripherally aware of the room that you're sitting in.

And at the same time, you can actually feel the aliveness that pervades your entire body, that your hands are alive inside, your legs, your feet. The entire body feels alive. So some of your attention moves from thinking into the sensing of that global field of aliveness inside you, which you cannot see, but you can sense it.

That is the life that which animates the body and that can serve as an anchor. And so from there, you can then perceive things without unwanted, unnecessary interference of old conditioned thinking. So it's always a great help to inhabit the body that keeps you present.

[Speaker 8] (6:24:22 - 6:24:40)

I will just say quickly that it really is a moment to moment awareness and knowing what you have to do. It's homework. And eventually, hopefully it becomes more of a natural thing like it is for you, but it's something that it's an everyday, every moment we have to be focusing on living quietly in this moment.

[Speaker 1] (6:24:40 - 6:25:21)

That's right. Yes, it becomes a practice. Once you've had your first glimpses, then you're able to, by choice, invite that presence into your life.

And by choice, you can then take attention when you don't need to think particularly, and especially when you notice thinking is becoming negative or dysfunctional, in other words, creating unhappiness inside you, when the moment you notice that, your choice can be to take attention into the present moment by becoming aware of your inner energy field, and then becoming aware of sense perceptions around you. And immediately you've stepped out of the old conditioned thinking.

[Speaker 8] (6:25:22 - 6:25:22)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (6:25:23 - 6:25:24)

Thank you, Eckhart.

[Speaker 6] (6:25:25 - 6:25:33)

Jan, I think this might be a good time for your question. Jan from Arizona, would you like to ask that now?

[Speaker 10] (6:25:34 - 6:25:55)

Okay. Yes, I'm Jan in Phoenix. And my question for you today, Eckhart, would be this.

I'm separated from my husband, and I live alone, and I can't stop myself from crying at times. What can I do to stay in the present moment and avoid these feelings?

[Speaker 1] (6:25:56 - 6:26:00)

How long have you been separated from your husband?

[Speaker 10] (6:26:00 - 6:26:01)

38 years.

[Speaker 1] (6:26:02 - 6:26:03)

Sorry, how many?

[Speaker 10] (6:26:03 - 6:26:03)

38.

[Speaker 1] (6:26:05 - 6:27:24)

Okay. Now, once a feeling is there, then instead of attempting to avoid it, it's better to simply allow it to be there so that you'll become the space for whatever feeling happens to be there. But it's important to observe whether there is a link between those emotions that arise in you and certain thought processes in your head.

And it's only you can be the observer of your mind. Perhaps, in some cases, people don't even know that many emotions that they experience are actually caused by certain thoughts in their head. Let me ask you, do you know whether certain thoughts tend to bring up those emotions and the weeping that you periodically experience?

What kind of thoughts tend to be associated with that in your mind? Okay, a little bit.

[Speaker 6] (6:27:24 - 6:27:26)

Jan, did you hear the question?

[Speaker 1] (6:27:26 - 6:30:15)

I think Jan is frozen at the moment. But let me just, until she comes back, let me just talk a little bit about that because it's something that applies to many, many people. What tends to happen is that certain thoughts come into your head that tell you a story about yourself.

And, for example, the thoughts that you are lonely now, that you are alone, that you have, I have nobody. Let's just, let me be the thoughts for a moment. I have nobody in my life.

These people are all happy with their partners. No, I'm alone. He has left me or I left him, and now I probably won't find anybody anymore.

And why do I have to be so alone? And you begin to feel self-pity, and you begin to feel really lonely because you are creating a story in your head about yourself and that story is what makes you unhappy. And there's nothing wrong really with being alone as long as you don't have a story around it because being alone can also be a great opportunity for becoming present in the moment.

So that's the difference of being lonely and experiencing solitude. Lonely is a state that nobody would want to experience. That means lonely means I am lonely, usually means I'm alone and I don't like it because I have a story in my head around it that tells me that that's a negative thing.

So a self, this is of course egoic thinking, a self, an image is created in one's mind. That's me. And this me image is reinforced by continuous further thinking.

And in many cases, that me image in the mind, which is the egoic self image, in many cases, it's an unhappy one. It's an unhappy story. And that was my case, my identity.

I lived with an unhappy sense of self for many years that made me anxious and depressed, a deeply unhappy self, but I was so identified with those thoughts that made up that unhappy sense of self. I didn't know that there was a deeper dimension in you that had far deeper than any thoughts going through my head until that night. So is Dan back now?

Can you hear me?

[Speaker 15] (6:30:15 - 6:30:15)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (6:30:16 - 6:30:40)

Okay, you disappeared for a moment. And I wanted to ask you, are there certain

thoughts in your head that tend to occur as these emotions arise in you, the sadness and so on? Do you know whether there are certain thoughts that tend to be associated with those feelings and emotions?

[Speaker 10] (6:30:41 - 6:30:43)

Yes, and they're extremely subtle.

[Speaker 1] (6:30:44 - 6:33:12)

Yes, yes. And I'm very aware to... So you recognize they're very subtle.

This means you need to be very alert to catch those thoughts and identify them as not the truth, but a story about your life and about who you are and about what has happened to you. So those thoughts tend to, you construct a little story about me, the lonely one, self-pity perhaps arises as part of that. And if you're not very alert, then the thoughts take you over.

In other words, you believe in every thought that arises, you become the thought, this is called self-identification with thinking, and then you become an unhappy me, an unhappy self, and the emotions then come. And so if you catch those thoughts, and as you say, they're very subtle, as they arise, you say, oh, there goes another one of those thoughts. And then you realize it is not a helpful thought and it's not even the truth.

The truth is simply that you are here, there's nobody else around, and there's no problem with that. Actually, it's a wonderful opportunity. As I said earlier, you might not have heard it.

It's a wonderful opportunity for being just totally present in the moment. You're not, aren't you lucky, you're not being distracted by some husband who wants this or that, and has his demands. So life has given you an opportunity to be free of that, and use that opportunity to inhabit more deeply, not only the inner body, but the present moment, so that you experience the aliveness of life that happens around you every moment, instead of identifying with some old thoughts in your head and becoming a story in your head.

So it's a, use the opportunity of being alone for your presence practice. There are millions of people who wish they were alone. And of course, when they are alone, they wish they were with somebody else.

So half of the people are unhappy in their relationship, and the others are unhappy because they're not in a relationship.

[Speaker 6] (6:33:13 - 6:33:23)

So I think we might've lost her, but we'll see if she comes back. But Eckhart, this is a

little bit different than trying to re-fame a good story around the experience. Would you say that?

[Speaker 1] (6:33:24 - 6:34:24)

Yes, that's a good point. There's nothing wrong with improving a story and saying my life is actually quite good compared to other people. Look at those people, they're far worse off than I am.

That's another story that kind of makes it feel, feels a little bit better. But I would say that's fine as a transitional step if you want to do that. But I'm here pointing to the possibility of actually going beyond any story so that you don't exchange a happy story for a good one.

Are you able to just step out of any story and just be the conscious presence in your life, the conscious presence that is your life, be there as a conscious presence, then some thoughts may still arise out of that, but they tend to be happy thoughts. But it's not that your happiness is not caused by the happy thoughts. The happy thoughts are caused as they come out of the state of presence.

Yeah, yeah.

[Speaker 6] (6:34:25 - 6:34:34)

And so even if the external world is reinforcing a certain story, good or bad, you don't necessarily have to have your being identified with that.

[Speaker 1] (6:34:35 - 6:34:38)

That's right, yes, yes, yes, absolutely, yeah.

[Speaker 6] (6:34:39 - 6:34:55)

So we'll see if she's able to come back, but I think we should probably move on to Wafa Lababina, and she can probably pronounce her name better than I can, who is in Indiana. Welcome, Wafa.

[Speaker 5] (6:34:56 - 6:38:24)

Thank you, welcome again, sir, and thank you. And I forgot to mention, thank you for your work, for bridging technology with consciousness and reminding us that we can put it at the service of consciousness versus only at the service of ego, as we might have seen in the past. So thanks, I greatly appreciate your work.

I already checked it out, and it's fabulous. And my last name is Lababne. You said it right the first time.

Eckhart, as I mentioned, I began deliberately to become aware of my thoughts many, many years ago at the suggestion of a business mentor who said, who would just say, just become aware of your thoughts, watch your thoughts, and that's what's it. There was nothing more. So for many years, I became aware of my thoughts, the process, I'm pretty sure you are well aware of the process, that was fascinating, scary at the beginning, confusing at times, but as I began to become aware, many realizations occurred, realizations.

Naturally, I started writing, because I'm a writer since I was a child, I always write, and I document, and I have a scientific nature, so I tend to write everything. Years later, I decided to write a book about conscious consciousness, because, and I like to call it that and not say presence, just to make sure that I am precise, I am aware of my awareness, which are moments that don't come yet so often in my life, but they come at least once or twice a day, which is a great achievement. As I began to write the book and collect my thoughts or the observations through the years, friends, family members, at some point an author and a person, a CEO of a publishing house, suggested that I write my story.

They all had the same thought patterns, the same rationalization or logic behind it, which is so that people can relate, so it can reach a wider audience, and it gives us credibility. I'm relatively young, and people always kind of like, well, what am I gonna learn from a young person? I had great resistance for that initially.

I see their logic, I agree with it, I understand it, but every once in a while, and I started to write, put memories and start to do the work to integrate the realizations with the life story, but every once in a while, a thought would come and say, but do you really have to tell the story? Eckhart didn't tell his life story. So my question to you is twofold.

Number one, do I really have to tell the story so that people can relate? And number two, if I do, how can I tell the story without energizing the ego and triggering the pain body? The story is filled, since age two, the story was filled with trauma, violence, many things.

Of course, there were always doses of love, as I call them, and joy, and glimpses of joy here and there kept me alive. However, the numerous stories of trauma are there. So if you're going to tell the story, you have to say what happened.

So how can I tell the story? If you think it's necessary so people can relate, how can I say it without energizing the ego and most importantly, triggering the pain body? Some people may have trauma, and I want to contextualize it in a way that it doesn't just provoke the pain body and then good luck.

[Speaker 1] (6:38:25 - 6:42:29)

Yes. Thank you. Yes, thank you.

I do believe that it is helpful to connect with the reader. It is helpful to actually tell the

story. I often, of course, I get many books and manuscripts sent to me, far more than I can read and sometimes even look at.

But I do often, when I do look at manuscripts, often people write things like, I had dreadful child experiences and so on. Some of the substance is not there. The reader wants to know, what is it actually that happened to you?

And it's only when you talk about your own suffering, then you begin to connect with the reader because the reader has his own suffering also. And so you then resonate. The important thing, of course, is there are two different ways in which one can tell a story.

One, you can tell a story in an unconscious way where you put blame and you accuse and blame those people who perpetrated those things, who perpetrated the abuse. You can tell it in an unconscious way where you create an identity for those people out of their unconsciousness, what they did unconsciously. Or you can tell a story in a conscious way where there's already an awareness underlying the telling of the story, which means you still tell exactly what happened, but you are also present as you write.

You are also present already as the aware consciousness that wasn't there when those things happened to you, but is there now. So you can bring in two dimensions as you write. There's the dimension of the present where you're telling the story, which includes your own presence, your state of consciousness, the awareness that you are now.

And from that level, you can tell the story and then the story becomes infused with awareness. And then it does not trigger the pain body in the reader. And it would also probably be a more pleasant way of writing.

So I would then recommend that you do tell your story, but be careful that you have the two dimensions, not just totally from the dimension of who you were then, just absolute suffering. Suffering is there and the reader needs to know that and to some extent experience it with you because the power of a book is that the reader can identify with the narrator. And that identification can be powerful.

And if the narrator has also awareness as he or she tells the story, then the reader can identify also with the level of awareness and not just with those negative things that happened, the suffering that happened. And so as you are a writer, so I'm sure you know how to do that. So my main advice then to just briefly summarize is as you write, write from awareness and bring in awareness as you write.

So you have the two levels existing at the same time. And then I think what you write will be very helpful to others. So does that make sense?

[Speaker 5] (6:42:30 - 6:43:26)

It makes sense, but can I just reiterate to make sure that I understand it correctly. The

previous idea I had in my mind was to chronologically mention everything as it happened so that people can relate. However, it gets to a point where I became aware of awareness and aware consciously and all that.

However, that's where I thought it was weak or it could be danger and triggering. However, what your suggestion as I understood it is that as I'm writing all that, it's kind of like I write the life story, but I also add that it's like two tracks, two sound tracks at the same time. When that happened, this is what had happened.

However, I'm right now here and I can see how simultaneously bring the presence that I am right now along with the story. That will protect the reader from only just going through the drama and the ride.

[Speaker 1] (6:43:27 - 6:44:21)

That's right. It's a little bit like when you're in certain movies, there is a background commentary. Sometimes it's a voice.

Sometimes it's a character that appears in the movie at a later stage where one of the protagonists in the movie is there not only as the protagonist, but also as a background voice that comments on the action from a much later perspective. So in a similar way, you can write that book that gives it, when that happens in a movie, it gives it a certain depth. And the same thing, again, happens as you use it in your writing.

There will be a depth to it when you have the two levels, you now, which is the awareness, and you then the suffering entity coming together.

[Speaker 5] (6:44:21 - 6:44:41)

Yes. So it's basically what the ego does. However, the ego is always the soundtrack that's negatively commenting and narrating.

So right now here, instead of ego, we learn from ego and we consciously, I consciously narrate the presence that I have right now. That's wonderful.

[Speaker 1] (6:44:41 - 6:45:11)

And also, of course, if you had not gone, I may suggest, I know it from my own life and from many other people's lives, if you had not gone through those so-called negative experiences, the suffering, you would not be at the level of awareness that you are now. So there comes even a gratitude comes in, even as concerns one's suffering.

[Speaker 5] (6:45:12 - 6:45:51)

Yes. I am immensely grateful that it came. People look at me when I talk to people.

I'm relatively young and I talk to people who are always like sometimes double my age. And I feel very grateful. It's like, you know, I had to take this course, but it came to me compact.

And I'm so happy. I'm done with it. I continue to grow and learn and become more aware and deepen my awareness.

But however, I am very grateful. Hey, I'd rather have it early on when I was much younger and many tools that are powerful. And I'm here right now to integrate it with consciousness.

I am truly, truly grateful for everything.

[Speaker 1] (6:45:51 - 6:45:58)

Thank you. One last question. What does the writing behind you say, the writing of yourself there?

[Speaker 5] (6:45:59 - 6:46:01)

Well, I was going to ask you if you could read that.

[Speaker 15] (6:46:01 - 6:46:02)

No.

[Speaker 5] (6:46:02 - 6:46:34)

That's actually, it says it's a prayer. It says it's as you wake up, you say, we awaken and everything belongs to God and much gratitude to the one that is to the one and to him we return. So it's a very weak translation right on the spot.

I should have thought of that. But it's a prayer that I put there. My friend, actually, my sister wrote, actually, and I put there.

[Speaker 1] (6:46:34 - 6:46:35)

Oh, thank you.

[Speaker 5] (6:46:35 - 6:46:39)

Oh, thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Eckhart.

I greatly appreciate your help.

[Speaker 1] (6:46:39 - 6:46:39)

Thank you.

[Speaker 6] (6:46:40 - 6:46:49)

So, Eckhart, we have Angelica Mischendahl from Germany who also has a question now. Angelica?

[Speaker 9] (6:46:52 - 6:46:54)

Hi, very nice to be here.

[Speaker 1] (6:46:55 - 6:46:56)

Thank you.

[Speaker 9] (6:46:57 - 6:47:59)

My question is a very simple question and I'll tell you how I came to it. I was writing an email one day and, you know, to the dear ones I always write with love. I send you my love or I give you my love.

And I asked myself, you know, I write this, I give you my love. What is that? What happens when I give somebody love?

What happens there? What is that? What does that mean?

How does that feel inside? So this question led me to look a little bit deeper into it. And I saw, I realized that I actually don't give anything when I give love to somebody or when I say it even when I feel it.

I'm just there. And so the question that I have is, what is then the difference between love and presence?

[Speaker 1] (6:48:01 - 6:58:21)

Good. Well, that's a good question. Now, love, of course, can mean many things.

There is the love as the ego sees it and there is the true love which is a transcendent state. Now, I have, I believe in one of, I occasionally post things on Facebook. Well, somebody does it for me, but I write it.

And I had a quote a few months ago. I don't know, can't remember who it is by. It said, in romantic love you want the other person and in true love you want what's good for the other person.

So the pseudo love is always wanting something. And if the wanting is not met or no longer works, then it can very quickly turn into its opposite. So true love is very different from that grasping, clinging or wanting that we normally associate with love.

That's the egoic state. Oh, there is a word that is, let's explore some alternative pointers to that, to what we call love. There is a word in the English language called benevolence.

Now, benevolence is, of course, a Latin-based word. Bene is good. Volence is willing.

Of course, the English language also has a Germanic-based word, which is goodwill. So there is goodwill towards all beings or all creatures. Now, when you say you don't give anything, there is a kind of, when you look at something in that space or state of goodwill or benevolence, which really you can only do when you are present, when you are not perceiving through the filter of your conditioned thinking and the filter of the emotions and the filter of the ego itself that consists of conditioned thinking.

So when you relate to another human being, not through that filter of the ego, which says, I want you, I need you, you can somehow enhance my sense of self, you can compliment me, I can't live without you, and whatever the ego says, there is another way of relating to a human being. And when you relate no longer through the filter of the egoic mind, then you relate through presence. And when you relate through presence, there is, although you say it's not a giving, I do perceive it, however, almost as an outflow of energy that is not your energy, but it's energy that moves through you, and it flows to whatever it is you're perceiving in that state of presence.

And there is a benevolence that comes with that. So there's a deep peace that underlies that perception. And in that deep peace and in that benevolence with which you perceive other human beings or another life form, anything, even an inanimate object, sometimes you can pick it up and appreciate it in its beingness or its beauty or the simple fact that it's there.

So all these words that I'm using, appreciation, an outflow, an outflow of attention that doesn't want anything, a benevolence or a goodwill towards that which you are perceiving, with that the separation that is the sense of separation that is created by the conceptualizing egoic mind is no longer there. And then you can have love towards another human being that you meet for half a minute because you're buying something from him or her, and you are looking at him or her in that state of spacious presence. And out of that state of spacious presence flows this energy.

And often you find it coming back at you also because it can sometimes awaken that same oneness consciousness, as we could call it, in the other, or at least the other no longer feels threatened by you because consciously or unconsciously they realize that they are not being judged in any way whatsoever. They are being completely accepted as they are in the present moment. And in that complete acceptance, which is inseparable from presence, in that complete acceptance, in that spacious presence, there is an energy movement.

And that is what I would call love. And the world is waiting, one could almost say, the

world is waiting to be loved in that way by you. I would say that even the flower loves to be recognized in its beauty by you because it cannot recognize its own beauty.

It is beautiful. There's ultimately no separation. Every physicist will agree there's ultimately no separation between you and the flower.

There's just, we perceive this absolute separation. When you perceive a flower in that state of presence, the flower begins to recognize itself. And so that happens when there is this appreciation of things around you.

Another word that is associated with that is gratitude. They really all go together. You then perceive things in a state of gratitude.

Of honoring everything, every human being, not just using things for some end in the next moment. That's the mind projected to the next moment, and it uses every human being and everything in order to get to the next moment, what I want to achieve through this human being. It starts with a simple thing like buying, you're buying a newspaper in a shop.

Now, it's the only way in which you interact with this other person that you're buying the newspaper from. Is that person just a function of receiving the money and giving you the newspaper? Or is there another dimension to the interaction where for a few seconds while you're there, you acknowledge the beingness of that other person?

And that is, of course, you have to be present with him or her. You just, you look at him, for a moment there's no thinking. It's just a spacious presence.

Out of that spacious presence comes goodwill, comes benevolence, comes an appreciation, and comes a deep sensing that ultimately you and this so-called other person are not truly absolutely separate. There comes a sensing, a realization that the essence that you share with the other is consciousness. No matter what form the consciousness takes on the surface, it's a little bit like ripples or waves on the surface of the ocean.

Every ripple looks a little bit different. You are a ripple and the other person is a ripple. It looks different.

But what is the actual nature of the ripple? What is the true nature of rippleness? The true nature of rippleness is the ocean.

Each ripple is an expression, a beautiful temporary expression of the vastness of the ocean of being. And so you no longer take the appearance of the person for who that person is, because there can be no love there. You look through that and you sense there is an essence there that is inseparable from presence.

So presence then and love are very, they go together. You cannot have one ultimately without the other. There is, there are other forms of so-called love that the love of a mother has for a child.

That is fine. That's a natural kind of love that has its place, but is not yet transcendent love, but can, there can be transcendent love also there at the same time. But many people, because you mentioned in your question sending love to your, to relatives and so on, with relatives and family members, you have, you have, you can have two levels.

You can have the emotional bond, which is called love. And in addition, you can have the transcendent dimension, which is the true love. So you don't have to be confined to the emotional bond.

There needs to be something to really deepen it. There needs to be the transcendent dimension also. And that would be the case even with those with whom you don't have no emotional bond.

So for true love to exist, the emotional bond may be there or it may not be there. In many cases, you won't have an emotional bond. And yet there is this outflow of benevolent and gratitude and appreciation.

So that's really how it is.

[Speaker 9] (6:58:22 - 6:58:41)

Um, uh, you know, the question, so you, you, there is a, you, there is, when I, when I looked at this, when I looked at this question, um, and I removed all the emotions are associated with love.

[Speaker 15] (6:58:41 - 6:58:42)

Yes.

[Speaker 9] (6:58:42 - 6:59:00)

So why we, we, yeah. Um, then it felt for me, presence has a neutrality. Yeah.

It has like a neutrality. It's very, you know, it's just there, but there is no, there is no flavor to it. You can, if you, you know, yeah.

[Speaker 15] (6:59:00 - 6:59:00)

Yes.

[Speaker 9] (6:59:01 - 6:59:46)

And, uh, and when I took out of love, all this emotional charge, if there's a way to call it

that way, then I couldn't see, it was, I couldn't see any difference almost. That's why I asked you. And, and the way you talk about a flower, the flower is also present.

It's just there. Yeah. It's just there, but there's no, yeah, there is no, there are no flavors to it.

I mean, it's beautiful when one looks at it, but you talked about this outflow. So is it, is there, is this just being there? And then out of this, then a flow, this out, feeling this outflow or this current?

[Speaker 1] (6:59:48 - 7:01:04)

Yes. Yes. Just right now, you can, I can look at you, you can look at me without necessarily thinking anything, and, and you can feel a sense of connect, not just connectedness, but something deeper, a oneness where there's, you don't need concepts in that.

There's a, there's an underlying piece of beingness, of presence. And in that, concepts are not needed. And you don't even need to understand more about it, because one thing that can, the mind can be a help or a hindrance.

The mind never stops asking the next question, what's this really like? So I'm just inviting you right now, instead of asking to elucidate further, why not simply be here in this beautiful moment and appreciate whatever arises in consciousness at this moment, and be there as the underlying presence for it, and appreciate it in that way deeply. And that is love.

[Speaker 6] (7:01:08 - 7:01:59)

So our hour is up. And I want to take a moment first to thank all of the viewers who tuned into this from all over the world. I know there are thousands and thousands of you.

Thank you for taking the time. I also want to thank the members of the Eckhart Tolle community who came here today to ask questions. We really appreciate your efforts.

And to thank you, Eckhart, as well, for having the interest and courage to try out this new form of technology and dialogue. We greatly appreciate you taking the time. And this concludes our first ever Google Plus Hangout with Eckhart Tolle.

And thank you again for attending. And please go out and remember the practice of presence and awakening.

[Speaker 1] (7:01:59 - 7:02:01)

Thank you, everybody. Thank you.

[Speaker 5] (7:02:01 - 7:02:04)

Thank you, Eckhart. Thank you, Søren. Thank you, everybody.

[Speaker 1] (7:02:04 - 7:44:18)

Welcome to the present moment. So to start with, let's just become aware of the present moment. And that can have two or three steps.

You can go deeper into the present moment, or you can just begin to be aware of it. Step one is always, well, you could say remembering that the present moment is life itself, and it's all you ever have. And if you forget that, you live in a kind of hypnotic trance, which is how most people live, entranced by their thoughts and emotions, and a sense of self derived from the conditioned thinking and the emotional conditioning.

That's normal existence. And so you're not present. Your attention is absorbed by the conditioning, mental, emotional conditioning, and the egoic self, which arises when you mistake the conditioning for who you are.

So it often starts with remembering, oh, the present moment. And then first your attention goes to sense perceptions. That's usually when you realize you had been lost in the mind, and suddenly your attention comes into the present moment, and first it means an awareness of sense perception.

And suddenly you look around as if you had just arrived in that place, because you have, if you've been absorbed in the usual problem making, anticipating, remembering, regretting, that kind of mind activity. When you then first become aware of your surroundings, it's like as if you were arriving here after a prolonged absence. It could be your familiar room, but you never really looked at it anymore, just peripherally.

And suddenly you become aware of each thing, the table, the chair, the plants, the walls, without having to name them. I'm naming them because I'm directing your attention to them. You become aware of whatever is there, and there's the silent presence of each thing.

That's already an enormous shift in consciousness. It's already the beginning of a shift in consciousness. Become aware of the silent presence of things.

And the whole problem making activity of the mind subsides, and you realize that at this moment, there is no problem. You don't have a problem at this moment. But if you do, then you go and deal with it.

But usually you don't, unless the mind manufactures it. So it's quite a wonderful thing to become aware of. Let's say you're in your room, in a room, become aware of the presence of each thing and briefly acknowledge it.

It's presence without any mental activity. You just become comfortable with those things. And there's almost a kind of appreciation of everything.

And then you take in the totality of the place where you are. You might not be in a room, you might be outside. It doesn't matter if you're outside, then your attention goes out to whatever is there.

Whether they are man-made objects or natural objects, doesn't really matter. Of course, natural things are more conducive to taking you into that presence because there's no thought associated with a tree or flower. Or the grass or the sky or the clouds.

But even looking at a car or a house or traffic flowing, you just acknowledge the is-ness of all things that you are perceiving around you. And that is comforting. And it already frees you to some extent from the heavy burden of being a person, a personality, a me.

There's a heaviness to that. If that's all you know about you, then it's heavy. You carry around the baggage of me and my problems.

And already just allowing your attention to dwell on each thing that surrounds you. Already, to some extent, frees you from the heaviness of the conditioned person. And then you become aware also not just of each thing.

You become aware also of the totality of that place where you happen to be. If it's a room, you become aware of the totality of the room without focusing specifically on one thing. Just take in the wholeness of it.

And if you're outside, the same. Become aware of the totality of your surroundings as a single whole. So there's two ways of being aware.

You can place attention on individual things and as much as you can without needing to label it, just attention, just taking it in, just noticing it. Appreciation sometimes comes with it naturally. Oh.

So this is the first step in becoming present. That's already, for some people, that's all, they might not go any deeper and that already is a liberation. When they remember, they can go to that place where there's the non-problematic present moment.

Then you also become aware of sounds, of course. It becomes part of your experience of the present moment. It's not only what you see, it's also what you hear.

So there may be sounds, little sounds, big sounds. And again, you become aware and in the same way that you give attention to a table or a chair or a tree, you give your attention to the sounds that arise. And most sounds come and go.

They suddenly come up out of nothingness and then they disappear. Whatever it may be, a child screaming or shouting or dog barking or human voice or car passing by or

motorbike or bird or gust of wind or raindrops, whatever. Most sounds come and go, so they arise and they subside.

And again, there's an attention there. And again, natural sounds, yes, they can take you more easily into presence than man-made sounds because man-made sounds can more easily stimulate thought. But that's fine.

So there's visual, there's... So you're becoming free of the heavy me and something arises that is just an aware presence. And that aware presence is aware of these things around you that you perceive with your senses.

And the next thing is you become aware of the fact that you're breathing, very calming in itself. So if you're sitting in a room like here and now, you become aware of the things in the room, the totality of the room, any sounds that may be there and the fact that you're breathing. It's a kind of peace descends because the problem-making entity has temporarily gone away and something else has taken its place, we could say.

So that possibility is always there when life becomes heavy or you feel there's a heaviness to life, a burden, or it's, I'm close to a nervous breakdown, I don't know what to do anymore, I just can't cope anymore. Okay, so then look around where you are. Oh, where's the nervous breakdown now?

You're breathing, you're listening, you're seeing everything. So it's liberating, you can see how liberating the present moment is and how it's the entry point into something else. And as I said, for some people, that's already enough, developing the ability to step out of, especially out of excessive and unnecessary problem-making mind activity and becoming comfortable with, appreciative of whatever is here now.

And then you realize why some artists choose as their subject matter, not the extraordinary things of life, but some artists choose very ordinary things and paint them, an ordinary chair, an ordinary table, an ordinary landscape. Or just a normal, just ordinary tree, because the artist looked at that and gave it his or her fullest attention. And then he saw or she saw that there is something in the most ordinary thing, even the most ordinary table or chair or landscape, there's something there that you cannot name or define.

One could almost say there is more there than meets the eye. And the artist realized that, and that's why he then, or she, picked up a brush and painted this thing that, he wants to show on the canvas his or her perception of it, that added dimension that you cannot define or name. There's something to it that's more than meets the eye, even the most simple thing.

And then if the artist is successful, some are, some are not, some become successful after they're dead, but at some point, the painting may be in a gallery, and then the

people come and look at the painting of that old chair. Oh, look at that, so powerful. But they would never look at an old chair in real life, in the old chair itself, they don't look at it, but they look at the painting of the old chair.

Yeah. But the real purpose of art, or if not purpose, how art can be, contemplation of art can be helpful and beneficial, is it shows you what is possible, a perception that is possible, a deeper perception of things. So if you look at an ordinary landscape in a painting and you realize there is a depth there, then perhaps next time you find yourself in an ordinary landscape, you look at it with new eyes, not labeling it, but giving it your fullest attention.

And that's the present moment, of course, it's an aspect of the present moment. And that's really what your life consists of, there is nothing else but all the things that arise around you as you go through life. And the miraculous nature of it, and the mysterious nature of it.

If you miss all that, you miss the entire thing. You might as well not have come here. But, the aliveness of it all, and then to go a little deeper if you want, you're not only aware of all those things that you perceive with your senses, you become aware also of an aliveness in your body that's not really a sense perception anymore, because you don't see it, you don't hear it, you don't smell it, taste it, touch it.

You become aware of it in some other way. The simple fact that the body is alive. Your main goal is in your relationships, in your work situation, in your home situation, your main goal is being present wherever you are and whatever you do.

Then your life becomes empowered, and you will do a lot of good without necessarily feeling that I am doing it. It flows through you. And those of you who are still looking for something to do, the question often people ask me, what am I meant to do?

Where am I meant to be? Who am I meant to be with? And of course, the first answer is the foundation for it all, to find out where you're meant to be, what you're meant to do, who you're meant to be with.

The first answer is you're meant to be here, you're meant to be doing what you're doing right now, and you're meant to be with whoever you are with right now at this moment. That's foundation. I'm not talking about for the rest of your life, but right now, so you come to a full acceptance of whatever is in the present moment.

Now, most people who are trying to figure out what they're supposed to do in their lives, they don't give their fullest attention and they're not fully aligned with the present moment, where they are, who they are with. They are rejecting it in some way. And that obstructs the power and obstructs the arising of presence.

So you become accepting and comfortable with where you are right now. So you're

meant to be here right now. That's why you're here.

I'm meant to be here. And in the movie of your life, also there must be things that go wrong and they do all the time. Otherwise it's not interesting.

And then there is another dimension that is accessible in human consciousness. There's a potential of realizing the vertical dimension as opposed to the horizontal dimension and the vertical dimension is realized. You enter it as you become present.

And as you become present, the stream of thinking subsides, is replaced with a space of awareness. Awareness arises. And then when I ask you, who or what are you without reference to any thought?

What does it feel like to be you without reference to a narrative in your mind that you call my life? So for example, in this moment, you don't need to remember anything about your life. But when you don't remember anything about your life, are you still there?

And what does that mean? I am still there without reference to a narrative. What is that I am that's still there that doesn't seem to have any content anymore?

Without the narrative, there's an I am without content. This is why it's so hard to describe it or to talk about it. What is left is a presence.

It's all you can say about it. It's an absence of thought, but there's a presence there. Can't define it.

And there, you have no age. It doesn't matter whether you're 20 years old or 100. There's a presence.

A beingness. Being. One could say, you know that you exist.

Well, exist is the wrong word. You know that you are in that realization in the vertical dimension. You know that you are, but that's all you know and all you need to know.

Nothing needs to be or should be added to it. The beingness itself. In ancient Greece, the Temple of Apollo at Delphi had inscriptions.

One inscription on the enormous wisdom arising in ancient Greece. One of the inscriptions was, it goes back to Socrates or Pythagoras, know yourself. Know thyself inscribed.

And then on another side of the temple, there was a strange inscription. You are. And people didn't know later on when they looked at it, hundreds of years later, thousands of years later.

What does that mean? Maybe there's something missing. Let's look more closely.

You are. Maybe it got eroded by time. There must be something else.

But they couldn't find anything else. And a few people later realized the deeper meaning of it. And they actually go together with know thyself and you are go together.

Know thyself does not refer to the personality. It does not refer to knowing the story of you in great detail. Exploring perhaps hidden things that you hadn't known about yourself.

There's a place for that too, but it's not meant by the ancient know thyself. It's not the self that you get to know through going through psychoanalysis for 10 years. Because there's always new layers of memories.

Oh, I hadn't realized that. That's so interesting. My life is becoming so complex.

Interesting. The longer I have psychoanalysis, the more interesting it gets. That has its place.

It's fine. It's interesting. It's like a movie.

That's an interesting movie. And people like to see movies that are not only interesting, but interesting must mean there must be things that go wrong in the movie. Otherwise, it's not interesting.

And in the movie of your life, also there must be things that go wrong and they do all the time. Otherwise, it's not interesting. So know thyself doesn't refer to all the details of your life, hidden motivations, all those things, repressed desires.

Know thyself doesn't refer to that. That's a different knowing and a different self. A different knowing and a different self.

The knowing, the verb to know here, is not used with reference to conceptual knowing, analytical knowing, knowing through thought structures, thoughts, words, concepts. There is a deeper knowing that is non-conceptual. And there is a deeper self than the conceptual entity that is the egoic entity.

The self that the Buddha described as an illusion, that is the conceptual entity. There is a deeper self that in Buddhism is described as the no-self, and in Hindu teachings is described as the transcendent self. The Atman.

So the inscription on the Temple of Delphi refers to that. First of all, the knowing is not the conceptual knowing. There is another way of knowing, and there is another self other than the self that you are familiar with, that you call your life, me and my life.

So that's important to know. And the key is given in these two words, you are, that is the key to knowing yourself. And you are is the realization of being, which is the transcendent self.

I am trying to understand why a person would attract others who ultimately betray them. Assuming that we create our relationships consciously or unconsciously, why is there the experience of betrayal? Assuming also that I know and love myself profoundly, what is to be learned from being betrayed?

The question sounds a little abstract, but the questioner is not here. I assume that the questioner feels betrayed. By someone.

And since the questioner is a woman, perhaps she feels betrayed by a man. Perhaps, maybe it's by a woman. Now, of course, betray already is a word that is quite heavy.

He betrayed me. She betrayed me. There's already a huge amount of heaviness and story in that.

If you put it slightly differently, it loses some of its heaviness and putting it slightly differently could sound like this. He is a human being and he manifested behavior that corresponded to his level of consciousness at that particular time when he did it. Perhaps at other times when I met him, he seemed to be at a better, higher level of consciousness, but then he fell back to a more unconscious state and then his behavior manifested that.

Where's the betrayal? It suddenly disappeared. So that makes it easier on you to deal with it than to impose a huge narrative or judgment on another person and involve you in this dreadful act of which you become a part, the act of betrayal.

Yes, of course you suffered. We all suffer. We all encounter humans who make us suffer because many humans, most of them are unconscious and they're not always at the same level.

That's an interesting fact that humans can be at enormously varying levels of consciousness according to the situation they find themselves in. There are some humans who have a potential for committing a crime but circumstances never put them in a position where that potential becomes actualized and then it can happen that other humans encounter a situation that is very challenging and brings out all the worst accumulations within them that come up to the surface and suddenly they turn into these monsters. And before you might have known a completely different person, a completely different level of consciousness.

So humans get challenged or encounter situations that bring out certain aspects of their unconsciousness between in sexual encounters, because it's not unlikely that the betrayal has something to do with the man going off with another woman, not unlikely.

Now that is an area that that kind of attraction that can make people very quickly, very unconscious. There are expressions for that, but I won't say.

So yes, that's the unfortunate thing with human beings. They're not fully enlightened. And then of course you say, I trusted him.

He promised me when we got married that he would be faithful and I trusted him. And I'm sure when he promised it, he meant it. I don't think when he promised to be faithful, he meant I'm not really going to do that.

When he promised to be faithful, he meant it. But then a few years passed and then one day he had a few drinks and then he looked at that woman there and he was gone. Completely unconscious.

And again, in Jesus' words, forgive them for they know not what they do. Now to forgive them is only something that you do for yourself because you free yourself of the burden of having to live with a narrative or a story of betrayal and be part of that. And then part of your sense of identity, this is very painful, but seductive, part of your ego identity then is, I am the one who has been betrayed.

And that's a dreadful burden to carry in your sense of self. So if you believe in that story that your mind has created, the act of betrayal, he betrayed me. So you're setting up for yourself an enormous amount of suffering because that story will become part of your sense of self.

And if that's the case, then even it will influence and color the way from now on in which you relate to other men or women or whatever it is, can easily color that. So you have to be very careful and see what you're doing to yourself by creating these stories. On the conventional level, they are true.

You can say, he betrayed me. That's conventional way of using language, but it's not the real truth. You might have heard of Byron Katie, the spiritual teacher.

She always questions whatever thoughts the mind produces and that's a wonderful thing because otherwise you might feel tempted to believe in every thought that comes into your head. He betrayed me. And of course, Byron Katie would ask, do you know that for sure?

How do you know that? Yeah, of course I know for sure. And then eventually, if it works, the person is meant to disidentify from the thought that the mind has created and become free of being trapped by this thought, which really means consciousness is trapped by this thought that the mind has created and you are trapped in it.

So be careful with the stories that your mind creates. And sometimes if you rephrase, as I just did for you, rephrase the story, it suddenly does not cling to you anymore and it no

longer becomes part of your painful identity or sense of self because you want to be free of that. So, and of course then you, unfortunately you have to forgive him.

Sorry, you have to, that is part of it when you realize, yeah, he was unconscious. Forgiveness comes and that's fine. It doesn't mean you want to start all over again or maybe you will, but probably not.

Because unless a shift has happened in him, the same kind of thing might happen to him again next time he has a drink and sees a woman. So careful with, very careful with stories that the mind creates and then become part of your sense of self.

[Speaker 3] (7:45:25 - 7:55:35)

But there were several questions, a number of them, which I like to kind of lump together and address. And that had to do with pain in the body, that being related to the pain body. And different parts of the body, some people had shoulder problems, some people had it in their face, in their hips, and various other places in their body.

And, as I mentioned, every thought, every emotion, if not processed fully, leaves an imprint in the body. So if there have been any trauma in your life, or any just emotions that come up and that you haven't processed, it leaves an imprint in the body. And usually those imprints of emotions have a story.

And each time you tell the story, either it's out loud or in your head, okay, we know that one, where it goes around, it actually, the energy, because it's every thought and every emotion is energy, the story goes around. And if you believe that story, you believe, I mean, the event may have happened to you, yes. But if you actually sort of feed on that, and then you allow the story to play around in your head, and you tell somebody else, you know what happened to me, or you have this victim role where you just feed on that event, the emotion.

And that's what the pain body does. The first time I realized what Eckhart meant, because Eckhart would sometimes say, you know, we will feed the pain body, or, you know, you connect with somebody else with a pain body, and you feed off of each other. And I didn't really quite understand that.

I kind of understood that intellectually. But there was one day where I was meditating, and I was watching my pain body arise, so there's some old emotion there. Yes, I have a pain body, and it will activate itself.

And I was watching it, because it was something very old. And something very old sometimes takes a long time to process. I mean, if it's been very traumatic, it will take a while in time to process.

And then I had the story come up, the memory of the story. And I was able to witness

that. And I saw that as soon as the story came up in my mind, it was like this energy ball that came down and fed right into my gut, where I was holding my pain body, where I could feel the pain.

I was actually feeling the sensation of pain in my body. So, and I went, ah, that's what Eckhart means by feeding the pain body. So if the story goes around in your head, keeps going around, and you play it out, it actually then makes this pain body bigger.

So I went, okay, all right, now I understand. And then you're able then, that awareness is there that you can drop, you make that decision, and you don't follow the thought. But you stay connected to where you are feeling it internally, because that energy now is blocked in your body and it's something very old.

And it has to be felt. You didn't feel it back then, so don't think you're going to get away with not feeling it now, as it becomes active. So, and it's not, you don't have to create it into a problem.

It is not a problem. The mind thinks it's a problem, but it is not a problem. There is enough awareness in you where you are now able to free the pain body.

Hallelujah. So when you feel it, hallelujah, really, truly, because your awareness is there and all you just have to do is just feel it. And sometimes it is so intense, and the reaction, the habit, is to be able to run away from it, because we don't want to deal with it, we don't want to feel it.

We go, oh no, no, no, not this, not this. Or when will this stop? As soon as you have those thoughts, you're not in acceptance mode.

You're in resistance mode. So the only way out is through. Yes, yeah, the only way out is through.

And will that pain last forever? No. It feels like it will, but it won't.

It won't. So we just feel that and allow that, your awareness, shining the light of consciousness on the energy itself within the body, and then it will dissolve or transmute, transform, it'll change. Maybe it'll start to dissipate and the energy then can run freely.

And then your energy body opens up and the life force that is naturally and just always here, flowing within, can then flow. And there's a release. Sometimes it's a big release, sometimes it's a quiet release, but there's just a release.

Now, it doesn't mean that it won't come up again, because it may come up again. Don't go into your head and think that, okay, well, I forget to feel this once and I want it gone. Usually it doesn't work that way.

Life will bring something about to activate that dormant state of pain body so that we can release it and become free human beings. There was one here where somebody had hip replacements, two hip replacements, and with something like that, or changing something that's in the body, inviting a foreign object in the body, it takes time for the body then to be able to coexist with something that is foreign. And it will coexist.

And there might even be a grieving process because it's a loss of something. It's like losing a limb. So there's the experience, the body experience this, oh, jeez, what's going on here?

Something's different is happening. And there could be experience of a loss and a loss also on the emotional level. So pain can actually be our teacher and our alarm clock.

Because when our body's in pain, it's saying, hey, pay attention, pay attention here. Wake up, wake up. Don't go away.

Feel this. Release this. So I invite you to bring that awareness, the acceptance into your practice when the pain body arises.

And then when you think the pain body is completely gone, as Ram Dass says, go home and to your parents for a week. Ultimate test. And not just like, you know, there for a moment and pop out.

Stay with them for a week. But life will show you because we are evolving here and that evolution calls for the release of all things old. So that we can stand new and fresh with this beautiful vessel that we have been given so that life can bring forth a more conscious way of relating and living in this world.

[Speaker 1] (7:56:07 - 8:05:46)

We'll have some questions, but before, just read two or three questions that people have been sending in questions to people who are watching us, who are with us, but elsewhere in time, in space and eventually in time too, except that it's always a present moment. So time ultimately is an illusion, but on a conventional level, we talk about time. So I forgot to say hello to everybody who is not physically present here, but present somewhere else on the planet.

This question has been asked in the past a few times and tends to come up very often. So it is a question that quite a few people have. If we live with a person who is unconscious a lot of the time, is it possible to have a harmonious relationship whether the person totally awakens or not?

That seems to be a recurring problem for many people. Now, if you have brought your unconscious partner here, that means, and he or she actually came along, that means not all is lost. If he or she is still here.

So it depends in what way the unconsciousness of the person that you live with manifests. There are many ways in which it can manifest from being in negative states to misinterpreting what you say or do, anger, and then it goes up on the scale of verbal abuse. And then it goes higher up on the scale of unconsciousness to physical abuse.

So if the unconsciousness is not too high up on that level of intensity, it may be possible to live with a person who may not share, only not share your interest in spiritual evolution, but have no idea what you are practicing or reading or talking about. If you try to point something out, that person may just be uninterested. And then if you go up on the scale of unconsciousness, then another person may be hostile towards what you're doing.

And there's a big difference. But in both cases, there's unconsciousness. Your partner may just have no idea what it is, but say, well, yeah, go listen to that guy again.

I don't know why you go there, but that's okay. I'll be fine. That's fine.

So that should be, you can live with that person. And then another one gets angry. He says, why do you always have to see me?

I can't stand it anymore. Or whatever, criticize. So you might be able to live with that.

What you can live with, only you can know whether you can continue your presence practice and bring surrender into the situation with this person. And miracles are possible. Miracles do happen.

And sometimes the seemingly most unconscious person can suddenly shift. Now, if that person is very unconscious, usually what is required is some blow, not you physically doing it. I'm speaking metaphorically.

Life administers some blow in the form of big loss, accident, illness, and then deeply unconscious people very much trapped in their ego can sometimes suddenly open up. The ego gets cracked. You may sometimes observe that when a person with a big ego is unconscious, it happens not to everybody.

When they become ill, they're lying in bed and they're ill. Sometimes the ego gets even stronger, it seems. But for some people, the ego, there isn't enough energy left to keep the ego going.

Because the illness, it absorbs so much energy, so there's not enough energy. And suddenly, this person who was never a genuine person, that you couldn't talk to heart to heart because there was always egoic posturing and egoic role-playing there. And suddenly, this person is ill, lying in bed, and there just isn't enough energy for posturing and role-playing.

And then for the first time, I've observed it a few times, people have told me and I've personally observed, for the first time, you can communicate with that person in a deeper level of presence. This can also happen when people who had a huge ego all throughout their lives, when they're approaching death. Sometimes miracles of transformation can happen in the last moments, in the last days, or in the last weeks of a person's life.

When resentments that had been building up over a lifetime and other narratives of an extremely negative nature are let go of, can happen. It can also happen when a person is ill, that when this person recovers, that shift that you observed doesn't last. And the moment strength returns to that person, the old egoic patterns are back.

And it's like, oh my God, you're your old self again. You were so nice when you were ill, loving and present and open. Well, just wait.

Things will happen again. So if there's abuse, and these are more pronounced manifestations of unconsciousness, if there's verbal abuse, can you live with such a person? Only you can know whether you're prepared to do that, whether you can sustain your presence practice, perhaps not physical abuse.

If you stay with physical abuse in the hope that this person will become transformed, that is probably a delusion. But I cannot tell you what to do. But if you are alert and vigilant and observe yourself in the presence of that person, you will know what to do.

You just have to see that the right course of action is not being sabotaged by certain patterns that remain in your mind, mental, emotional patterns, such as fear of being alone, fear, loss of security, perhaps the acuity of being with another person, even if it's fear of the unknown, stepping into the unknown. So you may be held back by certain patterns in your mind. And if you are present enough, you can recognize that and then go beyond it.

[Speaker 11] (8:06:10 - 8:06:34)

Hello. My question raises the issue of trauma. People having survived earthquakes, crimes, car accidents.

What would you recommend for their practice? I'm a crime survivor and sometimes dealing with heavy pain, body attacks or difficult emotions during meditations. I have a question Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (8:06:34 - 9:30:35)

Thank you. Do you want to sit again? Because we never know how long the quest, the answer is going to be.

It could be a minute, could be 30 minutes. It may well be that for humans who have suffered trauma, catastrophic events, anything of that kind, deep suffering. It may well be that, not necessarily, but it may be that during this lifetime, they will not become entirely free of the remnants or the energy left behind by the trauma.

But the important thing is the realization that there is in you a dimension that is beyond anything that could ever suffer. And you have to get in touch with that in you that has always been and will always be and always is the transcendent, the formless dimension within you, the formless essence of who you are. And of course, this is our entire reason for being here is to go deep enough within where you encounter that presence or that spaciousness.

Within that presence or spaciousness, it can still happen that the old pain from time to time arises, or it could happen that the presence gradually consumes, burns up the accumulated pain from the past, the pain body. Either way is fine, even if the presence does not completely burn up the accumulated pain or suffering and which therefore then occasionally resurfaces. At least you know your essential being to be the spaciousness.

So from the difference from not having access to the transcendent dimension within yourself and having access is when you don't have access to it, you're completely in the grip of the pain. It occupies you completely. You become it.

It may also use your mind to renew itself because then you remember what happened. And then by using those thoughts, you feed the old pain through the memory of what happened. And so you are trapped in it.

It has a grip on you. Now, when you have access to the transcendent dimension, you realize that you, the pain is there, but you are there. So here's the pain and you are the space.

And the more you practice, the more you realize you are the space around it. Another useful practice is to, when you feel it, to accept what you feel at any given moment, the present moment, accept when it arises, but know that it is the old pain and the acceptance itself creates the space. And so you, more and more, who you are is not lodged in, identified with the pain, but who you are.

So what I'm saying is the sense of self begins to move out of the pain or the pain may still be there. The sense of self shifts from being identified with the pain and the suffering me to being the space behind or around it. And it's a very subtle thing.

You have to practice. The important thing is practice being the space when you are not, at times when you are not in the grip of the pain, because then you need to see if you can be the space in ordinary circumstances and surroundings. And especially here, of course, a great opportunity for dis-identifying from all the mental, emotional content that

still lives in you some fine, some painful, some extremely painful, but to dis-identify from it so that it no longer has a sense of self in it, including all thoughts.

Thoughts still arise, but without the me in them, emotions still come, painful emotions come, but they become divested of the sense of self. And that's a big difference between feeling that you are, you are the pain. It has taken possession of you completely, and it can easily define your sense of who you are, especially in the case of deep trauma.

The pain can easily define your sense of identity. So I have encountered people, I'm sure it's not the case with you, but I have had sometimes questioners and people who have asked about their deep suffering, and they were so identified with their old pain, when I suggested a way of going beyond it, they got angry because they felt that their sense of self had been threatened. And then in a few cases, when I pointed that out to them, they realized.

In one or two cases, they didn't want to realize. But when I pointed out, can you feel that you are angry now? Because I just made a suggestion that it may be possible to not perhaps to eliminate the pain at once, but to transcend it.

And then, so the egoic sense of self, because here too, whatever you identify with becomes part of ego. And it can happen that people identify with some pain or something they suffered in the past. In fact, it's almost a normal process.

And it needs to be pointed out. You need to realize that is not who you are. And compared to who you are, one could say it's like a bad dream compared to who you really are.

You are beyond that and have always been beyond that. You have to access that in you which cannot be touched by that. And it doesn't mean you cut yourself off.

No, the difference is make sure your sense of identity is not in the old pain. That is very important because if it is, you will always fight any attempt to get rid of it. It's an unconscious attempt of the ego to survive.

Very normal egoic motivation. It wants to survive. So the same thing can happen with deeply held viewpoints or opinions.

If you have certain, whatever it is, political, religious, or whatever thing you might have seen on the internet which suddenly has taken possession of your mind and become a kind of mental virus in your head that has taken over 75% of your thought processes. And then your identity is in it and you don't want to let go or the ego doesn't want to let go. So presence, access the presence when the pain is not obvious at those times so that when it comes, you can continue to be there as the accepting witness or presence behind and around it.

So when it comes, you accept it. It forces you to go beyond identification with form. And a point will come where you are thankful for anything, even though it seemed, at the time seemed terrible, for anything that forced you to disidentify from the egoic sense of self.

That's why retrospectively often people become thankful for their suffering, but then you have to realize you can't just go through the motions. It has to be a true thing and that may happen to you also. That's the the important thing is that the old pain is no longer able to use your thought processes and control your thinking so that you can feel when it comes, it comes in waves.

Occasionally it comes up so that you can be there as the presence and accept it without it moving into your mind and make you think the memories of what happened and so on, all kinds of thoughts associated with the energy of the pain. That keeps it in place and renews it all the time. And then you get into a vicious circle.

So, and for this, this is why it's helpful to be here as you sit here, even if you don't do anything, presence power grows in you so it comes more and more and then that begins to surround, so to speak, that begins to surround the accumulated pain. It may dissolve it, don't know, but even if it doesn't, basically, if you're no longer self-identified with it, you are free already. So it's a, and in, the strange thing is, and you may not realize it until later, so I'm not trying to convince you that what I say is true, that it is often humans who go through intense pain of that kind, and sometimes already children have to go through it, that happens.

It's often those that are, that becomes their opening into the transcendent dimension because the pain is too much and then the crack opens in the ego. The opposite can also happen, that the pain solidifies the ego and then the human being becomes totally enclosed in their painful identity and it goes like, or it could, potentially, it can always be the opening, the crack in the shell of the ego. So there may be quite a few of you, I don't know what the percentage is, who have suffered traumatic events and all of you have had certain forms of pain in your life as a child, as an adult.

My childhood was, there was not one traumatic event, but the whole thing was traumatic. So it wasn't concentrated in one event, it was dispersed, not as intense as one traumatic event would be, but dispersed over a period of whatever, 15 years of my life and especially the first 12 years when my parents divorced at the age when I was 10 and then for two or three years after that, it was still very unpleasant every day. Nobody's fault, every human being acts according to their level of consciousness.

What do you think about Facebook? Is it a healthy format? It seems a bit egoic, not a whole lot of transmission of connection, love, et cetera.

Posting pictures of yourself and quantifying friends, likes, et cetera, seems like

enhancing the ego. Are we going down the wrong path with social media? Well, the questioner has a point.

As even before the advent of Facebook and similar things for hundreds of years, or thousands of years, people constructed for themselves an identity in their head. That's me, me and my story as I sometimes call it. And that was partly inherited from what your culture tells you you are or your family and your culture and partly by choice, certain things you choose to identify with and then incorporate into your sense of self, certain possessions, certain achievements, or the lack of certain possessions and achievements can all be cooperated.

They become mind forms or thought forms, which you identify with. So there's a mental image that forms and that's the essence of ego, a mental image that's me. So that's been going on for a long time.

And then people live through that mental image of me. They seek out things or people that can improve the mental image of me and try to keep away things or people that could weaken or threaten the mental image of me. It all means not being in touch with who you are beyond any mental image, which is why we are here to go deep into that.

And now we got the technology of Facebook where you can externalize the image and you can create on the Facebook page, you can create the image of me and show it to the whole world. And so many young people and maybe not so young, I believe the oldest Facebook user, I saw a video clip in the States, the world's oldest Facebook user is 105 years old. And it is often used unconsciously in enhancing the image one has of oneself and the image one wants to show to the world.

And then you read other people's images on their Facebook page and you think that's who they are. And then you try to compete with that image and you try to polish up your image and compete with them. Most people want to show off, it seems, I'm not that familiar with it, but most people want to show the good things.

I'm having this great meal, here's a picture of it. Why would anybody want to see what you're eating right now? But they do, it seems.

Or I just bought this thing, do you want to see it? And then you can connect people to a place where you bought it, it's another thing. And all kinds of things that I don't understand.

So you can, in many cases, it becomes an artificial construct that you add to every day and everybody else has their artificial construct. And it can actually strengthen the delusion of the false self. It doesn't have to, but often it does.

Facebook can also be used in conveying interesting information and to connect with people at a deeper level or bringing about some spiritual knowledge. So that's not

impossible. I used to post occasionally things, I don't do it myself, but I would send it to Steve and he would post it.

But I haven't, I must admit, I haven't done it in a while. Although some things do get posted, quotes and so on, that's fine. Twitter is another one that is...

There's a Twitter message coming in. The last time I tweeted was when a few months ago, in February, the Oprah channel in the States, I don't know if you can get it here, it's called the OWN channel, Oprah Winfrey Network. They showed a repeat of our webinar that we did a few years ago that I did with Oprah.

They did a slightly shortened, edited version over a period of 10 weeks, 10 Sundays, the new us was shown again on this time, not on the internet, but well, also on the internet, but on TV. And Oprah sometimes is an active tweeter. And she said, it would be great if we could tweet at the same time while this program is being shown.

And so I said, okay, I'll see what I can do. And so I was on the phone with Steve while the program was running, and then I was watching it, and then people sent in these questions and they have to be answered immediately. So I was attempting to dictate answers to Steve and his assistant to put in the answers.

And my mind was quite... Well, I felt almost dizzy afterwards because I tried to watch the program and at the same time, watch the incoming tweets and think of an answer. But Oprah must have realized it wasn't from me because she said, Twitter is the exact opposite of how you operate.

And before Oprah said it, Kim said exactly the same thing to me. And that's true. So I was glad when it was over, but while it was happening, I was surrendered to it, although I did feel dizzy afterwards.

So if you can avoid constructing some pseudo identity for yourself on Facebook and be more real, then you can avoid that trap of just the Facebook amplifying the human ego, which it does in many, many cases, especially for youngsters who have no idea what they're doing. We're all ultimately invisible and what you see of another person is relatively insignificant and not destined to survive. Every human being is consciousness manifesting as a temporary form, taking form as what we perceive as a human being.

So the human being itself is a manifestation of consciousness and ultimately no other than consciousness. The death experience, when you die, what happens? There's a question here that might as well answer at the same time about death.

I laughed a little when I saw it. Why is it that we need to awaken? We all die anyway.

That seems to make sense. Is it that you are still awakened after death in the next lifetimes in eternity? Now, if you have experienced, I don't know if you have, been with

somebody, if you sat with somebody who died, who is dying, I don't know if you have experienced it, then you will have experienced if you're able to surrender to that moment.

It's a very sacred thing, a very sacred moment. And there's the moment when the transition happens between this body being inhabited by this field of consciousness and then suddenly the body is just a body. And there's a huge difference.

And you immediately see this body was never that being. It just looked like that being. So that being, as I said earlier, we're all ultimately invisible.

And what you see of another person is relatively insignificant and not destined to survive. So my intuition is, I'll verify it, I'll come back to you after I've died and let you know whether it's correct. The person does not survive.

The personal sense of self does not survive. But that which is deeper than the person in you as let's call it a spark of consciousness, that form, first you are the physical form, deeper than the physical form, you are the consciousness that inhabits the form. And that consciousness is inseparable from the one consciousness.

There is no separate consciousness. Consciousness does not have a plural. There are no consciousnesses.

Consciousness is a singular. There's only one consciousness that manifests as we could call it a ray of consciousness. You are this ray of consciousness.

As a ray of consciousness, consciousness is not subject to birth and death. So it is timeless. This ray of consciousness that you appear as this particular person does not necessarily immediately dissolve into total anonymity.

It remains in most cases as a particular ray, but it's not the person anymore. What happens then, it returns briefly to the source in the same way that a bee returns, goes to the beehive and deposits what it has collected. And every human is the one consciousness experiencing and learning and evolving in some way.

Even the most insignificant life form is the one consciousness evolving and learning. And what it has learned, not the details, but the essence, it contributes something to the whole. That is an intuition that came to me some time ago.

And I believe it, there's some truth in it, but we can only speak of it in terms of analogies. So your growth in consciousness becomes part of the one consciousness. The one consciousness, which is the consciousness of God, we're talking about things that you can't talk about, I'll do it anyway.

The transcendent of God is totally beyond time and does not evolve because evolution

would mean time. It would mean... So the transcendent does not exist in our time, it is in a transcendent dimension.

So you can't even conceive of it or talk of it. And that is God. Then God, the emanation of God shines into our dimension and creates our dimension.

And then God is an evolving being when God enters this dimension. And there's no doubt that there is an evolutionary process of consciousness happening in our universe. The ultimate, I cannot explain the ultimate purpose of it all.

I don't know it. And even if I knew it, I have occasionally an intuitive insight, but it cannot be put into words. How anybody could explain the universe by choosing the vocal chords is beyond me because after all, we only have a few sounds.

And as I often say, putting a few sounds together and attempting to explain the universe is a futile attempt. After all, there are only five vowel sounds. And a few consonants or whatever they're called.

So you put together the vowels, A-I-E-O-U, A-I-E-O-U, plus put them together in a certain combination. And there you have the secret of the universe. It doesn't work.

You cannot actually, and you cannot speak about what happens after death without already having to talk about the ultimate purpose of it all, because we are part of the ultimate purpose of it all. But the ultimate purpose of it all, you can never, you can only have little glimpses of it. You can never fully comprehend it with your limited mind or talk about it.

So who you are in your essence survives, does not, ultimately there is no death. And when you die as an ego in this lifetime, which is called die before you die, then you already know that as a living experience that you in your essence are beyond death. And that's a beautiful thing.

When the ego goes, then you die before you die. And you can sense the essence that you are. So I'm never going to die and you are not either.

But of course, the body dissolves. The body will dissolve. What is your level of consciousness throughout your life?

And as you die, that is an important factor in what happens after that. There are people who tell me that I don't want to reincarnate again. I don't want to come back.

It's so hard. Please don't let me come back. And then there are others who say, I hope I'm going to come back because I don't want to disappear into nothingness.

I really hope I'm going to come back. Reincarnation, is reincarnation a fact? Yes, but I would like to bring reincarnation into something that you can actually experience at

firsthand here and now.

The deeper meaning of reincarnation, as I see it, is you identify with form. Then you reincarnate. Reincarnate comes from flesh.

Flesh means form. Carnate, chili con carne, it's flesh. And it's, so you reincarnate, which means you identify with form.

Then you reincarnate into a form. So the Buddhists striving towards the end of reincarnation so that you no longer are compelled. The consciousness that you are is no longer compelled to reincarnate into another form and have to go through another lifetime of problems and suffering.

So the Buddhists are striving, they want to come to the end of this cycle of reincarnation, where perhaps you're conscious enough to choose whether you want to reincarnate or not. You can say, no, I've had enough, thank you. Now, when people tell me that I don't want to, they say, I don't want to reincarnate again.

I often point out, doesn't, what, how do you respond? You react to the, when the things of this world, how serious is it when things go wrong in this world? How are you, how, it shows you your attachment to form.

Is the moment you, something problematic happens, do you immediately get upset about your, that your investments have lost 50% of their value? Does it upset you a lot? Yeah.

So you're saying you're not attached to form and you are not going to reincarnate anymore, but you're attached to many forms in this world. So you do want to reincarnate. Reincarnation is identification with form.

How do I go beyond reincarnation? You can, you have to do that here and now. And that means that is what we are doing here.

Do not identify with thought forms in your head. That is the most basic reincarnation that happens continually to human beings is the complete identification with every thought form that comes into their heads. And then they become it.

That's how it is. Let me tell you. You can see how completely identified they are with thought.

So the consciousness is completely drawn into the form. The consciousness that they are, the consciousness that you are, is completely drawn into form. It does not know itself as consciousness.

It only knows itself as form. And that is the compulsion to reincarnate, which most humans who are not awakened, or at least awakening, still have. And you can

extrapolate from there that when you have this compulsion throughout your lifetime, the compulsion to reincarnate will continue after this body dissolves.

But if you have gone beyond the compulsion to reincarnate in this lifetime, which means identify with every thought and every emotion that comes up, when you have recognized the essence of who you are beyond form, that realization does not leave you. When you die, there is a freedom that comes. But a freedom you have already found in this lifetime because you have died to this identification with form.

And for many, the beginning of spiritual awakening is to realize that there is this stream of continuous commentary in their minds. And that is the thing, oh, that's interesting. That's a thought, of course.

But before the thought, that's interesting, there's the recognition. It's the voice in the head. And the recognition is not the voice in the head, although you might say it after the recognition.

But in the moment of recognizing there's a voice in the head, that's not a thought. The recognition of thought is not a thought. The recognition of thought comes through awareness or presence.

And awareness or presence is the higher consciousness, the arising new consciousness. Wow. So that is really the meaning of spiritual awakening.

By the way, in this first half of our gathering, I will be talking more about it. In the second half, we will do more experiential. But even while I talk about it here, I would hope that if it works for you, there's already also an experiential realization of what it is I'm talking about.

So there's the voice, there's the voice in the head. And people say things like, I think, they don't think, because thinking is not a voluntary action for them. So it's a delusion to even say, I think.

You don't think, you are being thought by thought. You are created by thought. That energy field is amazing.

So the master said, how can I teach you Zen unless you first empty your cup? Now that's a huge demand. If I'm full of clutter, mental clutter, how am I going to empty my cup?

I would immediately be enlightened if I could empty my cup. But the teaching points to something. It points to this, the word empty.

And that's interesting. That is an important word in Buddhism. And I don't think it's a good translation.

Who first came up with it? I don't know. With the 19th century, the Europeans started to

translate ancient texts from Sanskrit.

And one person came up with a translation, but probably of the Sanskrit terms sunyata and translated it as emptiness. That doesn't sound so nice. It sounds like something missing or something like that.

So I have an alternative translation for the Buddhist term emptiness. So that empty is an important word. So remember the Zen master said, how can I teach you Zen unless you first empty your cup?

Empty. Emptiness, my alternative translation for that is spaciousness. Spaciousness is a dimension of consciousness in you.

And that is what we could call the spiritual dimension of consciousness, the deeper or the higher consciousness, just words, doesn't matter. And that is in every human, it's there. Many don't know that it's there because the clutter is so dense that they have no realization of the underlying spaciousness.

And that is why I say in millions of humans, that is still a dormant faculty, so to speak. So the most important realization in your life, much more important than what you have achieved on the level of the world, whether your life in worldly terms is regarded as a huge success or additional failure, or for most of you, probably something in between. That's normal.

Sometimes you fail, sometimes you succeed. You move from gaining, losing, high, low, up and down. That's the identity for most.

So the clutter of your mind is there, but there are moments in your life when you become aware of something spacious underneath it. But you may not call it like, call it that. You may not call it anything.

It may arise, for example, in, and oh, in many humans who may never have heard of anything spiritual, they're still, they're out there. They don't know that the little bit of that is in them. So, but they don't know it.

There's little glances come occasionally into their lives of that dimension. It's not enough to actually say that the spiritual dimension has awakened in them, but little flashes come up now and then into their lives. And that is enough.

Those little flashes from that dimension come into their lives, and that is enough to keep many people sane. And those flashes can come when they, you might think when you go out into nature and you see something extraordinarily beautiful, like a sunset, for a moment you go, ah. Or the vastness of the ocean or the sky or the elements, the wind, the storm.

And for a moment you go, ah. And it's a moment of intense aliveness, and you feel, ah. And then you may remember that moment a little later.

That was such a beautiful moment. Why was it? Yes, maybe what you perceived was beautiful, but you felt something in that moment.

You felt a heightened sense of aliveness and a deep peace and connectedness with being, so to speak. Why? Because that moment of sense perception of something vast or beautiful freed you for a moment from the incessant stream of thinking.

So the incessant stream of thinking, let's say you see this vast, this incredible sunset or whatever, and for a moment you give it your complete attention. And for a moment, you're not thinking about yourself, your problems, your problematic life history, or your even more problematic future. Actually, you're not thinking about anything.

For a moment, the stream of thinking subsides and it goes, ah. And that is, without knowing it, you have a little flash that's come up from that dimension. And then the next moment, it may come up a few days later again, when you look into the eyes of a baby, one year old, maybe just in the street or in a cafe, and the baby looks at you, and the baby is one year old, and the eyes are like the baby's.

And you know instinctively that the baby is not thinking about you, because thinking hasn't started yet. The words have not accumulated yet, the thoughts haven't started yet, and yet there's a consciousness there. And you can see very clearly, there's an intense consciousness looking through those eyes at you without judging you in any way.

And in that moment, for just a few seconds, you feel so good. And you say, ah. Ah.

Why do you feel so good? Because at that moment, the baby liberated you from your stream of thinking. And again, a little bit of spaciousness opened up inside you.

And so for those few seconds, when you looked into the eyes of the baby, you were not thinking, and the baby wasn't thinking. So through the baby, you are able to be in that dimension, and it felt so good. Spontaneously, they can arise.

They're not recognized by people as ultimately spiritual, but they are. And so many people, there are millions of people who experience those things briefly, but that's enough to give you a sense still of life is worth living. And then there are others who are so burdened by their minds, they cannot even communicate with a baby.

They cannot even perceive the beauty of nature anymore, because their mind is so noisy that they never, there's a total veil. So they don't look at the baby like, they look at the baby, oh, that's a nice baby. They don't really see the baby.

Immediately, it's labeled. And for many, the beginning of spiritual awakening is to realize that there is this stream of continuous commentary in their minds. And that is the thing, oh, that's interesting.

That's a thought, of course. But before the thought, that's interesting. There's the recognition.

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You may not call it anything. It may arise, for example, in many humans who may never have heard of anything spiritual. They're still, they're out there.

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So they don't look at the baby like, they look at the baby, oh, that's a nice baby. They don't really see the baby. Immediately it's labeled.

Somebody sent me a sticker to put on, why sticker? I don't know where it originated. It says, you don't, what do you think?

Now, Stephen Mitchell, fortunately, does not exclusively use the masculine pronoun as it's done in most other translations. He, the master, he varies between she and he. So sometimes the master is seen as feminine and sometimes the master is seen as masculine, which is a wonderful thing since the Tao has many qualities that are closely related to the feminine, the openness and so on.

There are many images in the Tao Te Ching that are feminine images to point to the essential nature of the Tao, not that the Tao itself is feminine, but to get a feeling for what Tao is, the Tao Te Ching uses feminine imagery. So here we have a little few lines

about the master. The master keeps her mind always at one with the Tao.

That is what gives her her radiance. The Tao is ungraspable. How can her mind be at one with it?

Because she doesn't cling to ideas. The Tao is dark and unfathomable. How can it make her radiant?

Because she lets it. Since before time and space where the Tao is, it is beyond is and is not. How do I know this is true?

I look inside myself and see. Let's look at it again and see. The master keeps her mind always at one with the Tao.

That is what gives her her radiance. Keeps her mind at one with the Tao. In the next line, it says, if it's ungraspable, how can her mind be at one with it?

And it says, because she doesn't cling to ideas. Interesting. She doesn't cling to ideas.

That reminds me of the famous Zen saying. I don't remember who said it, but Zen master said it. Don't seek for the truth.

Just seize or stop cherishing opinions. That is, I believe, points to the same inner state of disidentification from thinking. She doesn't cling to ideas.

Cling to, it doesn't mean she doesn't have ideas, the master. But the master does not cling to ideas. And the Zen master, when he said, don't look for the truth, just stop cherishing opinions.

He didn't say, stop having opinions. Just as Lao Tse does not say, don't have ideas. Says, don't cling to ideas.

And the other master says, stop cherishing opinions. So this clinging, which is the same as cherishing, is self-identification with thoughts that arise. In other words, you then believe completely in every thought that comes into your head.

Amazing. You believe in it, that means you are it. That is self-identification with thinking.

So how then to be at one, always at one with the Tao? So simple. On the one hand, you could call it, stop cherishing opinions.

Now, any thought that arises, ultimately is an opinion, you could say. Stop cherishing, stop your self-identification with that. Or don't cling to ideas, in the words of Lao Tse, or this present translation here.

So that there's always a space between you and your thoughts. Or rather, you are not the thought, you are the space for the thought. This is how I put it sometimes.

You're familiar with that. And perhaps in yourself, you know it. You don't have to be in your thoughts, but you can be the space for your thoughts.

Then no matter how weird your thoughts are, it doesn't matter that much. You don't say, oh my God, I shouldn't be having these weird thoughts. No, because that's another thought.

I'm spiritually, I'm supposed to be spiritually advanced, and why am I still having these thoughts? There must be something wrong with me. Does that sound familiar?

That's also thoughts. That's more thoughts that say, I shouldn't be having these thoughts, there's something wrong with me. And then you believe in those thoughts.

Thoughts that judge other thoughts. That may sound familiar to some of you, and there's nothing personal in it. It's the human mind.

So you don't need to eliminate thoughts or to say, I should only have pure thoughts because I'm a spiritual person. Because by now, I should have transcended all impure thoughts. Well, then you're in a dilemma because in this world of polarities, if you only want to have pure thoughts, you're creating the other polarity in the unseen.

And sooner or later, the other polarity will come up from behind, creep up. And this has been done sometimes by Christians who try to practice the teachings of Christ without entering the state of consciousness out of which that comes. So they try to be pure and spiritual and good Christians and denied the other polarity, repressed it.

And then suddenly, they get overpowered by something deeply destructive and negative. So you have a nice, wonderful person who always talks in spirituals, just thoughts and spiritual. And before you know it, he's screaming at his wife or even hitting his wife.

Where did that come from? And he can't even admit to himself that this is what's happening. So if you push away certain thoughts because they do not fit into the mental image of who you are as this or that, then they get to assume a life of their own.

And before you know it, they invade your mind again, if only in your dreams. And suddenly, you have dreadful nightmares. During the day, you're such a spiritual person.

And at night, you suddenly have dreadful nightmares, monsters come, or you become a monster. Oh my God, this shouldn't be happening. And that's because you're pushing something away.

The true spiritual does not lie in one thought or another thought. It lies in being there as the space for your thoughts. Then it doesn't matter anymore, really.

Whatever thought arises is no more than that. It's a form that arises at this moment. You

don't resist it.

You don't need to resist it. But you are the space for it. You don't become it.

Somebody sent me a sticker to put on the car. I haven't put it on my car yet. A very wise sticker.

I don't know where it originated. It says, you don't need to believe every thought you think. So this is the practice, then, of being the space or the witness for your thoughts rather than being the thought.

And you can practice with your opinions. Many thoughts are actual. All thoughts could be called opinions, but there are certain things that are definitely, clearly recognizable as opinions when you are talking to people every day, when you're having a discussion or talk with friends or colleagues or neighbors.

So they will express their opinion, whatever it may be about, and you may express your opinion. And you can then observe whether or not there is self-identification with your opinion. And your opinion, of course, is a mental position, the position of the mind.

Are you identified with a mental position? If you are, then you are cherishing opinions in the words of the Zen master, or you are clinging to ideas in the words of Lao Tse. And how do you know that?

You know that when, as you discuss things, you become either defensive or aggressive in the expression of your opinion. Emotion flows into, and you get worked up in, why is that happening? Why are you becoming defensive or aggressive?

And of course, you have to look inside yourself to see whether this is the case or not. Are you becoming defensive or aggressive? You feel the influx of emotion.

And why is this happening? Because unconsciously, you feel threatened by somebody who attacks or questions or contradicts your mental position. Why do you feel threatened by somebody who questions your mental position?

That is a sign that you had identified with a mental position. And identified means your sense of self was in it. So the person is not attacking your opinion in your unconscious viewpoint.

The person you're being attacked in your very life is being, is under attack. Because you identified this, this is not true, but this is how it is perceived, as if they were attacking your very existence. Because you identified with a mental position, there was a self in it.

So anybody who questions it, questions your very existence. It's unconscious process. So that's an amazing thing to realize in yourself.

And it's a deep seated unconscious pattern in most human beings. And of course, as you become conscious of that, you can usually see it much more clearly in others, more easily in your friend or whoever you're having, then in yourself. Usually says, oh, yes, that's what he always does.

Of course, now I understand what my husband or my wife does. I understand completely. That's step one.

This questioner here asks, what if one is secretly angry at God? And I assume the questioner is secretly angry at God. And if you look more closely, you'll see that there are certain thoughts associated with it that create the anger.

Now, what if that's what you want to experience? Is that pleasant? When those thoughts arise, whatever the thoughts say, God neglected me, treated me unfairly.

For some people, it's God. For other people, they call it life. Life treated me unfairly.

I didn't deserve this. Why do other people get all the breaks? I never get any.

To meditate successfully, the idea that you're doing a meditation can be quite an obstacle. So maybe that's the first thing we can get rid of tonight. The preconceptions and the expectations that come with that term.

So why did we call it guided meditation? Well, we had to use some word to get you here. Yes.

Yes. Meditation is usually something that you do among many other things. Doing implies all kinds of things.

It implies time. Even future, to some extent. And yet, true meditation, if you even want to call it that, and it's better not to call it anything, is not to do with doing.

It's not a doing. It's the realization that you are of being, which underlies all doing. It's prior to all doing.

Thoughts, emotions is prior to that. The simple realization, not the realization who you are, because there can be so many perspectives on that, not the realization how you fit into the totality of the cosmos, how that seemingly little life fleeting existence fits into the totality somewhere. Not realizing how I fit into the whole.

It's impossible to comprehend. But an alignment with the totality, without the need to mentally understand anything, is a realization, a simple realization that you are, which is expressed in the sublime words, I am. I am.

And if you've missed elementary grammar at school, you might not realize that I am is the first person singular of the verb to be. Now you think it's two completely different

words. The realization that you are not as a concept, but as a deeper sensing of the life that you are.

The aliveness, the life. And something helpful to realize that is to pretend for one moment that there is no past and no future. I'm saying pretend so that everybody is still with me.

If I said, if I said there is no past and future, some of you might suddenly start thinking, just a second, aren't you going to sign books in an hour? And the moment you go into thinking, you're off into the realm of mind, the realm of things, object, objects in consciousness. Every thought is an object in consciousness and every thought has a pulling power.

That's how it arises. And it pulls your attention in and you start thinking, okay, but there is, I came here half an hour ago, there must be a past. I'm not realizing, of course, when you came here, it was the present moment.

And when the books are going to be signed, it will be the present moment because there is nothing else. Okay. But no need to believe that.

Let's pretend. Let's pretend for a moment that there is no past and future. Okay.

Or let's just say, past and future become peripheral to who you are. There's only this. That is the entry point into the realization I am.

[Speaker 12] (9:30:46 - 9:31:07)

Thank you for being such a great master, Master Eckhart. And my question is about music. What is music?

Somehow it does stop our minds. And why it is so important to us? Maybe about art in general also.

And what is your favorite kind of music?

[Speaker 1] (9:31:13 - 9:41:41)

Yes, it certainly stops the conceptual mind, although music exists at different levels. There's some kind of music that very much stimulates the emotions. That's not the mind, but the emotions.

The listening of music can be a wonderful meditation and practicing of music even more so. Do you play an instrument? But do you listen to music?

What kind? Classical, mostly. Classical music.

Yes, yes. Yes, there were several years, I don't know how many, maybe 15 years, when I

listened to very little music. And why?

Because the strange thing, I actually said that to somebody at that time who asked me the similar question. And I said, no, I don't listen to music much. That was at that time.

Why not, she asked. Because it felt to me that all those things like music and art, they were all inside me in their, the essence of whatever music can express, I could continuously sense, well, I still can. I can continuously sense inside me.

And so I can appreciate music, I said to her at the time, but I don't need it. It's like I have the cream and everything else is the skimmed milk. But even nature I perceived as a skimmed milk.

I remember often sitting in nature and in a state of sometimes closing my eyes, especially when I was still living in London, I would go on Hampstead Heath every day, sit there on the bench and close my eyes. And such beauty and depths of the formless life itself or consciousness. And then when I opened my eyes again, nature was still very beautiful, but it seemed like a diluted version of what I had within or even what I was within.

Not that there's anything wrong with that. For many people, it can be an entry point into that. So it can take you into that.

Now, then the time came when I started listening to music again as an enjoyment. And I do now, perhaps not every day, but from time to time I listen to music. More recently on my iPad.

Although the speakers are very small, they're about that size on the side. But yes, and I actually enjoy some of the kind of spiritual kind of music, some new age music. Some of it I love very much.

Some of it can be a little bit tinkly and emotional or superficial, but other kinds of new age music I love very much. And the other day I found a station, I think Kim found it. It's called Calm Radio.

And I believe it may even be Canadian. And Calm Radio has many channels. Well, there's one station and you can choose the type of music you like and it will play that classical oriental music, OM music, healing music, spa music, folk music, classical music, opera.

So many channels, just wonderful. Yes, the practice of an instrument also can be a wonderful meditation for many people because it really stops your mind. The important thing, however, it can be helpful, is not for presence to become associated with any particular activity.

The activity can be helpful, but at some point you have to see, use it as a help, like

playing an instrument, the flute, whatever it may be. If I learned an instrument, I would probably take up the flute. It looks, it's a simple thing, although not easy probably to master.

This is the, I'm now playing the soundless flute. The equivalent of one hand clapping. Not to become dependent on a particular activity so that you can be present although for a while it can be helpful, but not to become dependent on either, although use it as a tool to help you, yes, but don't become dependent on listening to music so that you can be present only when you listen to music.

Don't become dependent on playing the instrument or dancing, beautiful thing too, moving your body. Don't become dependent so that you can only be present when you're actually dancing. Well, at least it's a wonderful thing.

You can be present when you dance, but you can't dance continuously. Well, unless you regard your whole life as a dance, then it might work. Don't become dependent on climbing a mountain so that you can be present because if you're not, you fall off.

Don't become dependent on driving a fast car. Oh, really present and so that presence is not bound up with one particular thing that you do, but nevertheless, use those things as helpful ways of bringing you into presence, but then once more presence arises, switch off the music. It doesn't mean you can't switch it on again an hour later or tomorrow.

Switch off the music. If music brings you into presence, the mind is not, there's just the pure act of listening and you're aware that there's a pure act of listening and you are the consciousness, you know yourself as the consciousness that's listening. Beautiful meditation.

And then my next suggestion is switch off the music and continue listening. To what? Nothing.

So when you remove the object of awareness, what remains is awareness itself. So this is how it can be a wonderful portal. The same thing, any activity that brings you into presence, once you feel presence is arising, it's there, stop the activity and just be aware of presence itself.

And then you can carry, if you enjoy it, then carry on doing, and then again step out. So that's the, so that presence is not bound up with one particular activity or you can even, you can look at the, you can look at a photo of a spiritual teacher who is present to bring you into presence. Ramana Maharshi, there's one particular photo of him that is a beautiful photo where you actually truly feel the light shining through his eyes and that was where the photographer took that photo 1930 or so and the photographer said, Ramana Maharshi said, is there enough light?

The photographer said, you are the light. And that's a beautiful picture and the amazing

thing, some people have even used pictures of me to look and you look, as long as you know you're not looking at a person, that's not why you have the photo. You're looking at, to put you in touch with a particular state of consciousness, you're ultimately looking at yourself, the essence.

So then a picture can activate that in you and then the next step is again, similar to what I said before, close your eyes or remove the picture and continue to feel that presence. So you can use whatever is there to help you but don't become dependent on it, whatever it may be, use it, enjoy it, but don't become dependent so that that then exclusively becomes associated with presence and then you can only be present when you put a little altar with Ramana Maharshi up and then some, but as soon as you go away. So enjoy the music.

[Speaker 14] (9:42:00 - 9:42:01)

Hi. Hi.

[Speaker 6] (9:42:03 - 9:42:30)

The hardest word that I'm having trouble with right now is responsibility and I have a hunch that most of the things that I consider responsibility are just my ego telling me things I have to do but I also, when I think about the future of the earth and human evolution and stuff like that, sometimes I have big emotions of responsibility so I'm just curious. Thank you. About the right relationship to the word responsibility.

[Speaker 1] (9:42:30 - 9:49:58)

Okay. Thank you. Yeah, it's a strange word.

It has been pointed out that if you look at the word it seems to be talking about the ability to respond. So, to take responsibility for what is it that you can take responsibility for primarily it's taking responsibility for your state of consciousness which determines what kind of world you create. You, because you are humanity.

Humanity is an abstract concept, doesn't exist. Humanity is the human being. You are humanity.

So for humanity to take responsibility you need to take primarily responsibility for your state of consciousness because only a diseased or dysfunctional state of consciousness produces a diseased and dysfunctional world out there. By world I mean the human-made world that is, has been imposed on the what's already there, the planet which is potentially, of course, a paradise. The planet pristine, unbelievable jewel.

A being of great intelligence. We are not separate from it. But the being is going through a transitional process and every transitional process is critical.

It may or may not work in which case the being will go some other way. But the your state of consciousness determines what kind of world you create, what kind of action you take and what consequences your actions have. So here this is why my main work is to address the cause of dysfunction which lies in the human mind.

The dysfunction of the human mind or as it is sometimes called in Zen the sickness of the human mind. So as I see it and I don't anybody who reads history can doubt it there is a deep-seated dysfunction in humans has been there for thousands of years and if we know if there's no shift in that then the dysfunction will destroy us. It probably won't destroy the planet because the planet has enormous resources but it will take a while would take a while for the planet to recover.

All you have to do then is primarily take responsibility for your state of consciousness now. Now. Now.

And this is what the entire teaching really is about. What is what is my state of consciousness at this moment? Am I generating disturbance?

Am I generating negativity? Am I generating conflict and suffering for myself and others? Am I generating inner pollution?

Am I polluting my beautiful the beautiful being that I am with continuous absurd movements of thought producing negative emotions producing an entire entity that is illusory that I call the me. So to take responsibility it needs to be just of course an awakening where you can say okay I will take responsibility now. Some people don't know that there is even the possibility of taking responsibility that's why you are so important.

Anybody who realizes it this is you are the beginning of the transformed world. I don't know who first coined the famous phrase you hear it quite often these days you need to be the change that the change that you want to see out there you need to embody that. And that's not primarily what you do there's something more primary than what you do it's who you are.

Who you are is your state of consciousness whatever you do flows out of that. So that's the primary is that so the change is the transformed state of consciousness now that is your responsibility anybody once you've seen that that's your responsibility now you know it. People who are not yet at that level don't realize it and that's fine you can't expect the whole world already to be at that stage it's enough for you to take responsibility knowing there's still a few millions others who don't know that they can take responsibility because they live in such unconsciousness that they see the entire evil in others what they see as evil it's all in them and they make half the world into their enemy it's all out there they're still you don't that's fine your response it's only those are required to take responsibility you who are up to it but even those who are totally

unconscious still on the one hand they don't know what they're doing obviously as Jesus said on the cross they know not what they do in other words they are in the grip of unconscious forces or unconscious mental emotional streams they don't know what they do they cannot be held responsible and people say well they should be held responsible no they can't but they don't know what they do however the fact that they are not responsible because they can't be responsible does not mean that they do not suffer the consequences of their unconsciousness so they generate suffering and eventually suffering is the fire in which the ego gets burned up the collective ego and the personal ego that's the long way the slow way the painful way and then there is a shortcut which is any spiritual teaching is just it cuts through that the painful way the long way of waking up more and more suffering the planet might not endure that such a long learning process for humanity so if the learning process of humanity does not become shortened it is doubtful that the planet can allow the humanity to learn

[Speaker 14] (9:49:58 - 9:50:00)

through further learning

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[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 0:15)

further suffering for another 500 years, or even 200 years, or even 100 years. So that's, you're responsible for all that.

[Speaker 6] (0:23 - 0:26)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (0:49 - 6:19)

What is self? Now I notice that it's spelled with a capital S, I don't know whether that's a mistake or on purpose. Probably on purpose.

There's one self, that's the illusion, that is the identification with the mind and the ego, which is the unobserved mind, and there's a self that arises there that is a dreadful burden to live with. You carry around, most people for their whole life they carry the burden of a mentally defined sense of who they are, me, what about me? That's the little self, the illusory self, and that's the self that most people refer to when they say I.

But I potentially has a deeper meaning and is the deepest word perhaps we could say in the language, in its truest sense, I refers to who you are beyond the form, beyond the thoughts and the emotions. You as the consciousness is the self. Now the self has no form, you cannot grasp it, you cannot see it, you cannot really define it, you can never say, ah, there it is.

Because who is saying that? You are the consciousness, the perceiving, you are it. You can never see it as an object external to yourself, it's the essence, you are not what is seen, you are the seeing, you are the consciousness behind the seeing.

You are not what you hear, you are the consciousness behind what you hear. So it's never, this is what Jesus said when he used the term the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God, he said in one of the gospels, the kingdom of heaven does not come with signs to be observed. You cannot say, ah, here it is or ah, it's over there.

It's a free translation more or less, that's what he said. And of course, what do Christians do? They're waiting for the kingdom of heaven to arrive.

When they've been told, you won't be able to see it. You can't say, ah, there it is, it does not come with signs to be observed, literally he said that. It's, and I'm sure that's one of the, there's a lot of things that people later put into his mouth, but that is one of the things, the words that were uttered by somebody who knew the reality.

It doesn't come with signs to be observed. You can never see it or grasp it or know it as

an object for your knowledge. Because you essentially are it as the consciousness that perceives, the consciousness behind your thinking, behind your emotions, behind your perceptions, behind your experiences, the very light of the world.

Another thing he said, he not only said, Jesus, I am the light of the world, he said also you are the light of the world. So he's pointing, what is the light? It's the light of consciousness which illuminates the world.

You are that, that is the self. It has no form. Therefore it seems that Buddhism and Buddhists and Hindus are in disagreement, but only those who haven't realized the reality behind their teachings, those Buddhists and Hindus who have not really realized the reality behind their teachings, they are in disagreement and they have arguments whether there is self or no self, atman, anatman.

The Hindus believe in atman, that the existence of self, the fundamental underlying reality, and the Buddhists say no, anatman, no self. And then whenever you see a Hindu and a Buddhist discussing, perhaps even with negative emotions, whether one or the other is true, then you'll know that they haven't experienced, they haven't known the reality behind the teaching, because the reality behind the teaching is exactly the same, it's just a different perspective on the same. The Buddhists like to deny, they don't want to give it, call it something, as if the moment you call it, you say the self, the danger is that you make it into a mental object and start believing in it.

The Buddhists don't like that, so they say there is no self, which in a way is true also, there is nothing that you could say, there it is, it is an empty space almost, you could say, but it's potential fullness also, it's full and empty at the same time. It's all the same, the self, and that's why the Dalai Lama I saw giving a talk a while ago to Hindus and he said, you believe in atman and we believe in anatman, what does it matter? And he laughed, ah, ah, ah, makes no difference, ah, ah, ah, that's a good answer.

[Speaker 4] (6:46 - 6:59)

Hi, my question has two parts, it's what is the purpose of mental illness, how can something that is consciousness depriving have its necessary place and function?

[Speaker 1] (7:02 - 7:08)

Somebody, perhaps it was me, probably said that everything has its necessary place.

[Speaker 6] (7:08 - 7:09)

Yes. Okay.

[Speaker 1] (7:23 - 18:01)

Now, in the larger context, if you look around the world, it's not only mental illness which

exists in different gradations, mental illness in its acute form where it is recognized as mental illness, mental illness in its less acute form where we call it neurosis, whatever, and mental illness, well, neurosis already is normal, so mental illness in its normal form which is normal human consciousness and the world is full of consciousness, seemingly consciousness blocking events, all the suffering, you say, what purpose could that possibly have? For example, you could say, what purpose could human beings killing each other in the 20th century alone, human beings killing 100, not 100 million as I said in the Power of Now, that was a mistake, I've realized later, but closer to 170 million people killed in the 20th century alone, humans killing other humans, 170 million, nobody knows the exact figure, but that's, 170 million killed, what purpose can that possibly have?

You can ask also that all that suffering can't possibly have a purpose, can it? And then all the other things that you have, young children dying in accidents or illnesses, all kinds of things that seem to be blocking consciousness, people trapped in dreadful conditions, slave-like conditions still in many parts of the world and it was like that until recently even in the Western world, trapped and not totally deprived of freedom, all these things that seem to block the arising of the flowering of consciousness, particularly if you look at it in isolation, but it does seem that first of all, a misperception arises when we look at a human being as if he or she were an entirely autonomous entity, in other words, as if he or she, the life that he or she has were his or her own life. Because then you see, you then look at everybody as an autonomous life form without realizing that all life forms and all humans are a temporary expression of the one life, the life in you or in me or the consciousness in you is the consciousness in me, the same consciousness expressing itself in a different form. And there is something happening in this universe which is consciousness coming into the world of form and expressing itself more and more fully through the world of form, but it is always the one consciousness, assuming billions of life forms constantly.

But the human thinks, that's me, that's my life. No, it's life. It's not my consciousness.

I don't have my consciousness. It's the one consciousness, the one in the many. So all life is one.

So when something seemingly dreadful happens, all life is one. On one level, it is always dreadful. Nobody can say that humans killing 180 million of their fellow humans is not dreadful on that level.

But if you go to a deeper level, you see that something is emerging and for some reason it is through, in many cases, seemingly being blocked here and there, that the consciousness is emerging more fully. That also has its place. You can't see it when you look at individual cases, but when you look at the totality of consciousness wanting to emerge yet finding seemingly obstacles everywhere, but it's through the obstacles that

the flowering actually happens.

And so you might say, oh, isn't it unfair that this person represents a greater obstacle than another person? But the essence of any person is the one consciousness. So nothing is lost ever.

And in so-called mental illness, there's also something to be learned by the one consciousness. What it is, I don't know, but I do know that many mental, a certain percentage of mental illnesses are arising of consciousness that has gone slightly wrong, that isn't quite, or is unrecognized. There are people in India who have become saints and masters who would have been put in a mental home in the West, because the West doesn't recognize certain things, the spiritual arising.

And fortunately, they were not born in the West, but there are probably many people in the West. I'm not saying that all mental illness is a misinterpretation, a non-recognition of awakening process, but ultimately everything is part of the awakening process. And why do I know all these things?

You know things by looking at your own life. And I know that all the things that seem to block the full arising of consciousness in my life, and I'm sure you can find the same in your life, all the seeming obstacles to living a life of fullness and ease and greater awareness, ultimately, all those things are part of the awakening and those things actually led to the arising, to the awakening. When I look at my own life, and my own life is only a microcosm of the collective, it must be.

And I see all the blockages and all the suffering actually was part of the awakening, without which it would not have happened. And collectively, the suffering of humanity in so many forms is also unfortunately a necessary part of the awakening, but realize that what we see as somebody's personal identity is not who they are. They are an expression of the one which is constantly finding new channels through which to express itself in this world.

So if this channel is blocked, we see it as a person who is suffering. That's also true on one level. And of course, you help if you are there, you give whatever help you can, that's part of it.

But this, that personal sense of self is ultimately an illusion. And because who you are is ultimately timeless and beyond the person. So I know that if I had not encountered all these seeming blockages in my life, I wouldn't be sitting here now.

And if you had not suffered what you suffered, you wouldn't be here now. And so the obstacles to the arising of consciousness are ultimately part of the arising consciousness. And there's only one life.

And that's a liberating thing to know, that the life in you, the life in me is the one life.

And if I die at this moment, nothing is really lost. If you die, nothing is lost.

So we need to get away from the misperception that you have your life and it's a unique thing and you are an expression of the one and everybody is. And so humanity as a whole is awakening. And there's a term in the Bible which says the birth pangs of the new age, the birth pangs, before giving birth there's a pain.

So these are the birth pangs of the awakening. And it all, if you could see the totality, that also would make sense. It doesn't mean that killing 180 million is okay.

Recognizing that it is insanity is part of the awakening. The recognition of that as insanity, that collective part of the collective insanity, that's part of the awakening. Does that make sense?

[Speaker 8] (18:10 - 18:10)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (18:27 - 33:39)

And ultimately, if there is a true message, that includes angels or angelic presences, it always boils down to find out who you truly are. Find your connectedness with the source of all life. Well, some people seem to have contact with different entities that are not physically embodied.

And there's no doubt that there are entities that are not physically embodied. There are lots of guides, those entities who are also pretending to be somebody else. And the main criterion is what is the quality of the information that you are getting?

Rather than trying to figure out who they really are. And this also applies to so-called channeling, when this is still quite popular, I suppose, in some places more than in others. In the States there's a town called Sedona, which is a New Age kind of, in Arizona, a New Age town, where it seems every other inhabitant channels some kind of spirit guide.

So I have seen many channeled writings, and a large percentage of them seems not all that relevant to anything. Small percentage, yes, there's something there. A prominent example is the Course in Miracles, which is not for everybody, but it is a high quality text, scripture, whatever you want to call it.

And that was definitely channeled, because the person who wrote it had an inner dictation, and she wrote down what she heard. She did not fully understand what the dictation was saying, and she couldn't live it, the teaching, and yet the book was produced. You may have heard the saying, as far as deceased people are concerned, some people think when people, at the moment they are deceased, they know

everything.

But there's a saying that goes, just because they are dead doesn't mean they are smart. So, whether you do channeling, or you go to somebody who does channeling, who goes, the eyes usually close, and they go, this is so and so talking to you. And whether or not it's genuine, listen to the quality of the teaching, if it is a teaching, the words, is it truly, is it just, is it fictitious, could it be information that you have to believe in, and they could say anything, and does it make any difference to your life whether or not what they say is right or wrong.

Perhaps they're talking about life on those distant planets and what happens there. Could be a science fiction novel, as far as you are concerned, but some people are so impressed by the fact that these are channeled entities, they go, okay, and then what happens on those planets? Or they identify themselves as big entities from outer space.

Who knows? Ashta, my name is Ashta, commander of the galactic fleet, and I have come here to guide you. Okay, so what do you have to say?

And ultimately, if there is a true message, that includes angels or angelic presences, it always boils down to find out who you truly are, find your connectedness with the source of all life. All true answers will come from within you, and whatever I say, verify it in your own experience, don't believe me. If you cannot verify it in your own experience, then it's not relevant.

This is what the true guide would say. So the great scriptures of the world, they're not the author, some are anonymous. There's a difference between spirit guide and teaching that comes from a deep connectedness of the teacher with the source.

In that case, the teacher does not feel that it comes from an entity, but it comes from the source. And if an entity gives you information, where do they get that from? From the one consciousness.

So it may well be that this entity is more closer, more deeply connected to that one consciousness, but they are not separate consciousnesses, there's only one consciousness. And every guide, the one consciousness can only speak through any guide, no matter who it is, whether it's an angel or a deceased person, or Ashtar, commander of the galactic fleet, there's only one consciousness that can speak through them. And the essence of their message needs to be, if it is to be true, find out who you are in your essence, and then begin to live from the essence of who you are.

So use your own insight, and I believe you will be able to tell whether what they say is helpful or not. At the moment, I can only think of causing miracles, that's of a high quality. There was a time when there was Seth, the writings of Seth, the woman channeled, an entity called Seth.

Some of that is interesting and has some helpful things there. It doesn't necessarily go to the deepest level. Nevertheless, there's some useful information there, but not at the deepest level.

What's interesting is that when I speak, I don't feel that some other entity speaks through me, but I do realize that this is not the person speaking. This is consciousness using the mind, this person's mind as a vehicle, and consciousness speaks through me. In that sense, what I say is also channeled.

Also, I don't know what I'm going to say next, and most of the time, I don't know, even before I talk, what words are going to come out of my mouth. And that connectedness is important. That is the connectedness with the source, with being, with stillness, with presence, whatever you want to call it.

And that you have that available to you also, you might not give public talks, or you might at some point, and some of you already do. But in whatever area you are active in, to be connected to the source will empower you in whatever area you are active in and will make your work much more helpful to others and more empowered. You become more inspired, and you become an inspiration for others, even if you are just, even if you sell tickets, cinema tickets, or whatever, it doesn't matter.

Everything becomes transformed through your connectedness with source. But to have that, the vital thing is to be able to access the space of no thought. And that, and another way of calling that space of no thought, which I sometimes express by, because it's an inner space, thinking, thinking, thinking, you remember?

And then you go, shh, present. That's the space of no thought. So in order to have the connectedness with source, you need to open up that space of no thought.

Alertness, relaxed alertness. It seems almost paradoxical, but they go together. Relaxed alertness.

And you could also call that becoming comfortable with not knowing. Because otherwise, your mind always thinks it knows already. So when you're trying to help somebody, somebody has a problem, often people will immediately try to say something helpful.

They think hard, okay, what can I say to this person who is so suffering so much? I need to say something helpful. And you search in your mind.

And usually, it's not that great. And it's not, and it's not well received by the person. And it's not that helpful.

They might say, okay, thanks. But they feel it doesn't come from any deep place within yourself. All your intentions are good.

You're trying hard to say something helpful. But to be really helpful, you need to become comfortable with not knowing anything. And that because the space of no thought is, you don't know anything in the space of no thought, at least not conceptually.

The miracle is that in the space of no thought, you access the source of all knowledge. But it hasn't reached concepts yet. It's potential.

It's potential of all knowledge, the primary source. So many people are actually afraid of going there, because they're afraid of not knowing. And so they need to keep thinking.

So if you can, somebody comes to you, let's presume, let's assume you have practiced already beforehand not knowing, for example, by not labeling compulsively everything around you, but actually be present with a tree, with a sky, with another person. And so you, you almost, another way of putting it, you almost disappear as a person in that state of no thought. Because in no thought, who are you?

You're simply a presence. You're not a particular person anymore. So it's a voluntary kind of disappearing act where you as the personal entity disappear.

And there's just a space of consciousness where you were before. This sometimes happens to people who suffer greatly. They suffer so much that their ego gets destroyed and eroded.

And what's left is just a presence. And you, this could happen to you, but probably won't need to happen because you're already voluntarily going there. So life doesn't need to push you into it.

So to become comfortable with not knowing, let's say a person is comes to you with, is in suffering again, or is close to death, or somebody has just died, or they have just lost everything, whatever it may be. Or of course, it could be pseudo suffering too. It could just be a suffering totally created by their mind.

No actual situation, just totally mind created. In which case, I naturally always have a little smile on my face. I'm not laughing at them.

I'm just smiling because I realize it's a delusion. But let's assume it's real suffering. Somebody has just died or is approaching death, or has an illness.

And then instead of figuring out what can I say, you just go still. And you just listen. And it may be that no words come.

But an energy, you contributed an energy to that situation that is helpful, that is healing. Some healing comes in, healing, the deepest healing really comes in that way too. When you access that, it's not always words that come out of that space.

Sometimes a wordless emanation comes out of that space, which some people might call

healing. And healing is not necessarily healing of a physical symptom. There's a deeper level of healing that helps that other person to connect with the deepest source within themselves.

And that's really the true, the ultimate and true healing. So when I was many years ago, I was many, many years ago, I was beginning to work with people who came to me for advice and counseling and so on. And I was always naturally becoming very still.

So that's, and it all came out of that. I never knew the answer beforehand. Just get still and listen.

[Speaker 6] (33:41 - 33:41)

Oh.

[Speaker 1] (33:42 - 53:16)

And I may have told the story before. For a while, I thought I was a healer because that was early on after my shift in consciousness when I didn't understand much. So I was sitting with this woman who had been a Catholic nun for 15 years and then left the order because she hadn't found God yet.

And she came to me and I was sitting in that state of not knowing, but being comfortable with not knowing, not being uncomfortable with not knowing because that's not pleasant and then it gets blocked immediately. And she said she could feel the energy suddenly that was flowing and she'd, oh, you are doing healing. You're a healer.

I said, oh, that's what I am. And I thought, oh, so that's what this energy is. And then for a couple of years, the word must have spread.

People called me a healer and some people came for physical healing and some people had a pain there and the foot was hurting and can you heal my foot? Well, I don't know. And so I, and then I realized after two years, most people who then came were just interested in getting rid of certain symptoms.

They were not interested in a deeper healing. So I made an announcement as I am not a healer. So consciousness to me is the emanation of God, like the light of the sun, which expresses itself as the universe.

The essence of every human is immortal because the one life is beyond life and death. It's eternal. It's only in this dimension that time seems to be real.

So God expresses itself as you. One of the challenges I faced when I first started reading your books and in the experience I was going through at the time is something that everyone in here shares, the experience of losing someone they love. So a lot of things, if you lose them, you might even say your money, a spiritualist might say, well, that's

probably a good thing.

You'll be in a better place when you realize you don't need money. But when you lose a child or a spouse, being present, how do you be present with that and make everything okay? Because sometimes it's not okay.

It will never be okay again. But some people might feel like their lives are over. I don't have that thing that I love.

How do you deal with that? Yes. Deep loss, whether it's through somebody close to you who died, or there's also a sense of deep loss if a long relationship, like a marriage that lasted for a long time suddenly comes to an end.

It's also a kind of death. And so there can be the emotions that then arise of sadness. You may find yourself periodically, it comes in waves, periodically you cry and the deep emotion of sadness comes.

The important thing is to, you know, to be bring acceptance to what has happened. At first it may be difficult. The first thing you cannot accept the death or the loss, but that's okay.

But what you can do is you can accept the emotions that you feel at this moment. It's natural. You don't feel, oh, I shouldn't be.

No, you should. This is natural. So you accept that there's this deep sadness and that it comes in waves and you cry.

And then gradually you realize certain things that everything in this world is, as the Buddhists say, is impermanent. If you live with a partner, soon or later, he or she will leave you or you will leave him or her because one of you will die first. So everything, there's an impermanence built into everything in life.

Nothing lasts forever. And the sense perceived universe is not as solid as it seems to be. The structures are not as solid as they appear.

If you live in a Western country, you often get the impression that everything is, there's a solidity to the external world. If you go to other, another country like India, you realize that things are not as solid as they are in the world. Even the buildings look a bit shaky and things are not as organized.

Things don't work very well. You see in many third world countries, you see old and decrepit people in the street, which in the West very rarely see because old people and sick people are in buildings. They are kept away.

They say they are looked after, okay. But you don't get a real sense of the reality of life in the West because old age and madness and sickness, I'm not saying they shouldn't

be, but the fact is people who are approaching death, unless they are close relatives and you visit them, you don't see them. In a third world, this is everywhere around you.

So you get more of a sense of the nature of the fleetingness of human life, of every human life. Also, all these things that you have life insurance here and you think there's a solid foundation to your existence. It's not anything good that could happen any moment.

Life insurance is an illusion. It's fine. It has a function on a practical level, but really, first of all, it should be called death insurance because it's about death.

It's not about life. But if you called it death insurance, nobody would want to buy it. So there's a fleeting sense of the nature of life in the West.

So you get a sense of that. First, you come to a sense of acceptance of it and when it happens, first you accept the emotions that you feel and then you may be able to accept that this has happened without too much of imposing a narrative on it. Although you could, depending on your beliefs, because you may believe that the essence of who they are has not died and in a way that is, I would suggest, the truth because the essence of a human being, you can see so clearly that if you look at a dead body, you can see so clearly that that body was never the true being that was there.

The essence is gone, that human being. And so some people can even feel that that person is still there, the essence of that person is still there. So I want to, but I'd like to be able to suggest that even without having any particular belief, you can still come to an acceptance of the short-lived nature of all forms so that you do not, the period of mourning after great loss is natural and should be allowed to happen, but if you then impose a narrative on that, which is negative, that can prolong the sadness that you feel for many, many years or the anger that you feel about it, you feel that it is unjust that this happened and so on, which are all mental judgments, and then it is normal for a period of sadness where they'd last a few months or a year or two years, and then you practice surrender. And surrender is really the deeper acceptance, surrender to the is-ness of life. There's a story of the Buddha, a mother came to the Buddha and said, was weeping because a child had died and was asking for advice, the Buddha, and the Buddha says, okay, I'll tell you what to do in this village or town where you live, go from one house to another and ask them whether they have ever had a death in their family and then come back to me.

So she went from one house to another, it took several days, and then she came back to the Buddha and there was a relief because in every house that she came to, she had heard, they confirmed that yes, they had also experienced people dying. Yes, yes, yes. And the Buddha said, and suddenly she was able to come to an acceptance, to surrender.

But in that surrender, there is a strange realization comes. Surrender means you're not judging this anymore as good or bad, you just accept the is-ness of that. In that, I experienced it when my parents died, both in the same year, although they didn't even live together and didn't even live in the same country.

They were divorced many years ago, but they both died within six months of each other. So in that year, I had the two, there was the death of my mother in the summer and the death of my dad in the fall. So twice I sat with first my mom's dead body, and then a few months later with my dad's dead body, and there were tears, I cried, then they subsided, then tears came again, subsided, and I sat with the dead body, and suddenly I could sense this deep peace underneath the sadness.

So there was both the sadness, but with the surrender came also a deep peace. And that peace was something feeling my own essence. But in feeling my own essence in this, and this is really what we've been talking about today also, getting in touch with that, the deepest level in you, which is cannot be seen.

There's a beautiful quote from a French book, what is essential is invisible to the eye. Whatever is essential is invisible to the eye. So what I see in a human being, I see the body, and I see whatever their mind, the words I hear, whatever I perceive is their mind and their body, their personality, but the essential thing about the human being is deeper than that.

The essential thing about me is deeper than any thought or any emotion, it's consciousness itself. And so in that peace that I felt underneath the sadness, I could also feel the essence of my mother and father as a deathless essence, and I don't even want to say whether reincarnation or no reincarnation, but every human being is like a spark of the divine. I see consciousness that is the essence of every human being, of every being, is like a ray of, if you take the analogy of God, let's say in this analogy God is the sun, and as you know in the past, in other cultures they worship the sun, because the sun is life-giving, it gives force of itself continuously, it gives and gives, it pours out energy continuously, and every life on this planet is the life of the sun. The warmth in your body comes from the sun, it's calories. So the sun is in you, the sun is can be used therefore as an analogy in the sense-perceived universe for God, which of course God is not in the sense-perceived universe, God transcends the sense-perceived universe or anything we could imagine, even talk about, and yet I'm talking about it.

And then you have the sun, then you have the sunlight, the sunlight comes from the sun, and the sunlight gives life to everything here. Now is the sunlight separate from the sun? No, it's an extension of the sun, it's not a separation, you can't even say exactly where the sun ends, it has no surface as such, so you could say that the sun ends wherever the light of the sun ends, which would be beyond the earth.

So this is an analogy then for what to me God is, and what consciousness is, to me the

consciousness that is the essence of every being, oh by the way, consciousness to me also manifests in every life form, that to me solid, so-called inanimate matter is like frozen consciousness, plant life is like consciousness in a different state, the human mind is like water, you can have water in different states, you can have water as ice, you can have water as liquid, you can have water as vapor, so consciousness can exist in many different states, but the entire life is an expression of the one consciousness which emanates from the source, from God, the central intelligence of all life, and so every human is an expression, a temporary expression of the central intelligence of all life, briefly, very brief, I mean on a cosmic scale every human life is a flicker, if you could see the planet, humans on the planet, a human life on the planet on a cosmic scale, one human life would go like, just a spark, and it's gone, and so there are billions of sparks on the planet, the one consciousness continuously expressing itself in forms, but of course we attach names to the sparks, so the essence of all life is really divine, consciousness is not God, in the same sense that the light is not the sun, and yet it is, so consciousness to me is the emanation of God, like the light of the sun, which expresses itself as the universe, and so as that, the essence of every human is immortal, because the one life is beyond life and death, it's eternal, God is eternal, it's not subject to time, it's only in this dimension that time seems to be real, so God expresses itself as you, as me, as even as the dog in a different form, as the flower, these are expressions of the one, and then when you recognize that, now does this particular expression of the one, which is a human being in a human body, does this particular expression of the one still continue in its seemingly separate, individualized state, even after the body has dissolved, so does this particular expression of consciousness that is you, or somebody close to you who died, does this particular expression of consciousness still continue to express itself as a particularized expression of consciousness, or does it immediately go back to the one consciousness, this is something that one can look at, my suggestion would be that for a while it continues on its journey as a seemingly separate entity, even after one particular body has dissolved, so in other words, it's not immediately absorbed in the oneness again, it continues for a while, as perhaps other separate existences, the journey continues, and so in that way, the universe becomes more and more conscious, now God exists in a transcendent dimension that is timeless, so in that sense, God does not need to become more conscious, but when God expresses itself in our dimension here, there is a seeming evolution of consciousness, in other words, one could say that God gradually is expressing him, her, itself, gradually, more and more fully in this dimension, and I think what I've just said now is the most one could say, because I've already said too much, because the mystery

[Speaker 8] (53:16 - 53:44)

of the universe cannot be contained in words. Questioner Hello.

[Speaker 3] (53:47 - 54:25)

My question is about charisma. It seems to be a phenomenon that we all recognize, but unlike embodying stillness, it doesn't seem to have an intrinsic, be intrinsically good or bad. We can say that Nelson Mandela has charisma, but Adolf Hitler must also have had charisma.

So my question is, what is the energy or the force behind charisma? Is it something that you're born with? Is it something that you can learn?

[Speaker 1] (54:26 - 1:20:28)

Ajahn Brahm Thank you. Thank you. You better sit down.

Yes, that's a very strange thing, isn't it? Some people seem to have some kind of emanation as personal power or something, sometimes people call it. Hitler probably had it, but other people who seem the opposite on the opposite polarity also had it.

Angela Merkel does not have it, and yet Angela Merkel is better for Germany than Hitler, much better. It seems that some people, at some point, they access something, a source of power, and I believe charisma is a manifestation of what is traditionally called chi or shakti or whatever. It's an inner power that comes and emanates through the person, and you may remember that I wrote somewhere that chi is the bridge between the unmanifested and the world of form.

So the unmanifested is totally beyond form, and then out of the unmanifested form is born, and forms also return into the unmanifested, but as I'm talking about something that is totally beyond words and becomes distorted, of course, and reduced the moment you talk about it, but let's do it anyway. So there's the unmanifested, and then the energy comes out. I would say that's what the beginning of the creative process, the energy that is the creative energy that then goes and creates form in this world, mental formation first, then physical formations, and there we have the energy in its half form-like state and half unformed state, which is chi, and some humans, in some humans, they have access to the chi, they're not just manifestations of it, they can connect with it at an earlier stage, and so it sometimes happens to people who have, for example, Nelson Mandela, if he has charisma, it probably happened because he was in prison for many, many years, which probably forced him to go within very deeply because there was nowhere to go without. So it forced him to go within very deeply, and then there was a source of power that he contacted which is chi power, and that power then was able to, he manifested that when he left prison. That power is beyond good and evil.

There are spiritual teachers who have it very strongly, some of them, but just to be connected to chi is not a guarantee that you're free of ego. It's only when you go deeper than chi and touch the unmanifested and realize that who you essentially are is beyond anything that has form, and chi is already moving into the world of form. That is the only place where the ego dissolves.

There are people who are powerful transmitters of chi and still have a huge ego. There are spiritual teachers where people go to them and they say, oh, I can feel his energy, and they get addicted to the energy they feel, so they all come and go. It's not a guarantee.

It may well be that the teacher is free of ego, but there's no guarantee that he is, and in some cases it turns out that there's a huge ego. In fact, the ego can become energized and magnified by somebody who touches that halfway power in him or her. It can magnify the ego and then you become a very powerful Genghis Khan or Hitler or, I don't know, Stalin, maybe he also had it, who knows.

And everybody listens to you when you speak and you project this energy and you influence people and have power over people and you love it, you love the power you have over people. But in the end it leads to your destruction. It's like the genie that comes out of the bottle, but in the end you encounter disaster.

If you magnify the ego, the end result is always magnified disaster. You can't have a good outcome if whatever an amplified ego produces will create disaster sooner or later. So that's how Hitler and Stalin and all those people, and it all ended in disaster.

So some have it, some don't. Those who are at the deepest level, those who embody the spaciousness also have an emanation that sometimes is not detected as easily by other humans. You need to be attuned to it to feel it.

Just Qi can be a very raw energy. There are people who can project Qi through their hands, they can light a fire with their hands. You just project the energy out through your hands.

Are you free of ego? Who knows? Maybe not.

Maybe your ego loves being able to do that and you build up a big ego. Or maybe you are free. We don't know.

But that in itself is not spiritual attainment. It's a great power, but the spiritual only comes in as you go deeper so that you realize who you are instead of identifying with an energy stream of Qi and think that that becomes part of your sense of self, which would be a magnified ego. So if energy moves through you, there is a famous word in cities in Indian spirituality, they have a wider vocabulary than we have in the West to describe these phenomena.

People who go very deep within and touch and access the transcendent dimension, sometimes they manifest what is in conventional language called supernatural powers. Certain things happen around them, the strangest things, and these in India are called siddhis, they are supernatural powers that are a by-product sometimes, but not always, of the transcendent dimension. A by-product of deep spiritual realization.

And all the great teachers will tell you that do not pay too much attention to the siddhis, the powers that arise as by-products of the deepest realization. When they are there, it's fine. They are there, you can acknowledge it, welcome it.

If you get attached to them or identify with them, it will lead you back into ego. And the same thing the teacher will tell his followers, don't get too attached if you observe certain powers arising, that's ultimately not it, it's a by-product no more. It is not, to develop certain powers is not the aim of spiritual awakening, it's a by-product sometimes of spiritual awakening.

So that's important to realize and every, all true teachers will tell you that. So if I appear to you in two places simultaneously, if I'm here and then somebody else sees me in Los Angeles at the same time, don't pay any attention to that. And if you live in a false identity, a conceptual identity that you allow the world to tell you who you are, you allow the world to determine your worth, so you've stopped thinking, the ripple has stopped thinking, and in that at first there is a strange, I'm not thinking about who I am or my problems, and yet what is left here is just a presence.

And that means the ripple is becoming aware of a transcendent dimension that is deep. And that is the awakening of the ripple, and that is the awakening of the ripple. And that is actually the main purpose of your life, is to become aware of that, because that is the awakening of the human species.

And the human species is only one manifestation of the consciousness of the universe manifesting here as a human species. I'm sure there are others on other planets or galaxies who are also awakening, and your purpose is that. You may sometimes question whether your life is this weird notion of life.

How do you judge your life so far? Success? Failure?

Something in between? And of course it's, yes, it's nice to achieve something in this world, to create this or that, but it cannot tell you who you are. It always leaves a sense of lack ultimately behind, even if you can hang on to it until finally you die and you have to let go.

Or it leaves you, either you leave it or it leaves you, whatever it is. It leaves you or you leave it. And many things leave you before you die.

Achievements too, especially in the age of reputation can leave you, especially in the age of Twitter. One wrong tweet and your entire life is destroyed. And if you live in a false identity, a conceptual identity that you allow the world to tell you who you are, you allow the world to determine your worth, you look to the world and other people to tell you that you are good.

And if you allow the world to tell you that, then it's ultimately, you're trapped in a

conceptual identity, that's me. And that can be destroyed. In the past you had to do a little bit more to destroy your reputation, but nowadays it's so easy.

Just tweet something and suddenly the hive mind will pounce on you and you have to say, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. And you can't show your face in public again anywhere. Exaggerating only slightly.

But that's all, it's so fragile because it's a fictitious sense of self. It's a surface I. But to lose your reputation or to lose your possessions or to lose your position is a wonderful opportunity for realizing who you are beyond your position and your possession and your achievements.

Some people need that. It's a blessing for them to lose, not everybody needs it, but many people need to lose some things very significant in their lives in order to bring about, to initiate the awakening process. And retrospectively, many humans look back and say they're really grateful that they lost this, which they regard as irreplaceable and extremely valuable.

And with that loss they lost mostly most part of their identity was a fiction anyway, but they didn't know that. And that led to suffering, of course. So the loss of fictitious identity, which can happen to anybody, to some people it doesn't happen until they retire.

They had a particular job title and suddenly if you pack your bags and you look forward to, okay, now I can start living. But then suddenly you realize you're nobody, beyond your job description and your function that you fulfilled for decades, perhaps an important function, member of the board. And suddenly you're not a member of the board, you're just bored.

But you have been looking forward to the golfing or there's a lot of golfing around here. Nothing against golf, can be wonderful meditation, but you've been looking forward to the golfing or whatever it is, you're very tired and I can start living. And you do some golfing and then you sit there and do a bit more golfing, whatever it is.

But who are you suddenly? You don't get these phone calls anymore, only very occasionally. And this great sense of something missing arises, oh, I'm nobody suddenly.

Yeah, because your entire life, your entire identity was built upon a fiction, a conceptual edifice in your head. And everybody else confirmed its truthfulness, but it wasn't. So the loss can be great, a great, great help, but it can be, most of you are not in desperate need of a huge loss, or it might happen, the universe gives you what you need, because you've already voluntarily come here.

You have voluntarily embarked upon a course of, to put it in blunt and somewhat scary terms, a course of meditation. A course of self annihilation. But it was only the surface

self, there was nothing real there.

So when you, for example, when you now, especially now during the COVID pandemic, especially in six months, when your practice is your inner state, the practice is becoming familiar with awareness, allowing awareness into your life, realizing that nothing is more important than that. And then the most important thing is, you discover your ability to refrain from thinking. It doesn't have to be long at first, just long.

Not just when you're meditating, say, okay, now I'm going to do a meditation. That's fine, it's good. But there's more, there's much more to it.

To refrain from thinking, in ordinary situations, when thinking is not required, simple thing like looking at flowers, looking around the room. Do you have to think while you look around the room? Or can you look around the room without thinking?

And who is looking when you're not thinking? Is the person looking when you have no labels for your perception? Or when you're listening to a bird or the sound of the ocean?

Or the sound of rain, which may be coming tomorrow? When you're listening to that, and you're not labeling it mentally, you're not saying anything about it, but there's an alert listening. Who is listening?

Are you then a person with a history and so on that's listening? Or is there a deeper eye that has emerged and the sensory perception is happening against the background of, or within the space of, that deep eye? So in that sense, you could say the universe is listening to itself.

And there is a, let's say there's the bird song, or there is the crushing of the waves, or there's the sound of the rain. And suddenly, that listening is an enormous addition to the universe. The universe is awakening to itself, its own depth, its own beauty, through you.

But you can only fulfill that function as part of the totality, the function of the awakening universe, if you're not excessively burdened and excessively trapped in your personalized sense of self. And because otherwise you carry the burden of your self, the surface self, the little self, but the little self can feel very huge. It occupies your entire mental and emotional space.

And it sings about itself, and it talks about itself, and it moans about itself. I am the most important thing in the universe. He's me and the rest of the universe.

Oh dear. And now, how do you become free of, how do you step out of this, the trap, the prison of the self? As the Buddha just called it, the self.

Jesus also called it the self. It's not a very well-known fact, because they don't understand it in the churches, most of them, some may do, but they don't understand

when he said, deny yourself. Jesus said, deny yourself.

Deny thyself, in the old translation. Meaning, obviously, you're not supposed to deny something that is real. The implication when Jesus says, deny thyself, is obviously that the self is not real.

Why would he ask you to deny something that is real? Would not make sense. And so the Buddha, of course, always pointed out to the, pointed to the fictitious nature of the self.

It said, Buddha said, self is an illusion. And as long as you are trapped, I'm paraphrasing the Buddha now, as long as you are trapped in the illusion of the self, you will encounter dukkha, translated as suffering. Sometimes translated as misery, or translated as unhappiness.

Suffering, misery, unhappiness, unsatisfactoriness. When you're trapped in that ultimately illusory self, you continuously generate dukkha, which is from the Pali language which is related to Sanskrit, meaning suffering, unhappiness, unsatisfactoriness. And wherever you go, whatever situation you go into, whatever relationship you go into, whatever place you go to, whatever attainment, whatever you attain or achieve, or get, there's always, sooner or later, and usually sooner, you will encounter the element of dukkha.

In other words, it gets tainted with unhappiness. And so the Buddha, that was the teaching of the Buddha, said wherever you go, you'll find dukkha. But why?

Because you take something that you are not to be real, and ultimately, who you are. And so that is a fiction. And therefore Jesus said, deny thyself.

Meaning, not deny the reality of yourself, meaning, deny the un-reality of yourself. Recognize the un-reality of yourself. That's the significant meaning of deny thyself.

Recognize the un-reality that is a denial of the self.

[Speaker 4] (1:20:55 - 1:21:11)

I read a quote where you were discussing people's food choices, and how that's connected maybe to their spirituality. And I'm wondering if you could elaborate on how that's connected, especially concerning ahimsa?

[Speaker 1] (1:21:13 - 1:41:11)

Thank you. I would say, I've never, as I never do, to tell people, you should do this, or you should not do that. But you should be present with whatever your food choices are, and then the right food choice will happen for you, rather than giving an abstract guideline.

It needs to come from within, rather than as something from without. So, if you are vegetarian, that's wonderful. It doesn't mean it immediately makes you into a person who is spiritual.

You could be egoically identified with being vegetarian, in which case it would be a hindrance to the realization of the spiritual dimension. So, I shocked a vegetarian once when I said, did you know that Hitler was a vegetarian? That person was very strongly identified with the mental image of me as a spiritually evolved vegetarian.

And so, yes, he was a vegetarian. I don't know why he was a vegetarian. Perhaps, I don't know, I haven't read about it, but I know that whenever people around Hitler were eating chicken soup, and so he said condescendingly, so you're eating dead bird soup.

So, it really is, it comes, the answer to that comes from within. Within you, and you have to do what feels right, what corresponds to your state of consciousness at any time, when you go into, when you even look at food, or even think of food. It is helpful to, sometimes when I buy some food, I go into a supermarket, and I look at the shelf, I imagine that this is going into my body, and then the body either opens up to it or closes down.

And so, if you're in touch with the body, then that is quite helpful, it makes it easier. The mind often doesn't really know what the body really wants. The mind remembers some past pleasure and wants to repeat it, and that's where overeating also occurs, because it's just, overeating is on the external level, on the physical level, the need to fill a sense of insufficiency that is ultimately there on the psychological, spiritual level, the sense of not enough is ego.

The ego lives from that sense of insufficiency, of not enough, and of needing more. And for some people that comes into the physical realm, in which case then you eat more than the body really needs or wants. And again, it's a spiritual dilemma and can only be really ultimately transcended if you realize that you are not that needy entity that says, I need more.

So body awareness helps a lot in food choice, and then it's up to you what it is that you feel, and you will know, you will not be in a dilemma, you will know what is right for you. And so this is, all important answers need to come from within you. And what you're experiencing here, realizing here, is the Tao, or consciousness of the Tao, in its pure form.

Well, I don't remember what I say it is, so let's see. Whatever you say about consciousness ultimately is not it, which is actually the first line in the Tao Te Ching, talking about the Tao. The Tao that can be spoken of is not the true Tao.

This is one of the translations, this is the first line in the Tao Te Ching. So in the widest

sense Tao can be equated with consciousness, and the moment you speak about consciousness, consciousness becomes an object. But this is the reason why Lao Tse, the author of the Tao Te Ching says, the moment you speak about it, realize that it's not it.

Because the moment you speak about it, it becomes an object of thought. Whereas the essence of consciousness is that it is the eternal subject. So consciousness, you cannot understand it, you cannot understand what it is, you can only realize it as the essence of who you are.

And instead of talking about it right now, I suggest that you, I, right now, see if we can realize it as the essence of who we are. Realize or even just get a glimpse of what is meant by consciousness. And you might notice that the words I'm speaking are slowing down a bit.

And if you are listening attentively, then your attention will be such that you tune in completely to the words which arise out of thought and make them your own. So as I speak, these words are perceived as by you and they become thoughts in your mind. And if you're very attentive, then you don't add any other thoughts.

So you can actually experience this moment of me speaking in the same way in which I experience this moment. I experience this moment as I am speaking thoughts that become words arising spontaneously. But I'm slowing down, which means in addition to the thoughts and words arising, there are gaps in this discourse.

There are gaps between words and sentences, although there's lots of gaps. And if you're attentive enough, then you will also become aware of these gaps. So you're aware of the words which are only pointers right now.

The words that I'm speaking right now are only pointers that point your attention towards the gaps where there are no words and no thoughts. So you become aware of the words, yes, which are the objects that arise in consciousness. And if you're attentive enough, you're also aware of the spaces, gaps, spaces between the words and the sentences between the words.

And while you're aware of these gaps, you realize that you're not actually aware of any object. A gap or a space is not an object. It cannot be an object.

When you talk about it, it becomes an object. But when you experience the gap, it is just a space. It's not an object.

And so what is it that you experience? There is just a spacious presence. It has no content.

And what you're experiencing here, realizing here, is the Tao or consciousness in its pure form, its pure, no form, which is the Tao, which is the Tao before it becomes something,

before it becomes a thought or words. So right now, you're aware of sense perceptions because you can still see me. You're aware of the words.

But more importantly, you are aware that you are aware. You know yourself as this aware presence, space. Without that space, that aware space, there would be no sense perception.

It is the light of consciousness in which all the objects of consciousness are perceived. Most people are not aware of themselves as consciousness. They're only aware of the object that arise in consciousness.

And their sense of identity also, their sense of who they are, ultimately, is an object that arises in their consciousness. That's me. This is my story, me and my story, my identity.

I am this and that and that and all those things together, that's me. But they're all thought forms or emotional forms that arise in consciousness. They are an object in consciousness.

And this object in consciousness, for most people, is the foundation of their sense of identity. But that, unfortunately, is an enormous limitation and, ultimately, a misperception of who they actually are. Most people's sense of identity, therefore, is based on a misperception.

Because who you truly are is not an object in consciousness. That's ephemeral. It's here for a while, then it evaporates.

Who you truly are is a space of consciousness itself. And so you become aware of an underlying presence, just to use a word. And a wakefulness, a certain alertness, a stillness.

But not a stillness that is asleep, an alert stillness. That's the realization of consciousness, of yourself as consciousness. That frees you from this misperception that you are an object that arises in consciousness, the egoic self.

That has its place, of course. You have a past. You have certain conditioning.

Your mind, your mental, emotional field is conditioned in certain ways. And that conditioning becomes the person or the personality. But there's a deeper dimension, a transcendent dimension to your identity.

And if you realize that, that's an enormous liberation from this extremely limited and, ultimately, erroneous sense of self that is the person. And now the interesting thing is you can actually sense this presence that you are in the background of your life at all times. Now you may not be able to do that yet.

It may become obscured many times. And then, again, you become identified completely

with the conditioned mind, with the personality, with the person, with its reactive patterns, its conditioned likes and dislikes and opinions and so on. And then, suddenly, again, you know yourself as this alert stillness.

So it's deeply satisfying to know that there's infinitely more to you than your personality. So you're no longer, you still have a personality, but it's no longer a prison. It's no longer your prison.

You're no longer totally confined within it. You're aware of a transcendent dimension to who you are. And this is, this can only be realized directly.

So the answer to the question, how do you know that consciousness is what you're saying it is, is quite simply this. The cessation of thought and what remains is the unconditioned consciousness. That's who you are in your essence, but that's not only who you are.

That is also, and more fundamentally, who or what the universe is in its essence. It is a disguised desire also for God. But those who are trapped in ego don't know that what they are really looking for is not the house or the car or the recognition from others or the fame.

What they're really looking for is themselves.

[Speaker 5] (1:41:18 - 1:42:20)

Hello, Eckhart. The question that I submitted was, what is the fundamental difference between your teaching of presence and the current popular teaching of the law of attraction? Behind that teaching is really a question about desire.

And I have always felt very drawn to the Sufi teaching which says, hidden deeply within my desire is the desire of God. And yet, the law of attraction people are saying you can have or do or be anything you want if you think and feel in a certain way. And I always feel a red flag when I hear that because I think the ego could go wild with that.

So my question is, is there a deeper fundamental level of desire which is not of the ego?

[Speaker 1] (1:42:28 - 2:25:18)

The Sufis are right, of course, when they say that ultimately every desire is really a disguised desire for God. It's a disguised desire for ultimate satisfaction and fulfillment and being fully and truly, completely who you are. And basically, we're talking about the source, realizing the source of all life.

Everyone is longing for that, but in most humans still, the longing for what I sometimes call the return journey to where you came from, the source of all life, but never really left the source, of course. It's not really a journey, but it's words. There's a longing to return

to the very source of life, and it's really only then, when you have discovered it, found it consciously, then there's a completion there of life.

That's what the universe wanted. It wanted not, it wants two things. If you observe yourself, you know that this is true and you are the universe, so you can learn a lot about the universe by observing yourself, because you are it, and it is you, and as above, so below.

The tendency, or the desire, to create, the human being has the tendency to create. There's a desire to create in the world of form, to bring things, to give birth to whatever it may be. It may be a material thing, it may be something else, but there's a desire in humans to participate in the act of creation, which, of course, the act of creation is there even without humans.

The millions of life forms on this planet alone come into being every moment. Millions of life forms of different kinds, it staggers the imagination, how many different life forms on this planet alone are being created every moment, and of course die at the same time, continuous. Birth, death, birth, death, continuously.

Humans too, humans are being created every moment. I can say a human being is being born now, now, now, now, now, somewhere on the planet, and a human being is dying a little bit slower, now, now, now, now. At this moment, somebody is dying on the planet, and again, and again, and again, and being born.

So that's, there's the act of creation that the universe is engaged in, and creation is becoming, is increasing in complexity. If you look at our planet alone, you see that there was a time when it was barren, there was only minerals. Then came plant life, and then other levels of life, increasing complexity.

Like a tree, first there's only one branch, the stem, one branch, and then a lot more smaller branches coming out of that, so it grows, and it goes into complexity. And even human life forms, if you go back in human history, human society and the human being was relatively simple thousands of years ago, even a few hundred years ago compared to now. There's much less complexity in people's personal lives, what they had to deal with, and the collective.

So there's the, the universe then is growing in complexity and is indulging in or wanting or delighting, perhaps, in the act of creation, because otherwise it wouldn't be happening. It is a desire of the universe to create, and that's what it does, and that is reflected in humans. We participate in the, this wanting to give birth, so the human, the act of creation can happen to the human, the human can create, and that's, in that sense we are different from animals, because we can create all kinds of things that are totally new.

We can create music, science, and many, many other things, art, philosophies, pictures, movies, organizations, Wall Street, all kinds of things, and you can probably find in yourself that there's part of you that would like to do and participate in the act of creation and bring something into this world that wasn't here before, in the world of form. Maybe it's a book you want to write, or a piece of music, or you want to create an enlightened organization that changes things in the world, or whatever, or you want to, to help people who are suffering, you create a structure that is helpful, but you create something. There's that desire to, or in some people it is more fundamental, it's a desire to acquire something.

Some people who are very much in the egoic consciousness don't see it so much as giving out into this, giving from your treasure, and then create something. You must to some extent have already gone beyond ego if you, the creationist comes from the fullness that you sense inside you, and from there you can truly create, this is really presence. In the egoic consciousness they're also very interested in the world of form, but it's the egoic consciousness is not so much, doesn't come from the wanting to give, but wanting to have.

So the ego goes, what can I get? And the, from presence, when you participate in the creation, it's more what can I give birth to? That's the difference, so there is the egoic aspect of increasing complexity in the world of form, and life forms, the egoic part is wanting something, so the ego comes not from fullness, but from neediness, from a sense of not enough.

And so it says, where can I get, and that is the ego desire, the ego says, I desire that car because I will really feel better when I'm sitting in that car and driving it, especially if other people see me in it. Without other people it doesn't really work, because it's only, okay it's comfortable for the ego, yes it's a comfortable ride, but that's not such a big thing, it only begins to work for the ego if other people have cars that are not like mine, then it works. The same with a house, or whatever you acquire, any possession, you can perfectly enjoy a nice house, or a nice car, without the ego deriving any pleasure from it or enhancing itself, I'm not saying things cannot be enjoyed, if you have no ego you can still enjoy lovely things, but not because they add to your sense of self, it's a simple enjoyment of a beautiful thing that perhaps a human has created, a beautiful piece of furniture, beautiful, could be a house, you enjoy that house. You would probably not want to acquire a 20 bedroom house for yourself when you're not coming from ego, it's unlikely that presence would say, I'd love a 20 bedroom house.

We have, so the, I suppose the egoic aspect of wanting to, not so much the ego, not so much create, but have, but it's a world of form, and the non-egoic desire of the universe to give birth to more forms and experience more forms. So the universe does it without the humans, but an added dimension comes in when the universe or the greater intelligence or consciousness creates through the humans, a completely new level of

creation comes in. And this is why we have the expression, we become co-creators with God, God creates the fishes in the sea and the plant life and all the animals and the human bodies, and then through the human form, the human mind, including thought, the universe can create things that wouldn't be there without the human co-creators.

So that's, desire as such is really an egoic phenomenon. When you create beyond ego, it's not so much a creation out of desire, it's a creation, because desire implies some kind of lack. Creation comes as wanting to give from the fullness that you sense within you.

Something wants to be, the way I perceive when I wrote the books, the books wanted to come out and I could feel it wanted to be created. It's not so much that I had a desire to write a book, the book wanted to come, and so that is creation when it's not, does not come from ego. The desire of the ego, as I mentioned earlier just now, if you look deeply, it is a disguised desire also for God, for spiritual realization.

But those who are trapped in ego don't know that what they are really looking for is not the bank account or the house or the car or the recognition from others or the fame or whatever it is that the ego thinks would give it fulfillment. What they are really looking for is themselves, a fuller version of themselves. And who are you in your essence?

You are the source. Who you are in your essence is consciousness itself, which is, if God is the sun, so to speak, an analogy, then the light of the sun is, you are, the consciousness is the light of the sun. God is the source, the unmanifested, of which you cannot speak because whatever you say is a distortion, it's absurd to speak of that mystery as the Tao Te Ching says, you can't speak of the Tao, and nevertheless we are speaking, and nevertheless the Tao Te Ching did get written in words.

And the people who are impelled by egoic desire eventually experience frustration and suffering, even if they attain an egoic state, and particularly if they attain whatever they desired, because then they realize, no, this doesn't seem to work, I'm still, I still feel this unfulfillment, perhaps even more strongly when you no longer have anything that you could mentally project yourself to and say, when I have that, I'll be okay.

And so when you have everything that this world can offer you, some people do, not many, most people are wanting, want that, desire that, but those few who do, I've met a few, who have everything, and they can either realize the futility of desiring things that ultimately cannot give them themselves ultimate fulfillment, ultimate satisfaction, a sense of permanency, vibrantly alive inner peace, these things can't give that to you.

But in the meantime, as long as the egojis don't know that, they are free to practice manifesting, they are free to practice, okay, I need to manifest the car, I need to manifest the house, I need to manifest this, and they, to some extent it can work. You're a little bit hampered when you're coming from ego consciousness, so your powers of

manifestation are limited, nevertheless you have some. In addition, what the ego also manifests, of course, it's its own dysfunction that comes with the house and the car, so what we're not mentioning here is that while the ego can manifest a house and a car and whatever else it wants, it will also manifest the drama in the marriage that's in the house, the drama with the wife and the husband in the big house, that's a side manifestation of the ego that it hadn't planned that, but because of its inbuilt dysfunction, it also manifests continuous conflict around whatever else it manifests.

So it's a, and eventually you realize that this does not provide you with satisfaction, and then you begin to awaken. So, am I, I'm, there are then two ways of manifesting the ego. One comes with the ego's neediness to manifest, and another is out of the fullness of presence you can manifest.

You, even coming from the fullness of presence, presence can use also the human mind, because presence flows through the, can flow through the mind and can energize your thoughts, your thought structures, and they're no longer dysfunctional, and whatever the, whatever presence wants to manifest through you, it can and it can use the power of thought to manifest, but it will come from a giving behind it, it's a desire to give, a wanting to give, not to get.

So, thought can be used, and it used more powerfully when the ego is no longer interfering, but presence, when the human becomes co-creator with God, then presence can flow into the human mind and use also human thought and create original things out there, and that's a beautiful thing. What part does willpower play in the awakening process, if any? Don't I use some willpower to motivate myself to follow your teachings?

I must listen to Icarus now. I don't want to, but I have to. So it's not willpower, because if you use willpower and you listen because you think you should be listening or you're a spiritual person and you should be listening to a spiritual talk to just prove to yourself that you're spiritual, or you're determined to awaken.

No, there is something in you that wants to listen and that responds, and that in you that wants to listen has nothing to do with willpower. It's an energy field that rises up, and whatever, the only way you can listen to any spiritual teaching is from that deeper level, not from the conceptual mental level, and whenever you listen to a spiritual teaching, it's always from the deeper place. It's always a recognition of what you already knew deep down.

So the truth is always recognized because it comes from, you listen from the same place from where the teaching arises, and so it recognizes itself. The truth, you already know it, even though it may be too deep for you to access it for yourself, then you listen to a spiritual teaching and suddenly the truth that is in you is called forth and drawn out and responses, oh yeah, and you immediately sense, that's it, yes. Why didn't I know that before?

Of course, you did know it before because now you recognize it. Now there's something else in you that does not want to listen. The egoic entity may sometimes take over and say something like, I can't deal with that spiritual stuff now, it's just too much, what's the point of all this?

It's not getting me anywhere, is it? I've been doing that for years, where's it getting me? Nowhere.

The story in the head. And then you believe in what it says, and sometimes it can stop people temporarily from going to the spiritual teaching, but then if that goes on for long enough, you start to suffer more and more. And finally the suffering becomes the thing that awakens you again, that creates the gap or the opening in you and you're ready, ah, now you want to listen again.

Can't stand the suffering anymore. So willpower is not it. Now it may sometimes look to, at first sight, it may look, when I say be present, you can choose to be present.

When there's a certain level of presence in you already, you can choose to be present rather than to drift back into your mind. And there is an alertness associated with presence, but it is a relaxed alertness, not a tight alertness. It's not, it's not a, no, it's a, you see the difference?

It's easier acting it out than talking about it. It's not, it's not the tight, almost fearful alertness that is there, or even some anger behind it. It's a relaxed alertness, so it's almost, it might seem incompatible almost, relaxed alertness, but it's not.

So the alertness has an intensity to it. And, but that's not willpower. The non-relaxed alertness has an element of willpower in it, and that's not it.

You can sometimes see in paintings or drawings of Zen masters, that alertness, that intensity, that willpower alertness, and in Zen masters, that particular version of spiritual awakening, there is a fierceness. There's a fierceness to the way they look sometimes in the ancient drawings, and there is also a fierceness to the way in which they teach. And it's partly culturally conditioned because everything comes through the particular veil.

The teaching is the same, no matter what cultural veil or conditioned veil it comes through, but the way it manifests can be conditioned by a culture, or in the case of the teacher, it can be conditioned by the energy field of the teacher. Some teachers are, seem more forthright and aggressive almost. It's not really aggressive, but it might look so to the ego.

So there can be, there's a fierceness sometimes to the alertness, which is sometimes required to break through all the mental stuff you need to go into. Now whether you look fierce at the same time, doesn't matter, you can. But if you look at the greatest drawings of Zen masters, at first sight they look fierce.

If you look more closely, you'll see that behind the fierceness, there's a compassion and a gentleness. And of course, those can only be done by artists who are masters who can capture what the inner reality of the Zen master, which is both the fierceness and behind it is hiding compassion. The same applies to meditation practice.

Willpower is not a good way to ensure that your meditation practice is successful. In other words, it doesn't work. Because willpower in meditation is the famous lid on the boiling kettle.

You're holding it down, forcing yourself to be still instead of surrendering into the present moment so that stillness arises naturally, forcing yourself to be still. And then that may work for a while. And when the next episode of unconsciousness happens, which will be soon, when you go back into your normal life after the meditation, you come downstairs into the building and you're shouting at somebody.

And everybody's disturbing your serenity. So when you realize that what's important is already here and not in the next moment, what really matters, that means you already have shifted to a different state of consciousness. Very simple, just that realization.

But it's so deeply ingrained, the illusion that you believe, the unconscious assumption that the next moment matters more than this one. Everybody inherits that mind pattern. And that makes life very frustrating.

You all know that. Life consists only ever of this moment. So we are here to go deeper into this moment and not wait for something more significant in the next one.

So we become comfortable with being here now and get rid of the illusion that there is something important missing from your life. Or there's something not quite right that hasn't arrived yet. Something, a very deep-seated illusion.

There's something not right. But it's going to be right perhaps one day. The person who is still deluded by worldly things believes it's going to be right when this or that happens or I attain this or that.

And the spiritual seeker believes it's going to be right when I become enlightened. In both cases, it's future, the promise of that. And you're continuously overlooking something vital that is very easy to overlook because the movement of thought is so seductive and hypnotic.

There's a light in you, not a visual light, a presence that is essentially who you are and has nothing to do with your past or future. And we are here to become familiar with being that presence consciously. If it feels good and right for you this moment to be here and to hear this and almost, let's say, to recognize the truth of it, that means that's it.

Just a sense of goodness and rightness of being here, that means that dimension that

has no form is already arising. So for example, St. Francis of Assisi, he was born as the son of a very fairly wealthy merchant in Italy. And he was so disgusted by his father's wealth and consumption and that he told, there were very few spiritual who rejected all material things so completely.

He was the ultimate hippie before hippies. So he didn't, he would always go barefoot, have no possessions whatsoever. I don't want anything, no nothing material.

And so he, and many people joined him, young men, often some women, they joined him and wanted to live like him. It seemed a wonderful thing. And then gradually his teaching spread and more people joined the order.

And then they had to come to the church, it was becoming suspicious. He had to go and visit the Pope and ask to have permission to have an order and so on, and he had to do that. There's a wonderful scene in a movie, Brother, Son, Sister, Moon, where St. Francis visits the Pope. It's a beautiful scene. And then as the movement grew, and St. Francis got older, the order started to have possessions. They had, beginning to have buildings and lands.

And he was so disgusted by this, he didn't want to have much to do with it. He let other people run it. I don't want it anymore.

He didn't like. But if that had not happened, the entire Franciscan movement would have evaporated after his death. It needed to be somehow rooted in the materiality, the physicality of things.

Jesus lived by, was supported by women, mostly. Strangely enough, many people don't know that. And it's only said in one line in the New Testament, where many women followed him and served him with their possessions, with their money.

So if you, and then how would some, let's say, a publication, a Western publication, where Jesus lived nowadays, a Western publication would say, he's exploiting this, look at this spiritual teacher. He's exploiting these women. He's taking all their money.

This would be the headline. Some of them have left their families, and he just dreadful charlatan, look what he's doing. So there's no clear, everybody has to decide for themselves what they feel comfortable with.

If you are a spiritual teacher, what is it that you feel comfortable with? Do you chant? Do you say donation?

Whatever you do, somehow you need some money. And if you go to a spiritual teaching also, you can see, do you feel comfortable with paying something or not? If you don't feel comfortable, go somewhere else where you don't pay.

You can go to a Buddhist monastery, and for a while you don't pay. If you go there a few times, they're going to look at you and say, well, where's your donation? I mean, you need, it wouldn't make sense.

So there was a time when after my shift in consciousness, when I explored, I had this need to explore all kinds of spiritual traditions. And I went, I tried everything, because I didn't understand what had happened to me. I, eventually the understanding came through Buddhist teachings, and then I understood, oh, this is what it is about.

It's a cessation of thinking. When a Buddhist, a Zen monk said to me, well, Zen is about not thinking. And I said, that was a revelation to me.

Not thinking. And then I realized that I was doing very little thinking. But I only experienced the not thinking as inner peace.

I didn't know it was not thinking. But anyway, I explored other things, causing miracles. There were workshops.

I went to, wanted to know, what's the cause in miracles? I read, very interesting. I went to Scientology.

I never became a member. I did one test. I just wanted to, but they were so, the guy who was doing it was so stupid that I didn't even want to know his interpretation of my test.

But then I went to other workshops. There were some workshops charge money, and occasionally I was so interested that, okay, this one charge is 500 pounds for the weekend. Well, I don't have 500 pounds.

And I remember, okay, I need to get a job. I need to make, I was really interested. I can't remember what it was.

There are so many things. I need 500 pounds. Okay.

I remember what job I got to get the 500 pounds for two weeks. I got a job at the Kennel Club in London, registering dogs on little cards. What's the name of the dog?

They were all coming in, every day they were coming in. I had to open the envelope, register breed, name, age, gender, all called, there were no computers then. Okay.

And after two weeks, I had enough money to join the workshop. It wasn't very good, but at least I knew that wasn't for me. And I never felt, oh, these people are terrible.

If they want that money and people do it, perhaps it's worth it. Perhaps it's a wonderful thing. It happened not to be a wonderful thing.

So, generally speaking, you're very right. Money can make people very unconscious.

Even just some people, even just beginning to talk about money, especially people who have had an experience of scarcity in their childhood and whose parents were fearful around money.

And money was always discussed in their family with negative emotions. There was never enough and so on. So, I know I've met people who were relatively conscious in most of their lives, except the moment when money was mentioned.

Then immediately it pulled them into unconscious reactivity. And not just necessarily huge amounts of money, it could just be, he charged me too much, it was $10 too much. The entire bill was $200, but the $10, it's terrible.

So, just mention money and they become unconscious. For some people, there are other triggers that still make it. Maybe some of you have certain triggers that make you unconscious.

Whenever you think about it or talk about it, it could be, for example, your ex-spouse. Whenever you think or talk about him or her, you go, awful. Or it could be money, or it could be something else, some other, your pet subject that you feel something in politics.

That's the moment it's mentioned, you go react, become reactive. But for many people, it's money. So, you need to observe that money is only, one could see symbolic energy, it symbolizes energy.

And in itself is not problematic, but for many people, it becomes associated with fear, the fear of not enough, and also ego. It becomes associated with ego. So, how much money you have determines your worth.

How much, this is a weird expression, how much is he worth? That's ridiculous. So, what's your relationship with money?

[Speaker 3] (2:25:20 - 2:25:29)

It's one which has evolved over time, and now it's a place where I see it as symbolic energy, and that's what I'm going and teaching the world about. Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (2:25:29 - 2:35:11)

Yeah, good. That's good. I'm doing good with the money.

Not everybody, almost nobody knows what exactly I do with it. I feel like Jesus' advice when you give something, don't let the left hand know what the right hand is doing, or something like that. So, nobody knows, because it can so easily become ego.

I met somebody last year, lovely, wonderful man. He's doing such good in the world, and

he's very wealthy, but he's not here, so I'm just saying it. He probably won't even know I'm referring to him, but soon after meeting him, he gave me a list.

He pronounced, well, I'm engaged in the following charities, this one. I've been supporting this charity for 15 years, and then I'm supporting this, and then I created that charity. It's wonderful work, but I could see he was already spiritually awakening, but his ego was clinging to his charity.

So, he's doing good, but it's not doing him much good, not his ego. So, it's better to give anonymously, as I often do, to give anonymously. People don't even know where it's coming from.

It's a lovely way of giving. Marina asks, from North Carolina, in my efforts to be in the now, I find I'm able to reach a state of peace and connectedness. I think that I wouldn't call it effort, but I know what you mean.

It feels complete and fulfilling, and yet there's a voice in my mind saying that to be truly connected, I should find a way to be in service to others. Can you help me understand the role that being in service to others plays in the evolutionary impulse of the universe? Thank you for bringing a ray of hope to humanity.

It is an interesting synchronicity to me that the day of your program launch is also my birthday. Happy birthday. The evolutionary impulse of the universe, the arising of presence, you cannot not be of service to others as presence arises, one way or another.

The way in which you are of service to others will vary from person to person. You may not immediately know what your way is. Again, the mind sometimes wants to know too soon, okay, what am I going to do with it now?

I'm present. Be present. And gradually, the realization of how you are to serve others, whether it's through direct spiritual teaching or whether it's through some activity into which the energy frequency of presence flows, you don't know.

It may come to you. It might take a while. It took years for this teaching to come out of the state of presence, so many years.

It may take a while, or it may happen very quickly. There is an acceleration happening on the planet now of the arising of presence, so it's probably happening more quickly to you than to me. How to be of service to others, whether it's through direct spiritual teaching or some activity, it will come to you either through an external circumstance that will tell you what it is that you need to do.

It can come from the outside as a synchronistic event, and many people are telling me that they're finding that things that are just right as they live more and more in presence come into their lives, the right offer, the right meeting, the right person, and suddenly

what it is that you need to do arises from the outside. It comes, or you wake up one morning with the realization of, this is what I need to do, and then I would wait and see just to make sure that it comes from a deep enough place, and if it's still there the next day and a week later and there's a deep sense of peace with it and power, then it comes from a deep place and then it's good to act on it. This is how I got taken away from living in England.

I loved England, but one morning I knew I have to remove myself without knowing why, and it was so strong that I removed myself. I knew I had to go to the west coast of North America, not knowing why, and it took a while before I got rid of everything, removed myself, landed on the west coast. What now?

Don't know. And so I sat there for a few weeks in presence, and the mind, yes, came in occasionally and said, this is, why did you come here? And the mind even got, started to look at ads for flying back to England, fares, and then at some point the impulse came to buy a notepad, to carry the notepad, not home, I didn't have a home, somebody had put me up, and there in his kitchen the pen came and a very strong impulse came to write, and I wrote, what is enlightenment?

Somebody had once asked me that, but I hadn't, I remembered more or less what I had said, but that was a new stream that came, and I'd written one page and I knew this is a book, it's coming, and so there was simply something I couldn't have predicted, obedience to what came out of the present moment, and the trust to go just into the, with a limited amount of money, into complete unknown, but don't do it on an impulse that is a restless kind of impulse, or that comes out of any kind of negative emotion, and see if it's still with you after a while, then it's right, it's peaceful and it's powerful. It seemed the book could only be written on the west coast of North America because of the energy field there. I realized that later when I went back to England, the writing stopped, I could only do editing, and so all kinds of things people will be called upon to serve in all kinds of capacities according to your abilities.

It may be that you produce something artistic or music that is inspiring to many people, whatever it is, we don't know. It may be that you set up a business and everybody who comes there is greeted for who they are, so you recognize everybody as spirit, as consciousness, and everybody who comes away from your business feels lighter and more themselves. Many things can be used as excuses for spiritual transmission and spiritual teaching, and if you already have some business or some activity, it is quite possible that this could continue to be used then as a vehicle for transmission of spiritual energy, and then it will become empowered.

Beautiful thing. There's no predicting how this will change your life, except that it will change your life, and even if some people may not remove themselves, they may stay where they are, and yet it will change, might not change what you do, but it will

fundamentally change how you do what you do. That's always the most important thing, it's not what you do, it's how you do it, what is the consciousness that flows into it, is it the egoic consciousness or is it the unconditioned consciousness?

[Speaker 7] (2:35:32 - 2:35:35)

To be enlightened, how does it feel like?

[Speaker 1] (2:35:44 - 2:35:45)

Feels good.

[Speaker 7] (2:35:45 - 2:36:06)

I mean, I need to know what I'm doing, you know, so I think I have to go through the mental process of understanding this, and what will I get out of this?

[Speaker 1] (2:36:06 - 2:44:39)

The motivation to seek enlightenment can be of various kinds, some work better than others. There's a danger that the search for enlightenment is ego-motivated, that can easily happen. The ego feels a sense, which is quite normal, of lack or dissatisfaction with the things, either the things it has or the things it has already achieved and didn't fulfill it, and then it went on to something else, and that wasn't quite that fulfilling either, and then it reads or hears something about the possibility of achieving a state of enlightenment.

Well, that sounds much better than all the things I've been looking for so far, because those things haven't satisfied me, so I'm going to go for that. And then the ego creates, of course, a goal, I want to reach that goal, in the same way that before it created other goals that it either reached or did not reach, either way it wasn't satisfying. You might have heard the saying, there are two ways of being unhappy, one is not getting what you want, the other is getting what you want.

That's when the ego operates, that's the case. So, either it achieved already what it wanted and it didn't satisfy it, or it couldn't achieve it, and now it's looking for something else that maybe it could achieve, and enlightenment seems a good option, because the Ferrari, that didn't satisfy me, and then I tried the Lamborghini and that didn't satisfy me, and then I tried whatever else, didn't satisfy me, but enlightenment, that's it, I want to go for that.

And then, of course, it wants to know, okay, but what exactly does that mean? I want to know what I'm striving towards, because it might be the wrong thing, maybe when I achieve it, I won't be there anymore, or maybe the only way to achieve it is for me to dissolve. I don't know if I want it anymore.

I think I'm going to ask Eckhart that question. So, what I can tell you, in addition to what I've already said, is enlightenment will not satisfy your ego. Sorry about that.

Ego needs to be recognized as an illusion, an ultimate fiction in your mind for something else to emerge, and in that sense, one can say nobody actually becomes enlightened. You don't become enlightened, but when you get out of the way, there it is. So enlightenment is not something you can actually achieve, and I have no feeling that I achieved anything or that I am enlightened.

I said it feels good because just the present moment feels good, that's all I know. So, even to make that claim, I am enlightened, is ultimately, cannot be correct, because who is saying that? Who is making that claim?

So, in ultimate terms, you cannot be enlightened, but if you, the person, recognize its ephemeral nature and you no longer see your sense of self there, then something else is suddenly there that has always been there, but you just didn't know it. It was obscured. It was continuously overlooked.

The presence of consciousness was continuously overlooked in every experience. You could have been conscious of it at any moment, but it was overlooked because the hypnotic nature of the sensory world, and especially of the mind, was so overpowering that you overlooked something more essential in you that has always been there, is always there, will always be there. So, and therefore, if the motivation to seek so-called enlightenment comes from that place of seeking some permanent fulfillment, then it's not going to work, and there are spiritual practitioners, without knowing it, they spend years and years looking for that thing, and they're mentally projected into this place called future, which, by the way, only exists as a thought, but has no reality as such. There is no future except as a thought in your head.

Nobody has seen future, touched it, been there. You can't. It's not there.

Life is now, always. There is no future. So if you seek a future state, it's misleading, and if you seek enlightenment in the future, that very search is the obstacle.

So there can, however, there can be another motivation for seeking enlightenment, but then I would suggest a different word for it, and not enlightenment, but liberation. And that motivation can be not to find some greater fulfillment, but that motivation can be to become free of suffering. So there can be another motivation for seeking enlightenment, but although I would prefer the term liberation here, or in Christian terminology, a related word that's used in Christian terminology is salvation.

So if the suffering in your life gets too much, and then realizing that there is a way beyond suffering and wanting to know more about that, that is a better motivation for finding liberation than seeing what can I get out of it when I finally get enlightened. And

of course, the answer is, the one that's asking that question won't be even there to experience it. If we do not take action, I do not believe that the planet will become destroyed, but we will destroy ourselves.

[Speaker 5] (2:44:39 - 2:45:27)

I don't really have a formulated question, but I'd like to hear you talk for a second. It's kind of been hinted at here and there, but talk more specifically about the situation of the planet, the ecological situation, you know, without panicking, without getting self-righteous, and all these other things. Clearly, a change of consciousness is necessary, but things also have to be done in real time, because these are processes happening in time.

And so, just if you had anything at all to say about that, and how these two processes of consciousness, and also changing things, doing whatever would be necessary for the planet, how this works together.

[Speaker 1] (2:45:27 - 3:01:47)

Yes, thank you. Are you engaged in that kind of work? To some extent, and hoping to be more, yes.

Well, one thing, as you know, I don't need to say it again, the foundation for any action you take is to let it arise from presence, rather than from a feeling of fear, or anger, because those two are not very productive. What comes out of fear or anger is not productive. Presence is much more powerful.

There's an enormous power in presence, and true intelligence, intelligent, really intelligent action comes out of presence. So, that's vital to know. There are many things that need changing in our relationship with the planet.

Things seem to be going the wrong way right now. All I can say is, do as much as you can to help change the way in which we live on this planet. Do what you can, with peace in your heart.

That's the main thing, with peace in your heart, because otherwise, without peace, the opposite of peace is war and conflict. So, if we don't destroy the planet, we destroy ourselves through war and conflict. The planet, there's more to the planet, this is my intuitive realization, by the way.

There's more to the planet than we realize. The planet is a being. It's not a rock floating in space with things growing on top.

The planet is a living being. Many humans or scientists cannot accept that. What I mean is, it is pervaded by an intelligent energy field in the same way that your body is

pervaded and held together and run by an underlying intelligence that keeps everything, the thousands of functions in your body, because the planet is another kind of body.

The thousands of functions that need to be constantly coordinated and controlled that keep this body alive, keep the atoms and molecules together, keep the organs from cooperating. No human or the greatest computer could possibly do that. Even now, we only understand a fraction of how our physical body operates.

There's a vast intelligence built into it. When that intelligence says goodbye, then very quickly, the atoms and molecules say goodbye to each other, too, and then they depart, and then the form dissolves. The planet is also an intelligence, a being that is intelligent, and it has produced us in a way, not alone.

There have been other factors. The sun is also more than a fireball. We think the sun is a ball of just energy.

There's more to it than that. We think the sun is extremely hot. Well, hot is one way, but really what that means is the energy of highest intensity, which our physical body registers as extreme heat.

The sun is also a celestial being. You don't need to believe me, by the way, but I'll just tell you what my intuitive realization is. And the planet has an intelligence also that we need to, one reason why we need to be active in protecting the planet, so that we don't use these absurd ways of the resources of the planet, the absurd ways of getting energy.

We need to go beyond that. There are other ways. The universe is infinitely abundant.

The energy on the external level, the energy, obviously inexhaustible energy comes continuously from the sun. And all the other energy forms that we discover on the planet are really transformed sun energy. It was once sun energy.

So, and to use those is a very primitive way of using energy. And we need to, as soon as possible, and this is the task of scientists and so on, who also need to be present to go beyond those primitive ways of using the energy that's left over by sun energy on the planet. The planet, if we do not take action, I do not believe that the planet will become destroyed, but we will destroy ourselves.

Or the planet, which has an intelligence, but it's just slow, because to a planet, a hundred years is nothing, 200 years is nothing, one second in your lifetime or less. The planet, if the planet feels threatened by humans, I firmly believe that it will eliminate humans. It can do that very easily.

We are, because we are connected, our physical form is connected to the energy field of the planet. It's part, it's come out of the planet. So the planet could easily, even without violence, the planet could end all humans within a hundred years, without any act of

violence, by simply making males and females infertile.

That would be an action taken by planetary intelligence. Say, these humans, we can't have them anymore, that's too much. Or let's just get rid of 95% of them, and then they can have a new beginning and can try again.

But it doesn't have to come to that. So before the planet takes action, and the planet is slow, we need to take action, but with peace, because otherwise we are unconscious beings, we'll just contribute. Even if in our unconscious action, we could save the planet, we still wouldn't save ourselves, because we would create warfare, if we are unconscious.

There are many ways we can destroy ourselves, not just through destroying nature. There are other ways we can destroy ourselves, and we will, if there is no, if the shift in consciousness does not reach a sufficient number of people. But the essence of what I'm saying is, peace in your heart, do not fear.

There's more to the planet than you realize. If the planet needs to get rid of you, it will. How do you deal with challenges?

And challenges will continue to come, that's the weird thing. And that's a wonderful thing, because if life did not give you challenges, you would not evolve. And that not only applies to humans, it applies to every life form on the planet.

Life is challenging for every plant, and every tree, and every animal on the planet. There's no doubt about that. It presents challenges for every species on the planet.

And that is how consciousness grows, through being faced with challenges. And once you see that, you might recognize it in a movie. You wouldn't want to go to see a, watch a movie where the characters are not challenged by life.

In other words, let's say you go to a cinema, and the movie begins, and nothing goes wrong. And then you would say after 15 minutes, this is not an interesting movie, there's nothing going wrong. Because almost any movie, something needs to go wrong, otherwise there is no movie.

Because it's only if things go wrong, the character gets challenged. And then something happens. Either the challenge is resolved on an external level, which is a not so good movie, which means the bad guy is finally eliminated, or put away.

Or if the challenge is, if it's a good movie, the challenge with which the characters are faced brings about a change in the character. And in a very good movie, and there are not many of those, but some, the character becomes more conscious through the challenges. And then you might even want to see that movie again, and again, and again.

It no longer depends, you already know what's going to happen, but that's secondary. You just enjoy the process of watching somebody awaken. And as you watch somebody awaken, you somehow participate in that awakening.

And it could even be a funny movie in addition to that. So one of my favorite movies, or I'm sure most of you know it, Groundhog Day. And I've watched that many times.

And that shows somebody deeply unconscious, and suffering, and suffering, and suffering, is stuck in the same day again, and again, and again, and he can't get out. This is, of course, the state of the egoic state. And then until finally, something changes in him.

Finally, he comes to acceptance, and surrender, and becomes helpful by accepting and surrendering what is. He becomes helpful to other people. And then in the end, the same day, which is forced to repeat again, and again, and he's stuck in a place that he hates, in a town that he hates, doing what he hates, seeing people that he hates.

And finally, he can't stand the suffering anymore. And then he's not hating anymore. He just accepts.

And then suddenly experiences the same day differently. He begins to awaken. And in the end of the movie, he says, oh, this place is so nice.

Let's stay here. And then he's free to go. So that kind of movie that you want to watch many times, because that is a rare thing.

It shows the unconsciousness, and then how a character by facing challenges, ultimately self-created. And then there's a deepening that happens. So, and that's reflective of life.

You would not want to see a movie where nothing goes wrong. But when things go wrong in your own life, implicitly, you think this should not be happening. The movie of my life should be such that nothing goes wrong.

I want it to be totally boring. So people complain when what they love to watch in movies, when it happens to them, they complain and think this shouldn't be happening to me. So I'm talking about the challenges that are an inevitable part of your daily existence.

And even as you awaken, you get challenged by the gravitational pull of the unconsciousness within yourself, but also in the form of other people around you and situations that you encounter, your workplace, family members, relatives, friends, you are challenged by the unconsciousness of the world that you inhabit. And that's how it's meant to be. Now you might develop a theory that if only the conditions in my life were more suited for my spiritual growth, all would be well.

And then if you could devise a list of things that you need in order to facilitate your spiritual growth, you would say, okay, I have enough money to go to the most exquisite spa places in the world where I will have massages two or three times a day, live in absolute bliss through the most pure food imaginable. My needs are being met so that I can meditate if I want to, I can exercise my body, clean, pure air, not being disturbed by noises and things around me. Everything will be so beautiful.

I can dedicate myself totally to being present. And if that became a reality for a while, you would be happy. And then after a while, you would find yourself, you would find your level of presence decreasing after a while.

It can be nice as an interlude in your life for a week. It might be great. Withdrawal and so on can be great.

But if you think that that will facilitate your spiritual growth, the absence of challenges will facilitate your spiritual growth, you would be very much mistaken. You would eventually find yourself, your level of presence decreasing because it is not needed. Things are going too well.

There's no challenge. Everybody is so nice. Of course, they're nice because you pay them.

If you lived with them, they wouldn't be nice. But that's, so you have enough money to pay all the people around you so that they can be nice to you. And you're not being challenged by these obnoxious humans anymore.

And it would not ultimately facilitate your spiritual growth. And you may reach a moment after spending two years in this wonderful spa of longing to get back to your challenging life. If you even have enough consciousness even to long for something at that point.

So what I'm really saying is, whatever arises in your life is your practice. It is the practice designed for you. It is your spiritual path and particularly the challenges.

[Speaker 8] (3:01:50 - 3:02:11)

Okay, now tell me the ultimate secrets of God in the transcendent universe.

[Speaker 1] (3:02:12 - 4:23:59)

You can't. It's absurd. I am is the word.

All you can say is I am. But you don't need, you don't add anything, not this or that. I am.

In the Old Testament, God is asked, who are you? And that's perhaps the most profound sentence in the Old Testament is I am that I am. Where God defines him, her, itself as the I am, as the essence identity of all forms.

And also another beautiful sentence in the Old Testament, as you know, the Old Testament is a mixed, the New Testament, the Bible is a mixed bag of fantastic things and other things. But I like to look for the jewels that are there. And another beautiful statement that points to all this is, be still and know that I am God.

Be still and know that I am God. Now these words are all synonymous. Be refers to being.

Still is a state of consciousness without thought, stillness. Being and stillness, the same thing. And know there is a deep knowing in that.

In fact, it's that is because that is the source of all intelligence. There's a deep knowing but from the point of view of the conceptual mind, it looks like unknowing. It looks like ignorance because it's not knowing through concepts anymore.

There's a deeper knowing. And this is where what we call wisdom arises, which is very different from intelligence, the IQ kind of intelligence. The wisdom that the world needs, not more intelligence, please, no.

But wisdom that yes, be still and know that I am, it is the I am of being God. Oh, here we come to a difficult word, but they're all synonymous. What is God then?

I rarely talk about God because you can't really, it's so transcendent that whatever you say would be very limited. As you know, human language and human thought is relatively limited. How can I make statements about the ultimate transcendent reality?

Just by producing a few weird sounds with my vocal cords, plus air pressure through my tongue and lips. Oh, the vowels, A, I, A, E, I, O, U, E, U, R. This is what language is.

Okay, now tell me the ultimate secrets of God in the transcendent universe. You can't, it's absurd. Just produce a few sounds and that explains.

No, however, I'll carry on talking. All we can do is give an analogy or like a poetic image of what God might be and how God relates to who you are. And that image is that I prefer is the image of, you know, we can only use images from our sense-perceived universe.

The sun is a life-giving thing in our universe. The sun gives of itself ceaselessly for millions and millions of years. One could almost say eternally.

It's not eternal, but as far as we are concerned, it's eternal. Without the sun, there would be no life, no physical life here. So the sun gives of itself, it emanates continuously.

The very heat in your body ultimately comes from the sun. So the sun, if you use the sun as an analogy for the transcendent God, God has no location in space or time. God is neither there, or if we have to say anything, we could say God is right here because it's transcendent to this dimension.

So if we use this as an analogy, the transcendent emanates into this dimension, something that creates form, that creates life. And what it ultimately, this thing that it emanates is consciousness. At first, very little.

At first, consciousness appears as if we're frozen as minerals and stones. And then consciousness becomes as if it were a liquid. If we use an analogy of water, then it becomes vegetative life.

And consciousness gradually evolves. So one consciousness, more of it comes in, then you get animal life. And then you get human life.

It becomes ethereal as a human mind. So emanating from the source of all life that is transcendent, of which you cannot say anything, into this world, as the sun emanates light, the God emanates consciousness, and this brings about this universe. And in this universe, it's a process.

It grows in the transcendent. We don't know anything about that. So not the important thing is the ray of sunlight that you come that hits your hand, you feel the warmth on your hand.

That ray, it's not the sun, you couldn't say I have the sun on my hand. I mean, if you got close to the sun, you would immediately disappear. But this ray of sunlight is still connected to the sun in some way.

It is still part of the sun. We can't even say where the sun exactly ends. It doesn't really end anywhere.

It doesn't have a clearly defined surface. It extends outward. So it emanates continuously.

So what the source of all life emanates is consciousness. And you can sense that in yourself. When you can sense yourself as consciousness, the presence, then you realize this, the ripple on the surface of the ocean has realized that it is not only a ripple, I'm mixing analogies now.

It's not only a ripple, more fundamentally, the ripple is the ocean. And suddenly the ripple is no longer fearful, because it can sense its deep connectedness to that which is vast and all encompassing. And so the ripple suddenly lives in a different way because it realizes its own timeless essence.

Or the sun, the ray of sunlight could do the same, it could suddenly become aware that it is still connected and part of the sun. It can, and you can sense in yourself the undoubted fact that you are conscious. But not only that, we're creating a duality here that doesn't exist when we say that you are conscious.

The essence of who you are is consciousness. So you are consciousness. And this consciousness is the brain, yes, mainstream science, most of it will still tell you that consciousness is a byproduct of the physical brain.

But mostly scientists avoid talking about consciousness because they don't know what to do with it. It does not make much sense in their universe. They say, well, it's a byproduct of the chemical activity in the brain.

Okay, well, what does that mean? A more sensible thing that some scientists are beginning to already embrace the possibility, they're mostly scientists who are close to retirement, so they have nothing to lose anymore. They're beginning to embrace the possibility that consciousness, that the brain, which undoubtedly is linked to consciousness, acts more like a receiver and a transmitter of consciousness than a generator of consciousness.

So the brain is like a radio. The radio does not produce the music. The radio just transmits and then gives it form.

And that could be, and I believe that is the relationship between the human brain and universal consciousness, which is one. So there's not your consciousness and my consciousness, there's only one consciousness. And that one consciousness manifests as this flower too.

And it manifests beautifully. It manifests as any life form. It even manifests as so-called inanimate matter.

It's just a totally different frequency. So the entire universe is really consists of one substance, which is not a substance. It's one.

It's the multitude, the manifold manifestations of life in this universe are all manifestations of the one. And this one, the one that you can find, this is what in the past only rare mystics have talked about it or realized it. But now it becomes more accessible.

This is why here we're talking about it and not just talking about it. This one, which is the essence of not just of who you are. The weird thing is the essence of who you are is one with the essence of the entire universe.

So when you realize this essence of yourself as consciousness, when the ripple realizes that it is also and more fundamentally the ocean, then it's not only a realization of the ripple. It's a realization of the ocean too, through the ripple. So the consciousness that is underlies this universe, which emanates from the one is awakening through you.

It's awakening. It wants to awaken. One cannot say much more about it because there's a limit to what one can say.

But the most important thing is the realization within yourself of you are consciousness. And you need to be able to realize it is not that difficult to, as much as you can, step out of the stream of thinking so that you are not throughout the day, that you are not trapped in this continuous torrent, this current that drags you along one thought after another and another and another. Invite gaps into your life in the stream of thinking, for example, by conscious perception.

For example, if you wanted to do it now, bring a gap into the stream of thinking, I would say, become aware of your sense perceptions. Look, listen, be alert. Look and listen.

Be the alertness for the perception. No need to label what you are perceiving. Just look.

Look at a flower, at a tree, at the sky. Look and don't label it through concepts. And that's a wonderful way of inviting presence into your life.

And then there's in the background, there's an alert stillness. And then in the foreground, there's sense perceptions. That alert stillness is the essence of who you are.

But it's also the essence of the universe. And that is a wonderful, very simple spiritual practice as much as possible, especially when you're waiting somewhere just for a moment. Conscious perception.

No labeling. And the more dependent you become on the way things are going to turn out, the more likely it is that they're not going to turn out the way you want them to turn out because there's fear in you. The most important teaching in the Bhagavad Gita that runs through, it's mentioned in almost every chapter, is what's called karma yoga, which is a way in which you perform action in this world.

I already briefly talked about it in our first session, but since this is perhaps the central theme, and it's the main spiritual practice, one could say, recommended in the Bhagavad Gita, is to do whatever you do in a certain way. And what that is, I'll explain again briefly. And if you do whatever life gives you to do in a certain way, that will lead to a deepening and spiritual realization.

And that can be really, you can summarize that as in the words of the Bhagavad Gita, do not be attached to the fruit of your action, which, of course, simply means don't look to the goal of what you want to achieve through whatever you're doing now. Give your complete attention to the doing rather than where you want to get to through the doing. And that's, again, a very important lesson nowadays, because most humans don't know that yet.

They are always one moment ahead, they want to get there. You may find in your own life, still, a lot of the time, you are not present moment centered, you are focused on the next moment that you need to get to. So whatever you are doing at this moment is designed to get you to the next moment.

And internally, you project yourself away from what you're doing now, because the doing becomes a means to an end. This is very normal, everybody lives like that. Whatever they do is a means to an end.

And in their mind, the end is more important than what they are doing. That is so habitual and unconscious that most humans don't even know that that is how they live, that they always live for the next moment, but they're never completely in this moment. They also don't know that by living in that way, they create frustration and suffering and stress and discontent.

Basically, they're condemning themselves to continuous discontent and to stress. Because if you ignore the present moment continuously, and ignore means, you make it into a means to an end, because the next one is so important that you need to get to, then you miss life completely. You miss the depths that potentially is there in life.

And life becomes shallow, because it's all mental, because the next moment is always a mind formation. The next moment is a mental projection. Next moment is never a reality, because it doesn't exist.

When the next moment comes, okay, one minute from now, I've got one minute to finish this. And then after one minute, it's not one minute, it's always now again. And then there's the next thing to do, of course, immediately you look to the next thing, because you have become used to being uncomfortable with the present moment, conditioned since childhood to feel ill at ease in the present moment.

Oh, I should be doing something, and doing implies some future projection. You can never be, you're always doing. And now the Bhagavad Gita by recommending as a spiritual practice to renounce, as it's called here, to renounce the fruit of your action.

Sometimes that is called a sacrifice. And what is really in this ancient terminology, what is to put this into modern terminology, is really designed telling you to pay attention to what you are doing in this moment, and make this moment the primary focus of your life, whatever you're doing in this moment. And the secondary focus is what you want to achieve through whatever you're doing.

And that is called a sacrifice. One could say you sacrifice the future, you renounce the fruit. It says if you renounce the fruit, a different energy flows into what you do, and then many helpful factors come in.

And that is the truth. And it's a new way of living, where you actually, whatever you're doing now, you give it your complete attention. This is more important than what I want to achieve through it.

Yes, I know what I want to achieve through it. But since there's only ever the present moment and nothing else, surely this must be important than the projected future

moment. And then you can give your fullest attention to the doing and not to the desired outcome.

And also then you are not dependent for your sense of fulfillment on the way things turn out. Because if you're dependent for your sense of fulfillment on the way things turn out, quite often you will become frustrated, because they may not turn out the way you want them to turn out. And especially, and the more dependent you become on the way things are going to turn out, the more likely it is that they're not going to turn out the way you want them to turn out, because there's fear in you.

And when you need things to be in a certain way, there's already fear in you. So the fear flows into what you do and contaminates what you're doing now. The quality of your doing is contaminated by fear.

And so the very thing that you were dependent on is less likely to happen, because the quality of your doing diminishes. In other words, you are less conscious in the way in which you act. The less consciousness flows into the way in which you act, the less likely it is that the outcome is going to be productive and satisfying.

So the more you depend on a satisfying outcome internally for your well-being and sense of identity or sense of worthiness or whatever it may be, the more you depend on the desired outcome, the more likely it is that you're not going to get it. It'll fail in some way. And that makes life very frustrating.

But if your sense of fulfillment is derived from the doing itself, that is, the outcome is secondary. You no longer need it to make you feel fulfilled. The fulfilling thing is what you're doing now, the attention behind it, the consciousness behind the doing.

If you can feel the consciousness flowing through you as you do something with your hands or as you speak or whatever it is you do, relate to other humans, if you feel that and you enjoy the doing of this moment. Let's say you have a business negotiation. The outcome is you want the contract to be signed.

And if your focus is excessively on wanting the contract to be signed for the company you work for or whatever, then the quality of your interaction with the humans that you need to sign the contract diminishes. The other human, the other person will intuitively feel your unease. You are uneasy because you're fearful about the outcome.

So will also intuitively feel that you are not truly relating to him or her as a human being. You are making him or her a means to an end unconsciously because you want them to sign the contract. Now these, the people that you're dealing with, they don't know these things consciously that I just mentioned, but they can feel that and they will feel, no, I don't think I want to sign the contract with this person.

It doesn't feel quite right. Or something will come in, they'll verbalize it in some way. No,

it doesn't feel right.

Or they bring up some obstacle and magnify it and say, no, no, I can't do that. And then you have the alternative, somebody who doesn't need the outcome, but who gives his or her complete attention to the other person and actually enjoys the negotiation, the talking. Enjoys not just the words that are being spoken, but enjoys the presence of the other human being there behind the words.

But you can only enjoy the presence of the other human being if you can enjoy your own presence beyond the mental constructs in touch with yourself. So there comes a sense of goodness and rightness in the present moment of being with this other human. So you acknowledge their being.

You're not using them as a means to an end. Primarily, yes, it would still be nice if they signed the contract, you know that, but that is not your primary focus anymore. And if they don't sign it, you're not suddenly turning hostile.

In the business world, often you find if the people, if you don't do what they want you to do, they become hostile. Or they walk away, immediately lose interest in you. You haven't signed the deal.

And that's quite normal. The people who are most effective and successful actually are people who perhaps without even knowing it, perhaps because they have good karma, as the Bhagavad Gita would say, they live in this way. They like every moment of it, of interacting with you if you are the client.

They love interacting. They love that present moment. They don't transform the present moment into some means to a future end.

And this teaching about renouncing the fruit of your action is the primary teaching of the Bhagavad Gita, which is 2,000 or 3,000 years old. And still, most humans haven't learned that lesson. Whatever the obstacle arises, you bring this penetrating stillness to it.

You can also look into manifesting, but then the question is, what is it that wants to manifest through this form? It's no longer, this is what I want, the surface I. What is it that wants to manifest through this form?

Very different. And you may not know that immediately. There may be a time period when you don't know exactly what to do with your so-called life, which is not yours, just a conventional way of speaking.

There may be, for a while, you don't know what to do with your life. And so you're just there, being as still as possible, do your whatever activity you're already doing, but bring stillness into it, presence into it. And then at some point, either the realization of what it

is that you need to do, that wants to be done through you, comes from the outside.

Somebody tells you something, ah, or you wake up one morning and say, ah, this is what I have to do. And then you start taking action, always making sure you're not so attached to the outcome that you think it's more important than the present moment. An action can become egoic when you lose yourself, it becomes egoic when you lose yourself in the doing.

And a good sign or good criterion is when something happens to, that is against your, it seems to be an obstacle, a person or a situation. Say, I want to do this or achieve that, and suddenly somebody says, no, you can't do that. No, they won't allow you to do that.

Or a situation becomes a challenge, it's difficult, it's blocked, you want to go. Somebody says, no, you're not qualified to do that, you shouldn't do that, it's not allowed, whatever, you need this and that, which you don't have to achieve. Obstacles come all the time.

If you get upset, that means the ego is back in the doing when obstacles come. If you're not upset, you're still present and you look at whatever the obstacle is, and you look at it with this penetrating gaze of presence, which is stillness also. You look at whatever the obstacle arises, you bring this penetrating stillness to it, and that is like a light shines on it.

And then that dissolves the obstacle or it shows you a way around it. That's the power of consciousness. It always happens.

Either it shows you how to get around it, or it shows you how to use the very force of the obstacle. And you turn it around, if the obstacle is wanting to go this way, and you go with it for, I'm just demonstrating now, something counteracts what you want to do. It's coming this way, you want to go that way, but you don't meet it head on and start complaining, saying, no, this shouldn't be happening.

No. Perhaps you go with it for a little while, and you go, and then you turn it around. And the very power that was against you, then works for you, and you achieve your goal through that.

It happens, and this is the wisdom that comes with non-resistance. So whenever you go into this conscious doing, resistance always pulls you back into unconscious doing. It can easily happen because it's an old habit pattern, unconscious doing.

Inner resistance to whatever arises in the present moment pulls you back. Inner resistance is some form of negativity, some form of complaining, some form of fear, aggression, anger. And this is important because whenever you complain about what somebody else does, you're already beginning to fall into that trap of unconsciousness.

And of course, yes, you meet lots of people who are still trapped in ego, and they may

not like what you do, but just no judgment. Just look at what the situation is. They say this, they want that, you want that, and they don't say, oh, they're dreadful.

I know what he wants. He wants to deceive me, and he always does that. He wants to go.

No, just clear. This is the situation. This is what he says he wants.

This is where I want to go, and see. Okay. Never any judgment of a personal situation.

Just clear seeing, clear facing. This is the power. It's like a light beam of consciousness.

It falls onto, illuminates that situation, that moment, that person. That's the power of consciousness. No resistance.

Jesus already talked about the power of non-resistance, and that the moment resistance comes, you're drawn back into identification with form. Protection, resistance, fighting. Are you going to succeed all the time in this?

No. It's a shift from a way of doing that has been with us for thousands of years, and a new way of doing that is only arising now. So you are transitional beings between the old consciousness and the new, and don't judge yourself if you fall back occasionally into the old consciousness, but you will quickly know it.

How will you know it? You begin to suffer. You get upset.

You get upset about situations. You get upset about people. You get upset about what somebody said.

You get upset about what somebody should have said but didn't. You get upset about what somebody did or failed to do. Oh, there's a sign that you've fallen back.

Beautiful line in the Course in Miracles, I am never upset for the reason I think. Now, upset is a generic term. It could be in any way that you're out of alignment with is-ness.

There's a disagreement with the is-ness of the present moment, and then you become upset. Now, many people are upset a lot of the time, but they don't realize they are upset, and if you talk to them and say, why are you upset? They say, I'm not upset.

I'm just bloody angry. Or, I'm not upset. I'm deeply hurt because he didn't invite me to his birthday party.

Deeply hurt. Not upset. I'm never upset for the reason I think.

Now, the deeper meaning of this, of course, is you are upset because you have lost awareness of being, your essence, identity. And the reason you think is superficial. When you lose connectedness with being, you just wait a few minutes, and something or

somebody will upset you.

And so, if we believe that that which seems to cause the upset is the actual cause, this is not the case. These are interchangeable. It could be anything, and it will.

So, you'll be upset many times every day. By other people, by situations, by the slightest things, or the biggest things. Upset, upset, upset.

The entire world is so frustrating. So, that's a little sign then. If you're upset, you want to go somewhere, but people are not cooperative.

Situations are not cooperative. And you can talk to yourself. So, that's a good sign then.

You can use, also shows you to what extent the ego is active in you, because what's upset is not you, it's the ego in you. The ego is the erroneous identification with form, a false sense of I, which wanted something to make itself feel more at ease, or bigger, or more important, or whatever, and is frustrated in its aims. Well, that's a good, then it's like a little, if you had a little, it's almost like having a little technical device on your arm that tells you whenever your ego comes back, it goes, bleep, bleep, bleep, bleep.

You don't need that. Well, if somebody here is a technical wizard and is going to invent it, it's fine. But you don't need that, because all you need is to know if you're upset or not in everyday life.

Now, for many walking egos, upset is their normal state. They might not even know it anymore, because they're upset virtually all the time, and just waiting for some other thing to happen to explain why they are upset again. But, of course, there's the underlying dissatisfaction that's always there.

Foundation, then, is stillness. That's the return journey. So, can we be, then, simultaneously in the return journey to the source of all life, spiritual dimension, God, stillness, and still be active in this world?

And then, if we are that, then what we then do in this world becomes empowered by the intelligence that emanates from the source. And then the source creates through you. The power of the source is then no longer distorted by the ego, and its power greatly diminished to a trickle.

So, the source is like light, you can say sunlight, wanting to shine through fully. But for a long time, it's become reduced to a tiny little hole. There's a little bit of light coming through just to keep you going.

And now, it can come through and use you. When we use language, we always create duality. So, when I say, it uses you, it's not quite true, because you are it.

But language does that. It uses, then, once we know that it's okay, we can use those

words. It uses you, then.

Now, what exactly it wants, I don't know. Perhaps it simply wants to create beauty, or forms that are alive and joyful, and enjoy that. It's enjoyed the drama of thousands, hundreds of thousands of years.

It's enjoyed the drama of people cutting each other to pieces and eating each other up. It's enjoyed the drama. The movie is changing now.

And perhaps it's creating a much more pleasant movie. And who knows what is in store for us. I've never, I cannot predict the future.

I'm not particularly interested. This present moment is wonderful enough. But something is, there's a change happening.

And, of course, there comes a point in your life when you may not, this, the source may become much more important than whatever you do. So, you reach a time when you say, well, I've done this, and that, and it's been wonderful. And then, all you are, you're just still, and you emanate that stillness.

And even then, you affect the world around you without any doing. If you just be there, and whoever you come into contact with, there's some almost, one could say, transmission, even if they don't notice it. You can do that, and some humans, perhaps, will mostly live in that way.

How much doing you do, how much varies from form to form, person to person. Some will be very active into conscious doing, and create, and enjoy the creation. And others may do relatively little, or may just continue to do what they're doing already, but whatever they are doing will be a vehicle for consciousness or stillness that flows into this power, this beautiful energy that flows.

It could be even a person who just gives information. Let's say you work at an airport, and you give information to people, and maybe you stay there, and then everybody who comes to ask, where's gate number 16, you say, well, you go that way, and it's only about a three-minute walk. And there were not only the words, there was a transmission of stillness with the words.

Not in the sense that I am going to transmit stillness, no. It happens because you let go of the sense of doing, of I do, it happens. And the person, this one traditional word for it is blessing, the person goes away being blessed with that energy.

And so, beautiful. So what you do really is secondary. Some may do great things.

Others may do things that look on the surface not so significant. And ultimately, ultimately, what you do is secondary, but how you do it is primary. And how means the

consciousness that flows into what you do.

By dissolving the ego, won't I be dissolving my self-esteem? Do I not need self-esteem to love myself and others? Yes, self-esteem.

Many people seem to have a problem with that. Lack of self-esteem. I read a while ago that when the Dalai Lama was younger, he was meeting with a group of Westerners, and they were talking about the lack of self-esteem.

And he just couldn't understand that, what that was. And they tried to explain it, and then he went around the group and asked everybody, do you have that? And most people said, yes.

It's very strange, self-esteem. Now, the human species, it's the only species on the planet, of course, that has a relationship with itself, where you have a relationship with yourself. That's normal.

But the cat doesn't have a relationship with itself. Or the bird doesn't have a relationship with itself. Or the tree doesn't.

So birds, cats, trees, monkeys, flowers, none of them have a problem with self-esteem. And even the most ugly looking cat wouldn't have a problem with self-esteem. It hasn't created a secondary, an image self, mind created.

And once, of course, that's created, it walks with you, like next to you, behind you, or wherever it is, you always walk with a mental image of me, and you have a relationship with that. And often, you don't like what you see, that image self. That's poor self-esteem.

And then you may be in conflict with it, with itself. You may be talking to yourself in the head, telling yourself something about yourself. Some people talk to themselves in the first person, but many more people talk to themselves in the second person, as you, you see.

You failed again. You see you are not as good as you see you. Why can't you?

And then at times, perhaps the self feels suddenly great about itself. Some people predominantly have low self-esteem. In other words, feel bad about the mind made image me, feel bad about that, and then realize that some realization comes in when they realize that it is mind created.

And they realize, and usually in the West, it's connected with new age teachings, and they realize that they can do something about their bad self-esteem, the image. They can, you can actually change your thinking about yourself. First, you discover that the thinking about yourself is predominantly, or to a large extent, negative.

And then, you see, that's a little bit of presence is arising. It must be, because you are able to stand back a little bit and watch and see what you are creating with your thoughts. And then the possibility comes of changing your thoughts, your self-esteem through workshops, affirmations, visualization, and all those practices.

And then after a while, that image looks a little bit more comfortable. And you feel more comfortable with that thing, walking alongside you. But since everything in form, all mind creations, thoughts are subject to polarities, you can't walk with a high, continuously with high self-esteem and feel great about yourself.

There's always a polarity to it. And it's usually bound up with what happens or not happens in your life, what feedback you're getting from others. And it is usually comparative.

The self-esteem is comparative. How do I rate myself in relation to others? And that gives you the indication of where you are on one to 10, or whatever it may be.

So self-esteem is mind, is connected with the mind made me, lack of it, or in a good self-esteem, but it exists within polarities. Even if you spent a whole year affirming continuously that I love myself, I love myself. And maybe until now you hated yourself.

And your whole, your house is full of little stickers. And wherever you look, you see, I love myself. And you look in the mirror and look into your eyes and repeat that, I love myself.

To some extent, it works to some extent. You have a better relationship with yourself, but there's always a downside. It's hard to sustain that because the other polarity will manifest also in your life.

And you go through life when, in order to know how you feel about yourself, you need to compare yourself with others. And then you say, oh, I'm actually better looking than this person. So I actually feel quite good about myself.

I'm actually much more educated than that person I feel good about, or whatever you can get. Well, this person is ill and I'm healthy, so that's good. So you need for self-esteem, if you look, you need relativity and you need comparison.

And ego is always comparing itself. Is it possible to live without having a relationship with yourself? Neither good nor bad.

Is it possible to be so completely yourself that the mind made image of me dissolves? Yes, this is why we're here. This is the essence of our gathering.

The mind made image is connected to thought, to continuous thinking. It's fueled by, perpetuated by, upheld by the continuous thought processes, many of which are about

me and myself. And so I have, through thought, I have a relationship with a thought made entity, which sometimes feels quite comfortable and sometimes feels not pleasant, don't want to live with that person.

And of course it's true, many people live with a self that is very unpleasant, that creates a lot of trouble, a lot of problems, a lot of suffering, that continuously criticizes them, that continuously blames them, that continuously tells them they're not enough. And they live with that entity, mind made, conditioned mind movements, conditioned in such a way that they attack you continuously. And that's the self that they have a relationship with.

They would never live with a person like that. You would run out of the room. You couldn't live with a person for more than a day.

If your partner, somebody you live with, did that to you, what your self image is doing to you through thought, you would have filed for divorce long ago. But you can't do that with that because it's on the mind. It walks with you.

And there you have this complaining and whining and accusing and, oh, get away. And a large part of that is because you're identified with thought. There isn't the ability to step back from thought and watch thought, watch that.

This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation. If you are at the mercy of situations, you're at the mercy of things going exactly the way you planned them and the way you're supposed they are supposed to go.

And if they don't, you get upset. Some people get sad or depressed, others get angry and irritated, whatever it is. So you are at the mercy of things happening or not happening or happening in a particular way, or people behaving towards you in a particular way.

So you're under, you're always at the mercy of stuff happening or not happening. And if you are more deeply connected with the presence, that is the source of satisfaction in your life. Every other source of satisfaction is kind of fake, pseudo, not the real thing.

Presence, that arising presence is the source of satisfaction. The primary source of satisfaction in your life. Yes, there are secondary sources of satisfaction, of course, an apple pie.

You have a nice swim, feels good. You go for a hike. You have sex.

You have a drink. You even achieve something. You learn to master a certain skill.

And then as you practice, that is a satisfying, it's satisfying. And then you achieve it, it's satisfying. It's, these are all secondary satisfactions in your life.

And there's nothing wrong with that, of course. And if you meet a long lost friend, suddenly, it's great to meet you. It's so wonderful.

Of course, it's, there is a satisfaction in that, but they are all secondary satisfactions. The main source of satisfaction is the presence. And even all those things that are secondary satisfaction, many of them are, because for a moment, they bring you into presence.

For example, if you're climbing a mountain or you're hiking, or you're walking on the beach, or you're swimming, certain activities take you out of your mind and can bring you into presence while they last. And you feel so good. And you think it's caused by the activity, but it's caused by the fact that you're, all the habitual torturous thinking subsided, and you're suddenly completely there.

That was so good, that swim, that hike, that whatever it was, it was so good. Okay, why? Well, it was good because, were you thinking?

No. Were you thinking about yesterday or tomorrow or your problems or your difficult life or difficult people in your life? No.

Okay, you were completely present. So once you realize and sense that true satisfaction is derived from presence, that means when things go wrong in ordinary life, when you encounter undesirable, so-called undesirable circumstances, when things don't work out, they were supposed to work out, things break, suddenly you lose something, a difficult person comes into your life, you can, even in that situation, you can continue to be in touch with the source of satisfaction.

Let's say you made great plans for some great wedding, and suddenly on the wedding day, something happens, and the groom or the bride are detained somewhere, and they can't make it. And we've invited 300 people, and we've paid thousands of dollars for this wedding, and I've been looking forward to this for years. It was supposed to be the culmination of my life.

It's a fictitious situation, but it could happen and probably has happened. It's just one of many possible examples. So this is a very unpleasant thing, if you're not in touch with the true source of satisfaction, and you go all shaky and upset, or hysterical, whatever, depending on your predispositions.

You lock yourself in a room, or you scream, depending on whatever kind of ego you have. But if you are in touch with the source of satisfaction, in presence, wow, okay, that's a pity. But of course, we'll have it some other day.

And you continue to feel a sense of aliveness, because after all, this moment isn't that

bad, just because the wedding has collapsed. And I'm using the collapsed wedding as a metaphor, whatever collapses or goes wrong. So here we have...

And you are then above the situations in your life. They don't control you anymore. And I wouldn't go so far as to say that you control them.

To some extent, of course, you can manifest certain good things, but you're never totally in control of externals. There are many other factors. And you don't need to be totally in control of externals.

So question always arises, are you above the situation, or are you below the situation? Are you at the mercy of situations and people, or are you free of dependency on how other people behave towards you, or how certain situations evolve or happen, or dependent on whether something happens or does not happen? And shortly after this shift in consciousness, I had saved some money to visit my dad in Spain.

And because his wife was extremely challenging, it was agreed that I would stay in a small hotel. That was... I was in my...

I think I was about 30 years old. So I was looking forward, of course, to going to... I lived in England, going to sunny southern Spain, spending 10 days there.

And I booked, or my dad booked for me a place. He didn't have any money at that time. Well, he had some money, but not, I think, not enough to book a great room for me.

So he made a booking, but he hadn't looked at the hotel or the room. And when I arrived, the hotel was by the sea. So I imagined a view of the beautiful blue Mediterranean Sea.

And when I got there, and I looked out the window, there was a brick wall. It was facing away from the sea, and there was a kind of cliff, and there was just a brick wall and a little bit of sky. And so I stood there, and looked at the brick wall, and suddenly I felt incredibly peaceful.

And I suddenly realized it doesn't matter at all whether I have a sea view or a brick wall. Why didn't it matter? Because there was a flow of satisfaction coming from within.

If it had been my choice, I would have said, I prefer a sea view to a wall view. But I didn't have a choice. And I was amazed, because that was not long after this inner shift.

So I wasn't yet familiar with all the effects it has on things in one's life. And there were many, many instances when I was amazed. I said, why do I feel so peaceful?

I don't know. I just feel... I did nothing.

In this particular case, I knew that at some level it did ultimately did not matter. And that

was so liberating, so liberating, that reminds me of a very similar story. We had a retreat in probably Oregon many years ago, and one of the participants, who was also a friend of ours, had just started to unpack things in her room, the retreat room, when a woman burst into her room without knocking in tears and sounding hysterical.

And she said, this was supposed to be my room. And they put me somewhere else. I asked specifically for this room.

I've been waiting for this retreat for a long, long time. And I'm having difficulties in my life. This is all just so dreadful.

And our friend, without even having given it a single thought, said, you can have it. I'll move into yours. And the woman's, really?

No. Do you mean that? Oh, my God.

Oh, wonderful. Thank you so much. I'm so happy.

It is probably true that she had been through difficult times. Yes. But she was totally at the mercy of externals.

And our friend, I didn't inquire further how she felt when she moved into that undesirable room, which probably wasn't that bad. I don't think there was a brick wall outside the window. So she was fine.

So in her, there was some connectedness with the source of satisfaction. So her well-being did not depend on what kind of room she was in. Now, does that mean whatever room they put you in, when you book a room in a hotel, you should say, okay, not necessarily.

Why not? If that is not the right room, you can talk to them and say, this isn't the room I booked. I'd rather have the room that I booked and paid for, and then see what happens.

But again, there is not going to be that, uh, uh, or the anger. How dare you put me in this room? You lose all, there's no longer a flow.

Do you remember we talked about what makes up a true human? It's goodwill towards other humans, a flow of benevolence and goodwill, no matter what the situation is. And even if you're complaining about your room, you can complain.

And there can still be a flow of benevolence and goodwill because there is a human being there. That human being may have nothing to do with the fact that they put you in the wrong room. And you probably know that, but you're angry with him or her.

So of course you can change situations. And I think I probably asked, I don't remember all the details. I may have asked, I'm sure I did in that when I got to that hotel with a

brick wall outside, do you have another room with a sea view?

Sorry, that's all we have left. Okay. So it was a surprise to me that one, that I could be okay with that.

And I don't know how this woman from the retreat, whether she benefited from the retreat and whether by now, I haven't seen her in a long time. I wish her well. And I do hope that by now she has found the source of true satisfaction within herself so that the wrong room does not create an enormous amount of suffering.

If a wrong room creates an enormous amount of suffering, how much suffering when something really goes wrong. This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

Do we need ego only for the purpose to find out that we are not it, or could it be useful for anything else? Ego is a necessary stage to go through because there is a pre-egoic stage for humans. There was a where they live in relative happiness compared to the egoic state in a simple oneness with nature, with each other in tribal communities.

But for the growth of consciousness, we have to go through the egoic stage, form identity, developing. The ego is not to be totally, the ego has its purpose. You cannot become awakened without going through the ego.

It's like having those pre, in pre-egoic societies, people lived in oneness with nature. They didn't even know it. They didn't know that they lived in oneness with nature.

They just did. So in order to experience or to know something at a deeper level, you have to go through a loss of it first. You go through a loss as described in the parable of what is called the prodigal son in the New Testament.

The prodigal son is the son of a father who loves him and is wealthy, but he wants to leave, lead his own life. He leaves the father's home, goes to a foreign country, gradually squanders his wealth and becomes destitute. He loses his connection to the source of happiness and wealth.

And then messengers come to remind him who he is and that the father wants him back. So he then returns to the father's home. And then he is known by the father and the father loves him more now.

So he is back home, but it's not the same home as before. There is an added dimension to it that wasn't there before. So we are all prodigal sons.

We have to lose our sense of oneness in order to regain it at a deeper, more conscious level, our connectedness to the source. Before it was an unconscious connectedness

which just resulted in relatively unproblematic life, simple, unproblematic life. And then, so it's paradise lost and paradise regained.

When paradise is regained, it is regained at a much deeper level than before. There's an added dimension of consciousness there. And that is there because we moved through the egoic stage.

And what we learned in the egoic stage will not be totally discarded. The form identity remains. Our next stage is in the evolution of humanities.

Once humans are rooted in being, the next stage is conscious creation, where humans can manifest without having to go through the laborious processes that at the moment we still have to go through. Factories, heavy technology. For the future of humanity, I don't necessarily see an ever-increasing technology.

It is more likely that technology is one branch of human's development, but not the one, not the branch that will lead further up the tree. The ability to manifest through consciousness will, you already have it to some extent. There are things that you can manifest in your life, especially if you are rooted in the consciousness.

So it's not the ego that wants to manifest, but the consciousness wants, can use you as a vehicle for what it wants to manifest consciously in this world. So a time will come when we can manifest what now we laboriously produce energy. It's absurd how we use, where we seek energy in fossil fuels and so on.

Ultimately, obviously, the next step is there are two inexhaustible sources of energy. One is outer and one is inner. The outer inexhaustible energy is our sun.

It's an outpouring of energy and it's virtually limitless, although we know that the sun has a lifespan, but that is not relevant to us because the lifespan is a few more million years. And that is an inexhaustible supply of energy on the outer. And then even the sun is only an external expression of the inexhaustible energy that is the source of all life.

So it's just an outer manifestation. And this is why ancient traditions worshiped the sun because in a way one could say, well, that's very much like God because it's a continuous giving of life. It's a life giving entity, not asking anything back.

It just gives of itself continuously. So when people say energy is limited, of course, energy is not limited. It's only where we look for it that's limited.

If we continue to look for it in fossil fuels and so on, that's limited and can be very harmful, but energy itself is not limited. The sun is unlimited and the source of all life is unlimited. We just have to find it.

So the next step is using sun energy. And then after that is being able to use the energy,

source energy for creation. You can't even imagine what even science fiction books, they're not, can't even think of any that have even thought of what life can be when humans can effortlessly generate or manifest what they need or want.

But it won't be, they will not manifest superfluous or unnecessary things as the ego would. So let's not go too far into that. So if you discover within yourself that a lot of the time you're in a state of lack, of insufficiency, of not enough, and you feel that the answer to the remedy is to be active in this world and achieve and do as much as possible, then you'll probably find that ultimately that is not the answer to your state of lack.

In order to transcend, to go beyond your state of lack, of neediness, of not enough, spiritual practice and spiritual realization is necessary. Focus on the realization of being. It's only there that you can go beyond that state of lack which is ego.

Go within and discover who or what you are beyond the person.

[Speaker 3] (4:24:25 - 4:24:53)

I was watching a talk with you and Neil Donald Walsh and he said, you know, we both wrote great books but the difference between him and you is that you live it. And so first I just got to thank you for being such an example for something that's truly missing in most of the world. But my question is, what's a day like in the life of Eckhart?

It sounds like a bad reality TV show but...

[Speaker 1] (4:24:55 - 4:26:27)

It's not terribly interesting. It's very ordinary, unless when I'm traveling it gets a bit more interesting because there's a plane to catch and there's a hotel and so on. But when I'm not traveling, it's extremely ordinary.

I love being, so there's always set aside time for just being still or walking in nature. And I'm notorious for not meeting deadlines. Everybody knows when they say there's a debt, this needs to be done, this thing needs to be done by so and so.

Well, we'll see. And I love night times, so I sometimes don't go to bed until 1.30 or 2 and sleep about five hours. And I like little things, going to a cafe, have a coffee somewhere.

Nature, as I said, love walking in nature, reading occasionally, being, doing whatever needs to be done, people call. There's always things that need to be done. I do them quietly.

Some things don't get done at all and then they disappear.

[Speaker 3] (4:26:29 - 4:26:38)

Easier for you, right? Are you still able to go out in public though and still able to go out in public?

[Speaker 1] (4:26:38 - 4:33:47)

Well, that is interesting. I go out usually with a baseball cap, which I never really liked, but I've been wearing them for years now. And the, because I love privacy, I love to be invisible, I love to be in a room and being able to just observe what goes on in the room without anybody being aware that I'm there.

That's more difficult now. So often people come up, even with a baseball cap, they come up and usually it's lovely. They say some that it's been so wonderful, my life has changed.

It happens almost every day. And that's wonderful. I prefer not to be recognized, but the moment it happens, I'm happy and I respond and it's a loving interaction.

But my preference is not to be seen. Uh, I'm an introvert by nature. So even to go out and give talks was a very strange thing for me.

I knew that this is what the universe wanted me to do or the universe acting through me. So it's, it's things that one surrenders into things and then they're fine. It's not my nature to go out and sit on stage and talk.

Uh, and uh, so every situation brings its own challenges. The loss of privacy and so on is, could be seen as a challenge and requires then surrender to see in this world, there are polarities. You gain something here, you lose something there in the world of polarities on the surface, on the surface level, you experience polarities.

The gain here has to be paid for something. So the fact that the teaching has gone out to so many people, that's wonderful. Of course, then yes, privacy is lost that need to accept that.

Uh, before I had privacy, but very few people were reached by the teaching. Well, I did workshops in the, in the eighties and early nineties. Uh, but I, there was one evening talk in England that had been scheduled.

Nobody turned up. I was alone. I just sat there, but I had my privacy and then I had a workshop one schedule.

Usually I had about a seven, 10, 12, 15 people for little workshops or one workshop had been, somebody had organized a workshop for me and I arrived for weekends, Saturday and Sunday. One person turned up waiting at the door and said, okay, let's do it. So not that many people were reached, but I was wonderful privacy.

No. So that's how it is. It's, um, uh, simple.

I don't live in an ashram, uh, where, uh, some spiritual teachers live in an ashram where they're surrounded by, by people who go. And that can be, of course, comforting for a while to the ego. If you still have an ego, hopefully not the spiritual teacher, but, uh, it's not good.

It's, I prefer to be in every normal everyday life and, uh, go to the supermarket. And so it's, so it's not interesting, unfortunately, and not, not even glamorous, except occasionally when I visit Oprah, then suddenly it's, ah, driving into the big, the gates open to the big mansion and you drive in. But otherwise not that much glamour.

Thank you. Another question is, what is the key to stop the self-talk in the head? Well, just briefly, because I've spoken about that a few times in various occasions.

First of all, you need to know that there is self-talk in the head, not after, uh, several hours of being totally immersed in self-talk in the head and suddenly you get a moment of reprieve and then you say, oh, there was so much self-talk in the head. In order to, to, to become free, you need to know that there's self-talk in the head while there's self-talk in the head. Otherwise, there's just self-talk in the head without any awareness.

There needs to be a glimpse of awareness. And from there, you can, you can see that you want to be free of it, and that's not who you are. And the past, everything dissolves and then it becomes the past, which is a memory of a present moment in the now.

You talk about the past, you're remembering something that happened, but when it happened, it was a now, and it's still the now. So, but that absorbs human attention completely for the most, for unawakened humans. My past is my life.

And then you look back on your past and you come to some kind of conclusion about yourself, your identity and your life.

[Speaker 6] (4:33:49 - 4:33:49)

Hmm.

[Speaker 1] (4:33:50 - 4:42:31)

Well, that's my life. For many people, it's a mixed bag. They're not completely, it's not a, it's not the greatest, because there are things that are not going well in my life.

It could be, it could be your financial situation. It could be your relationship situation, your professional situation, your living situation, your health situation. Somewhere, other people, oh my God, problems.

You can look in your life, where are the main problems in your life? They're somewhere there, what I've mentioned. Hardly any human is free of experience.

This one or two of these dimensions is problematic at any given moment in time. And if you, for a moment, everything is going well. Let's say you have achieved great professional success.

Your income is great. You have a wonderful place to live. Your family is doing well.

You have two healthy and intelligent and wonderful children, and your wife is perfect, and your health is great, and your body looks fantastic, and you're great looking. Is that possible? It may be possible for a brief moment, but not for long.

So if that's the case with you, just wait a little, and something will pop up out of nowhere and challenge you and say, oh my God. And especially you just solve something here, and then something pops up there. Even if you practice positive thinking, which is a great thing to do, it will improve your life considerably, but it does not mean you will not be challenged by life again.

You will experience the opposite. Every situation contains opposites. You gain something here, but you lose something there, and you will experience being challenged by life.

And you can't get away from it. That's the weird thing. So if all is going perfectly in your life right now, it's unlikely that there's anybody here to whom this is happening temporarily, because why would you come here?

Everything is perfectly fine. So you get back into your big car and have a big meal and drink, and then you go to your radiant family in your beautiful home. Okay.

Everything is so satisfying, it doesn't work. It's not... So being challenged does not stop even when you begin lucid living, which means what we are talking about here, to bring consciousness into your daily life by not losing touch with the underlying awareness or presence within you, which would be my call still a field of highly, let's say, a field of highly intelligent presence that underlies it all.

And that, it is a stillness, but it's alive, vibrantly alive, a stillness within you. Underneath the personality, not separate from it, but underneath it. So one could almost say that, well, one could say that you as a person or the personality exists on the surface of being, so to speak, in the same way that a wave or ripple exists on the surface of the ocean.

Triples everywhere. And this, I often use this analogy because it's quite helpful, because that's actually how it is. You exist on the surface of being as a physical entity and a psychological entity.

And as such, you are a ripple on the surface of the ocean, a ripple that has forgotten its nature, not only its connectedness with the ocean, but its absolute oneness with the ocean. The ripple is the ocean, the ocean temporarily manifesting as a ripple. Look at me, says the ripple, and looks at other ripples and fears other ripples and complains

about other ripples.

And then seeking out some satisfaction on the surface of the ripple existence, never getting a feeling of home, of having arrived. Ah, briefly, yes, briefly, but usually it means there's a lowering of consciousness. I mentioned drinking alcohol, for example, you drink a couple of glasses, you feel a little better.

Why do you feel a little better? Because it slows down your thinking process, which sustains the person, the problematic entity. And so that slows down towards, and you suddenly, you can observe it in people when they have a couple of drinks.

Not everybody I come to, there's another possibility what could happen too, but let's stay with that for a moment. You have a couple of drinks and you feel life is suddenly lighter. You feel like singing, you might even sing, and then you say, I need another one, because if two is good, three must be better.

And if three is better than four, surely. And finally, you're moving more and more towards unconsciousness, and then you fall off the chair. So that's not the way to go.

So you, yes, humans are longing to become free of the self. And then many of them, whether it's unconscious, they go to drugs to experience a little bit of that. Some release from their problematics and almost continuously unsatisfying existence, continuous sense of lack, continuous sense of not enough, something missing, of discontent, of restlessness.

Even youngsters have that. And then they need some substance, and they take something in to feel that there's something missing, and that slows down the apparatus of your thinking mind that creates continuous unease and discontent. And suddenly, or you smoke a little bit, you go, ah, feels so much better.

Yes, it is you becoming free of yourself temporarily, but I'm not necessarily saying never do this. But that's not the ultimate way. It's not a regressive movement.

We don't want to fall below thinking. We don't, because animals and plants, they are not burdened with this self. They are not burdened with incessant, unconscious, conceptual thinking.

[Speaker 8] (4:42:31 - 4:42:34)

They are conscious. There's a consciousness there that operates.

[Speaker 1] (4:42:56 - 4:48:26)

When you were in utter despair, would having access to someone like you have helped you? That's another interesting idea for a science fiction story of time traveling, where my old, my 28-year-old self comes here and sits somewhere in the audience and listens.

Now, would that have helped?

There needs to be a readiness in the person to be helped. Some definitely want to suffer a bit more. They would definitely refuse.

Any kind of the openness would not be there. There were times at that time when people noticed around me that I was unhappy. There was a professor of the university.

He was doing transcendental meditation. And he said to me, you really should be doing meditation. And I said, no, I don't want to do meditation.

I lose all my motivation to work and that's not what I want. I was a bit scared of meditation. He said it would transform me and make me completely ineffective because I wanted to achieve.

I wanted to become an important intellectual. So meditation would have thought might be an obstacle to that. No, I'm not doing this.

So I refused. The help could have been, this was a hint of the universe said, why don't you do transcendental meditation? You might be less anxious.

But I didn't do it. So perhaps if I had met myself, I would have said, who is this guy? I don't know.

Some, you cannot help everybody. You might've noticed. And some humans need, and if they cannot, if there's no openness to be helped, it means they are happy with the spiritual teacher they already have.

And his or her name is suffering. Then they just need to experience that a bit more because if you show them the possibility of going beyond suffering or somebody else in a different way shows them the possibility and somebody else does and another therapist and another, or they open a spiritual books. What is this mumbo-jumbo?

Not ready, not ready to listen. Need to suffer a bit more. Suffering has a certain function in the evolution of consciousness.

I would, if let's say, if you were an omnipotent, the omnipotent God and you removed all human suffering right now, that's the end of the evolution of consciousness. Of course, you could, if you were totally omnipotent, you could say, let consciousness only express itself right now. That's not how it works, but the, it cannot express itself except through this.

Suffering is necessary until it no longer is necessary for you. And so it has a function within the totality. It is, you can see it in your own life.

I had to go through it up to that point. And there's a lot of collective suffering. There's

not only suffering in poor countries.

Yes, there is. There is different kinds of suffering everywhere. There's intense suffering in the rich countries.

You can probably find more happy people in the poor countries than the rich countries. So they're just different degrees of suffering. And so at some point, the individual realizes that suffering that is ultimately self-made, self-produced, and then the shift happens.

And then evolution has a, is of a different kind. It is no longer impelled or fueled by suffering. You still evolve, but it's no longer through suffering.

It's so, and that helps when you encounter a spiritual teaching or a spiritual teacher, that is the moment when that spiritual teacher takes over from suffering. That's the old spiritual teacher. And then you, you get, you get handed over to the new one.

That's a wonderful, that should be celebrated in a person's life. The transition from Mr. and Mrs. Suffering or the guru called Suffering, three, three Suffering, to an actual teacher.

[Speaker 6] (4:48:26 - 4:49:38)

I love you.

[Speaker 4] (4:49:41 - 4:50:29)

So in talking about thinking, I know this has an obvious answer and I'm actually asking beyond this, but where do our thoughts come from? So oftentimes I'll, I'll have thoughts and I, I recognize them as even not my own or, or possibly patterns that have existed for years and years. You know, jealousy thoughts or competitive thoughts or the thoughts of being threatened and fear.

But truthfully, is this something is waking us up in the middle of the night that you were just talking about? What is that? Is it, is it just part of the condition of being alive?

[Speaker 1] (4:50:30 - 4:50:45)

Thank you. The Buddha was asked a similar question. I'll tell you what he said, but then I'll, I will answer it because he didn't.

[Speaker 6] (4:50:47 - 4:50:48)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (4:50:54 - 4:57:12)

Somebody asked him a question like that and he gave a parable. He said, you've got, somebody shot you with an arrow. You've got an arrow stuck in your body.

And before you remove it, you're trying to find out where did that arrow come from? Before I remove it, I need to know who shot it and why and where it came from. Let's examine this in more detail.

And that was his answer. What he was saying was, our main concern should be to remove the arrow instead of trying to find out where it all started. How did it all start?

Where did it all originate? That was, his teaching was very practical, totally practical. Not all of Buddhism is that practical anymore.

Some of it still remains practical compared to other traditions. But in the very beginning of the Buddhist teaching was just totally practical. Remove the arrow.

The arrow, of course, stands for suffering, any form of suffering that is self-generated through the mind. And, okay, so that was his answer. Now, of course, I agree with that, and I'm sure we all do.

Thought, going a little bit beyond it, thought is, there's such a thing as a collective mind. And so many thoughts are not your thoughts, really. They arise in the collective mind.

They are energy fields or energetic entities that one could almost think of them as little bubbles floating around. They may not be literally true. I haven't actually seen any bubbles, but little bubbles, thought forms floating around.

And if the thought form discovers any resonance with anything inside you, for example, any form of negativity, and then there's a thought form in the collective mind, an even heavier thought form of negativity floating around, just a slight irritation about what somebody said today. And then there's another thought form that resonates with that negativity, and then that little, that bubble comes. And before you know it, the irritation has become something bigger.

So you connect with the universal mind, and it moves through you. So when we deal with our so-called our own minds, with far more than our own minds, and whatever awareness arises in you is not just your benefit. It has an impact on the totality of the collective mind.

When awareness arises in you, it means awareness is arising in the collective mind of humanity. So it's not just a personal thing. In the same way that any thinking that takes possession of your mind is not really personal.

There is no personal thought as such. It pretends to be personal. It's the human collective mind.

In the same way, of course, an emotion generated by that is not, it looks like my emotion, but it's either it's anger or it's sadness or it's jealousy or it's whatever this, and that's basically, it's the same in everybody when it arises. It attaches itself to slightly different stories in the mind of why I'm angry, but the anger is anger, human anger. So again, it's not yours.

You pick it up, and then it gets hold of you, and then many humans live virtually with a mind that has taken possession of them, pretends to be them, and they're stuck with it without even knowing it. If they knew it, there would be the beginning of freedom. They don't know it, and if you tell them they are, they get angry, but they don't.

The mind does because it feels threatened. So there's still humans who won't hear this. They can't hear this because immediately they would feel threatened by it because they're totally possessed by the mind.

You can see how, for example, certain collective thought forms can take possession of an entire country. Such has happened, for example, during communism, Soviet communism in Russia, Maoism in China. Millions of people all thinking the same thing.

But even in our society, it's not necessarily one monolithic thought form such as that, but there are different thought forms through the media become perpetuated, and without knowing it, often they are our most basic assumptions, how we interpret the universe and the world around us. Our basic assumption are thought forms that come out of the collective, have taken possession of us, and they're all forms that consciousness takes in the mind, and that's all fine in itself. It's fine if there is an awareness, but if thought is all there is, it becomes destructive and insane without awareness.

Of course, your next question, if you want to carry that, is why? How did it all start? Where does it come from?

And that's the arrow again.

[Speaker 4] (4:57:12 - 4:57:12)

Right.

[Speaker 1] (4:57:13 - 4:57:13)

Yeah.

[Speaker 4] (4:57:13 - 4:57:20)

In fact, my friend Jen and I use the phrase, when you ask why, that is the lie.

[Speaker 6] (4:57:20 - 4:57:21)

Yeah.

[Speaker 4] (4:57:21 - 4:57:40)

Just the need to let it go. But the thing that occurred when you shared your answer, thank you, is that the thinking isn't something I need to war against, but rather it's a tool, and it's showing me where I'm allowing myself to identify with something that I'm not, and thus identify with being separate from this one.

[Speaker 1] (4:57:41 - 4:57:41)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (4:57:41 - 4:57:42)

It's a wonderful tool.

[Speaker 1] (4:57:42 - 4:57:43)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (4:57:44 - 4:57:49)

That is ultimately powerless in the face of consciousness. Is that correct?

[Speaker 1] (4:57:49 - 4:58:16)

Yes. If you are identified with thinking, is it powerless? Yes.

Because you're not there. You're absent, virtually absent, or completely asleep when you're identified with thinking. So you're being run by patterns on the karmic collective patterns, mental patterns.

And so your true power comes as you wake up out of that.

[Speaker 8] (4:58:21 - 4:58:23)

Thanks Eckhart. Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (4:58:44 - 4:59:20)

My question is around, before you were talking about intensification of presence. So at times I've felt intense energy in my body, throughout my body. But that's more rare.

And it's, I feel that I experience presence in more of an underlying calmness. So my question is, is presence experienced, is there something consistent with presence?

[Speaker 1] (4:59:20 - 5:04:19)

Do you mean, does it always feel the same? Is that what you mean, perhaps? Well, the, as I said, the intensity of presence can vary.

Then, so presence is the energy field. Now, this is very hard to talk about, but I'll just, I will make an attempt. It is almost as if there's a place inside from where presence emanates.

And that place is timeless. And I can only compare it in the sense-perceived world, could compare to this, like the sun that continuously shines, and yet it has no form. So it's like a space rather, out of which presence emanates.

So the sun is an actually positive presence. But if you imagine that the sun were an empty space, out of which the light emanates, then you get a better, this is closer to the truth of how it is experienced as you go very deeply into it. So there is a space within, or a spaciousness, that is the point out of which the emanation of presence happens.

And that space is absolute repose, absolute stillness. And to feel that in yourself is joy, very joyful, in the, for lack of a better word. There's an aliveness there, but it is absolutely still.

That's the core. And that is, perhaps as I speak of it, you can get a sense within yourself what that is. You can only sense it when you're not thinking.

You can't be thinking and sense that. That's the innermost stillness within you. Out of that emanates presence, which can emanate directly from the body, can also move into your mind and begin to use your mind and inform the mind and speak through the mind.

There were times in my life when I was very passive for, you know, my episodes on seeking on park benches, but even after that, for long periods of time, I was so immersed in that inner stillness that there seemed no point in doing anything. And you don't need to go that way. I didn't have any guidance, so nobody could tell me what to do with that.

So I gradually had to learn for myself that you can be active in the world and at the same time completely rooted in the stillness. So you particularly mentioned the state of calmness when you can feel it. So it may be that you have that connectedness with a still point within and feel that very strongly.

It's very hard for people to, people also differ in their choice of words when they speak about it. So you could ask, if you go to India or you go to any Buddhist country, you may find that, and ask them about spiritual awakening, you may find that the words they use to describe it are very, very different. And only if you know already from direct experience what it is they're talking about, you can recognize that they are talking about the same thing.

So I've already said too much about it because what I have said may, those words may not be what the words that you would choose to talk about your experience of presence. So are you, are you able to suspend thinking for certain moments without going to sleep? Um, I'm not sure.

Okay, try it now. Okay, stop. Okay, how was that?

[Speaker 3] (5:04:20 - 5:04:23)

Um, I don't remember a thought.

[Speaker 1] (5:04:23 - 5:04:28)

Okay. Yeah. So there was no thought.

Yeah. Because not thinking is not memorable.

[Speaker 6] (5:04:29 - 5:04:32)

Yeah. Okay.

[Speaker 1] (5:04:33 - 5:17:18)

Now, this is very significant. So the mind doesn't know what to do with not thinking because the mind is thought. The mind cannot really appreciate how important not thinking is, because what the mind is interested in is, let me ask another question.

That's what the mind is interested in. It's not interested in, in stepping aside and allowing no thought to arise. So the mind has a certain momentum.

The most important thing is to become familiar with that state of no thought. Far more important than any question that could arise in your mind or any answer that the greatest spiritual teacher could give you. So that's why I mentioned in the New Earth, I was visiting that big, a big center where they offer countless fascinating courses on developing this and that faculty and spiritual development and, and physio, physical development and all kinds of huge number of courses are offered.

You can have anything, a menu of courses, you can pursue any interest, wonderful and fascinating. So I don't know if you remember reading it, I wrote, somebody came to me and showed me that program, that menu of fascinating courses and workshops. So which one do you think is most suitable for me?

And I looked through it. There's so many, I don't know. But I can tell you this.

What are the way I put it at that time was be aware of your breathing just for a few days and you will gain more than attending any of these courses. And it's free. Be aware of your breath as you go through daily life as much as you can.

What does that imply? That implies there's a space of no thought because you cannot be aware of your breath and think at the same time. If you want rapid acceleration of spiritual awakening, don't ask another question.

Because that the next question and the next and the next won't get you any closer, especially after. As you can see, I'm winding down. Especially after being here for several days, I have said all that can be said about spiritual awakening.

The next step is up to you. And it does not consist in. Well, let me see.

No, I need to do something else. I need to know. I know that some questions are helpful because.

But ultimately, the most essential thing is bring presence into your life now, for example, by being aware of your breath as much as you can. It's just one way of bringing presence in or feel the inner body as much as you can. And that's rapid.

Or if you can, just step out of thought already without using any of those portals. Just move out of thought. And some of you can do that already.

Then choose that as much as possible in your daily life. Choose to be in thoughtless awareness whenever you don't actually need to think. And that's quite a lot of the time.

That's the spiritual practice. There's no other spiritual practice. Everything else would point to that.

But this is the most direct spiritual practice. And very rapidly, you'll find the shift happening. You have a choice.

Now, with choice comes responsibility. Because the moment you have that choice, it implies that there is sufficient awareness in you for you to have choice. Once that has arisen, that choice becomes your responsibility.

We have to look at it from that point of view. Because if people ask me, well, who is responsible? Presence or you?

And all kinds of strange questions. But the most useful approach is to see that you can choose to be present. That's your responsibility.

Choose to be present in many, many situations in your daily life. Choose presence over useless thinking, for example. When you're in bed at night, when you wake up in the morning, when you're walking in nature or walking to work from here to there or traveling on public transport or sitting in your car, stopping at a red light.

Choose presence over thinking. You are able to do that. First, you have to remember that you have a choice.

That comes one. Okay, I have a choice. And then exercise the choice and take your attention away from thinking and put your attention on attention itself.

Become conscious of being conscious. From another perspective, which is also true and actually more true but less helpful, it is true to say that when you exercise your choice of being present, what is really happening is that presence is choosing to manifest through you. But what presence wants you is to feel that you can have that choice because it helps it to manifest.

Ultimately there isn't you and presence. You are an aspect of presence. So forget about what I just said.

But exercise your choice to be present, no matter where you are. And if you lose it, fine. It's coming back again and again.

Of course you will drift off again sometimes. You drift off into thinking. You may drift off into reactivity and find, oh, and then come, but then come back.

The moment you notice it, the moment you notice that you've drifted off into reactivity, your choice is to come back. If you cannot come back directly by saying, okay, I'll just be present, then use either your breath to bring you back, use the awareness of the inner body to bring you back, use some conscious movement to bring you back, or use sense perception to bring you back. Looking without labeling.

It's all, all the, especially natural things are helpful. You look at them, look at your dog. He's not thinking.

So, and immediately, it's so easy to be present with an animal, with nature, with the sky. You can use those things as help. So if you need some additional help to be present, use that.

I sometimes call it a portal into presence. There was a man working with Byron Katie, a spiritual teacher. The man was saying, if I had enough money, I would move to Hawaii, and that would be so great.

That's my dream. And she said, well, what would you do in Hawaii? Said, well, I would sit in a deck chair by the beach or in my backyard and look at the palm trees, breeze.

And she pointed out to him, well, where are you sitting now? Is the chair comfortable? Yeah.

So what's wrong with that chair? How different would it be to have just a slightly different view around you? You can be in Hawaii now.

It's an inner state. It's just the mind telling you, you need to be somewhere else in order to be happy. You need to be somewhere else.

It's here now. What's wise to seek, postpone fulfillment to some future imagined point, not realizing that the source of all satisfaction is within you already. And then sense that as your very presence and everything else, whatever happens or doesn't happen, you catch the bus or you miss the bus, you lose money, you gain money, up and down, hot and cold.

That's all the details. This mind made sense of self is also much more focused on the negative than the positive. To be free, you awaken to who you are beyond your history and your life situation.

Now, where is the limit between necessary discernment, perceiving insanity or insincerity, meaning not being naive by expecting only good things from another person, and judgment? So again, where's the limit between necessary discernment and judgment? Necessary discernment, the questioner says, would be perceiving insanity or insincerity and not being naive by expecting only good things from another person.

Discernment, judgment. Now, if you distrust a person, that's a thought form that, of course, creates a big barrier between yourself and that person. If you distrust a person, you cannot go beyond the conditioning of that person.

When you distrust a person, of course, what you react to is the conditioning in that person. The distrust on a conventional level may be justified or not. You may be right, let's say, I don't want to do business with this person.

I distrust him because he seems to me to be dishonest, or you could say I have evidence that he is dishonest.

[Speaker 8] (5:17:20 - 5:17:22)

And so I distrust him.

[Speaker 1] (5:17:48 - 6:28:25)

Which is more effective as meditation practice? To mentally ask, who am I? Or mentally think, I am.

It amounts to the same. If you ask, who am I? Don't expect an answer.

If an answer comes to you, that's not it. Because any answer that comes to who am I will be some kind of concept, and that is a thought form, and that's not who you are. Many people who are unawakened are very, very strongly identified with their physical form, and that's only level one of their form identity.

In the moment of noticing, you're not thinking. Because you cannot notice a silent space and think at the same time. There needs to be something in you that corresponds to that silent space, and that is the inner space of awareness.

And amazingly, that is also a way of realizing who you are at the most essential, the most fundamental level. Because you are essentially that silent presence, that awareness, that consciousness. That is the essence of who you are.

It's the essence of each person in this room. And that's an amazing realization. It transforms the way in which you perceive your identity, your sense of self, because that is perhaps one of the most important questions in life, in your life, is the question of identity.

And that's why the ancient Greeks, in ancient Greek philosophy, probably going back to Pythagoras, one of the most important sayings they had, which is actually inscribed at the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, know thyself, know thyself. That is one of the most important things in your life, to know who you are. Now most people think they know who they are because they identify with, first of all, of course, you have a physical body.

And on the level of form, that physical body is, of course, a part of who you are. I call that, this is the level one of form identity. So the most important realization, this is so essential, I don't know why they don't teach that at school or university, the most important realization is that there are two dimensions to your identity, whereas most humans on the planet, which is all those who are not yet awakening, only know themselves through one identity, one dimension, and that's the dimension of form, form identity.

Form identity begins with the physical form, and that is the first thing, of course, when you meet somebody else, the first thing, of course, you notice is the physical identity of that person, a man or woman with a body and an external appearance, and that's the first thing you notice. And with yourself, many people who are unawakened are very, very strongly identified with their physical form, and that's only level one of their form identity. They are very strongly identified with their physical form, either in a positive or a negative sense, in a meaning, some people are proud of their body and appearance, look at me and compare themselves mentally to other bodies who are not as beautiful, strong, whatever it may be, very strongly identified with body and with appearance, and that's all negatively identified, I'm very unhappy about my body, it looks so awful, that again is a negative identification with body, and of course that's amplified these days through the clever technology that humans have developed, selfies are very popular these days, and usually they show aspects of your body, I suppose, your appearance, so you go, and then you send it out to as many people as possible, and then everybody, all your friends, including hundreds of people you've never met, they look at your body or your external appearance, and feel bad because you look so happy, and that makes them feel even more unhappy than they were already, and to compensate for this, they also get out their phone and take a selfie, looking extremely happy, and perhaps you can find a background that makes people feel envious, or you show yourself in a restaurant having this incredible meal, and for a while that can keep people, well, not never happy

for very long, but busy, and you feel relatively okay in that dimension, of course, sooner or later a time comes when the body changes, strangely, changes its appearance, and you may think that the mirrors are no longer as good as they used to be, because you don't look quite the same as before, and so there are many options open to you, but you begin to be then a little bit unhappy more, because you identified with something that doesn't last, and particularly people who had a very strong body identification become very unhappy as they grow old, very unhappy, and nobody has told them that such an identity is extremely limited, extremely limited identity, but they don't know that, that's all they have, all their life, and then suddenly the body that made them feel superior now becomes a source of great unhappiness, and that is the fate of all those who cannot, do not go deeper within in order to discover deeper levels of who they are, so I never particularly was tempted to identify even when I was young with my body, because it wasn't particularly strong or good looking, so what do I do? I felt inadequate, it was a source of suffering, however, I realized I am more than my body, I'm also my mind, if I can't look stronger and more beautiful than the person next to me, I can be more intelligent, I can be more knowledgeable, so my sense of identity shifted instead of physical, although there was some negative identification, but my sense of identity shifted to my mind, it shifted to that, which of course is the next level down for your form identity, is your mind, your mind is all the accumulated knowledge and memories and so on that are kept alive by thought processes, so to compensate for my inadequate body, I read as much as possible, so that I could make other people feel inferior to me, because they didn't know as much as me, so I was still very uneasy, but whenever I was in a group of people, I would immediately start talking about knowledgeable things and show how much I knew, to make other people feel less than me, that's a very normal egoic strategy, was that the ego saying, don't talk about me so much? Of course I wasn't happy, I was continuously in a state of unease, because there were always people who knew more than me, what do you do with them?

And then there were others who didn't know more than me, but they had something else to identify with, they had a high social standing, went to university, I met a few lords and ladies, they didn't do anything to deserve those titles, they were born with them, so the baby comes out of the mother's womb and say, well this is lady so and so. So many of those people had a very strong, they derived a very significant part of their identity from their social background, upper class, basically it means family history, so they identified very strongly with that, and it could give them a sense of superiority towards most others, and even if the others were more intelligent, you had so much more class, so much more influence, background, whatever you call it, even the way you speak in English language in England, and even the way you speak, you will immediately show others, well not a little less these days, but when I was young and lived in England, the moment you opened your mouth, people would judge you, which social class you were, working class, middle class, upper class, upper middle class, upper class, and many of course pretending, trying to sound very upper class in an exaggerated way, it's very

embarrassing, but they thought it worked.

Again, people are looking for an identity, and the sense of identity is never ultimately satisfying, they're always looking for more, they're looking for something to strengthen their sense of identity, to strengthen their sense of who they are, and the ego, basically that's what the ego is, to have a sense of identity that is based on the conditioned mind, plus the emotions that reflect the conditioned mind, if the ego, usually people think when one speaks of a big ego, that ego is people who are bigger than life, they have a huge ego, they think they are the greatest and the most wonderful and superior to everybody, that can be one aspect of ego. There's also another ego, if you don't have enough stuff to identify with, you don't have more knowledge than most people, you don't have a great body or appearance, you don't have social class background, you don't have possessions, what do you do then?

What do you identify with then? Oh my God, who am I? Or then the ego very cleverly shifts to a kind of victim identity, I am so, I've been treated so unfairly by life, my parents, it started when I was born, dreadful background, life always been at a disadvantage, always been a victim, either you personally or you can identify with the whole social group, and say we have always been victims and we still are victims.

Not that certain, of course people have, there are individuals who have been born into very dreadful circumstances, there are also, there have been on our entire groups of people who are born into bad circumstances, that is undoubtedly true, the danger is making that into your sense of identity that keeps you trapped very much in a kind of prison. Very seductive, there's a big tendency these days for people to have a collective victim identity, very seductive for the ego, you can read about it on the internet very quickly how this becomes more and more fashionable almost these days to have a collective victim identity. So let us be still an instant and forget all things we ever learned, all thoughts we had, and every preconception that we hold of what things mean and what their purpose is.

Well today I'd like to read to you and comment on some brief quotes from A Course in Miracles. A few years ago I gave a talk about The Course in Miracles in a little bit more detail, The Course in Miracles, I don't know if you have read it or done it or heard of it, it's a channeled book, first channeled in the 60s, later part of the 60s, and first published in 70, probably 76, and it's been around since then become a kind of spiritual classic, it's one of the few channeled books that are deep and quite profound, and it's not for everybody definitely, it uses Christian terminology but reinterprets Christianity so that it becomes a very deep teaching, perhaps that's the original teaching of Jesus.

It was channeled by a psychologist, clinical psychologist at Columbia University in New York, so she didn't understand the content very well, having little spiritual background, so it was dictated to her by an inner voice. So the Christian terminology is helpful to

some people and a hindrance for others, it uses this old-fashioned language with exclusively masculine pronouns and God, the Father, and he going about God as he, that may be considered a limitation, but you can't look beyond that. Today I would like to, instead of using the entire course here, which is a big book, I don't even have it right here, this book was published, just a little volume here of quotes from The Causing Miracles, and it's called Accept This Gift, Selections from The Causing Miracles, four words by Marianne Williamson, published by Tartar Cornerstone Editions, and the quotes are quite very short and beautiful, and they selected also quotes that are relatively neutral in their language, so you don't get a lot of the masculine pronouns and the old-fashioned terminology. So what I will do today is just select a few of these very brief quotes and comment on them. This does not mean I'm simplifying The Causing Miracles or reducing it to something simple.

With a spiritual text, it's very different from other kinds of texts. It does not work in a cumulative sense, so the truth can be contained, the entire truth can be contained in one sentence. So it operates in the dimension of depth, not extension.

Although, of course, paradoxically, The Causing Miracles contains lessons. One part is the text, the other part is the lessons, 365 lessons, one for each day of the year. So it gives you time in that sense, but it gives you time because you need time to remove time from your mind, so to speak.

That's quite a paradox. Some of The Causing Miracles writings are quite poetic. They're almost like little poems, and maybe I'll start with one of those little almost poems.

They're quite beautiful, and perhaps the most profound one that I will start with comes towards the end of the course, which is, if somebody does the course 360, so it would be towards the end of the year doing the course. This is the longest quote in our session today, so it's actually a poem that I will read to you, and I think you will appreciate the beauty of it, and then I will comment on the meaning in case you need it. You probably don't.

I don't know yet if I'm going to read it all at once or I'll read parts first and then comment on each part. It's about a couple of pages, well, short pages. There will come a time when images have all gone by and you will see you know not what you are.

It is to this unsealed and open mind that truth returns, unhindered and unbound, where concepts of the self have been laid by is truth revealed exactly as it is. That's the first paragraph, first of the poem. Let me just briefly comment.

There will come a time when images have all gone by and you will see you know not what you are. It is to this unsealed and open mind that truth returns, unhindered and unbound, where concepts of the self have been laid by is truth revealed exactly as it is. Images have all gone by and you will see you know not what you are.

Now, does that mean that somewhere else in the Course it uses the ancient expression, know thyself, as one of the main purposes of the Course is to teach you to know yourself, know thyself? I don't know if I can find it. How does that relate to you?

A time will come when you will realize that you know not what you are. How can you know yourself? And then it says time will come when you, as a positive thing, that you know not what you are.

Well, that's easily explained. To know yourself you have to let go of concepts about yourself. And when you let go of concepts, mentally held concepts about yourself, then you no longer know who or what you are on the level of concept.

And when you have then let go of concepts, where concepts of the self have been laid by, let go of, is truth revealed exactly as it is. So when you surrender mental concepts about who you are, which is stories, narratives, interpretations, then another dimension of knowing arises which is deeper or higher, doesn't matter what term you use, than concepts. And instead of the conceptual knowledge which you let go of, a deeper dimension of knowing arises.

And in that deeper dimension of knowing that is not conceptual, it's not based on thinking, the truth of who you are reveals itself. So that's the essence of all, whether you look at Indian or Hindu teachings, Buddhist teachings, mystical Christianity, it's all the same. Sufism.

Now let's carry on with this poem on the same theme. I call it poem, it's just part of the text. Let us be still an instant and forget all things we ever learned, all thoughts we had, and every preconception that we hold of what things mean and what their purpose is.

Let us remember not our own ideas of what the world is for. We do not know. Let every image held of everyone be loosened from our minds and swept away.

Be innocent of judgment, unaware of any thoughts of evil or of good that ever crossed your mind of anyone. Now do you know him not, but you are free to learn of him and learn of him anew, him being any other person. So this section here points to the clarity that comes and the deep realization that comes when you let go of thinking basically.

So let us be still an instant and forget all things we ever learned, all thoughts we had, and every preconception that we hold of what things mean and what their purpose is. Let every image held of everyone be loosened from our minds and swept away. So it's not only about ourselves letting go of self-concepts, it's also about letting go of concepts that we hold of other people, judgments, concepts, conceptualization.

So meeting another person without any concepts. So you let go of the conceptual knowing so that a deeper knowing arises. Be innocent of judgment, it says.

Judgment is basically interpreting things through thinking. Every judgment is a thought. Jesus also said, do not judge.

So be unaware of any thoughts of evil or of good that ever crossed your mind of anyone. Now do you know him not? Once you've let go, you don't know him or her.

You see, we have the masculine pronouns. But you are free to learn of him and learn of him anew. What are you learning?

You're learning about the deeper reality of the human being, of who he or she is in their essence, and then knowing yourself in the same way. Now the book continues. Only be quiet.

You will need no rule but this. To let your practicing today lift you above the thinking of the world and free your vision from the body's eyes. Only be still and listen.

Simply do this. Be still and lay aside all thoughts of what you are and what God is. All concepts you have learned about the world.

All images you hold about yourself. Otherwise you are consciousness identified with form, the ego, trapped in form, the dream of form. And then consciousness disidentifies from form, wakes up and knows itself for the first time.

This is a very short question and hopefully the answer also will be short. Who becomes enlightened? So we could say the person does not become enlightened, but the person becomes transparent, one could say, and then light comes through, the light of consciousness comes through where the person was, perhaps still is for a while.

It's not an attainment, it's a disappearance of the density of the mental-emotional layers, that identification with which is the person. So the person becomes transparent, so to speak, all the structures. For example, it starts with the mind.

The mind movement is interspersed with spaces and that's how the light gets through, the light of consciousness. And so nobody becomes enlightened as such. Enlightenment, if you even want to use that word, is an awakening of consciousness.

Was consciousness then asleep? Well, in some way, yes, whenever there's identification with something, consciousness is dreaming the dream of form. And so, on the one hand, consciousness wants to continue the dream of form, and on the other hand, the dream of form means creating more forms.

This is one movement in the universe, is to create more differentiation in the forms. The universe is obviously creating form. Look at the life on one planet.

Even if you just look at the life forms in the sea, millions of different life forms. So the universe actually loves that movement into form. And then there's something else that

the universe loves, and that's the return to the source, to know itself.

How do I know these things? Well, just through knowing this outer movement, the return movement. Us here, this gathering, anybody who is present with us here, is really part of the return movement to the source.

The universe wants that as much as it wants to flow out into things and create. So you have the two movements. And it may not even be a question of either one or the other.

It is possible for us to embody within both movements so that we continue to create, but not blindly anymore, not egoically anymore, not compulsively anymore, which is there, for example, with the compulsive wanting more things, wanting more. That's part of the ego, and that's part of the universe's need to have more, more things, more stuff. But we can also embody the return movement, and then when the awakening happens, the awakened consciousness can also create.

Why would it do that? Not out of any need, but out of joy, a joyful creation, like an artist is joyful, not an egoic artist, but an artist who deeply enjoys the act of creativity. So we can consciously create form, but be aligned with the source.

So through the human form, the source can create consciously, rather than dreaming the dream of form, which is identification with forms. Conscious creation, a beautiful thing. So there may be some questions about that today, we'll see.

I know that a very important, we live in this, at this time, on this planet, and perhaps everywhere, it could be that everything that happens here is a reflection of whatever happens in the universe. There's definitely a strong pull towards the return movement of the awakening of consciousness, how it awakens out of identification with form. How do you know that?

Well, because it happens to you. Otherwise, you are consciousness identified with form, the ego, trapped in form, the dream of form, and then consciousness disidentifies from form, wakes up and knows itself for the first time. Nothing needs to change for you to know you stay where you are, and then you suddenly know reality as yourself, and then you become a conscious co-creator.

The universe moves through the human form and creates, either a lot or little doesn't matter, or nothing, it doesn't need to create. It's free not to create. Maybe you're a frequency holder who doesn't, is not interested in creating.

You can just be aligned with the source, and yet there too, something, you're still here in this dimension, something of the source will flow through you into this dimension. Don't attempt to understand all this intellectually because it cannot be understood. I'm giving as much, perhaps too much already, of what can be understood.

The entire thing is far too vast for the human mind to understand. It doesn't need that. It's not necessary.

You can be aligned, I've said it before, you can be aligned with the source, but you cannot understand the source, and yet you can be one with it, conscious oneness with the consciousness. You cannot understand consciousness. God, amazing what they did in the 19th century.

There were some vast, these philosophers that created a huge system, and every philosopher created his own system of thought to explain the entire universe. Intricate. And then they presented these as books that here's the entire universe explained.

And then they had followers, and now it's not fashionable anymore to attempt to explain the entire universe in some kind of system. Hegel did it, Fichte, Schelling, Schopenhauer to some extent. He had deep insights into something beyond.

But it's still a little limited because nobody can present us a mentally constructed system that explains the universe. Or God can explain neither the manifested, let alone the unmanifested. Many humans are going through the enlightening process.

Enlightening has two, fortunately, in the English language. Light has two meanings, which is very nice. As you go through the enlightening or awakening process, you become lighter, not physically, but psychologically.

A lightness comes into your being, not the heaviness of the ego, the seriousness of the ego. You become lighter. But also, the other meaning of light is the light shines through you.

You become porous to the light. Consciousness moves through you. I can sometimes, when I go to a public place or anywhere, occasionally I'm wrong, but usually I can point out the people in whom the process is happening and who are most likely to come up to me and talk to me and say, oh, we read your book.

I can look at, they haven't seen me, I've seen them, and said, out of these, these are the most likely to, I don't think that, I just see it. And then I put my sunglasses on. So no matter where you look on the surface level, you're not going to arrive.

And the Buddha recognized that because he said, wherever you go and whatever you do, you will encounter suffering. Oh. And that, if only read as a statement, sounds very pessimistic or nihilistic, which means you are condemned to perpetual frustration.

Other translations of the term that the Buddha used, which is dukkha, other possible translations of that term would be misery, unsatisfactoriness, unhappiness, frustration. Nothing is ever good enough. And that manifests in some people more extremely than in others, that state of consciousness.

But in many people it manifests as a continuous discontent, a continuous sense of something wrong here, except for brief moments, brief interludes, you've just arrived at your vacation destination, until then that feeling comes up again. So dukkha, it's a very profound realization that on that level, there is no ultimate fulfillment or happiness. And so you cannot look for it in the future, because when you look at it on the surface level of life, to fulfillment through a situation, through a new place, a new activity, a new way of relating to people, becoming important, becoming, getting recognition by others, all these things are surface phenomena, which are dukkha.

And so I've met some people, famous and wealthy people who have actually achieved all that, and then they realized it actually, it got worse, because they could no longer be under the illusion that when they finally have enough money, they'll be free. And so finally they got all the money, and they could go anywhere, and they tried it out, and wherever they went, they found themselves. And they found their own state of consciousness, the unrealized state of consciousness.

And wherever they went, because they found themselves, they found frustration. And they were unhappy sitting in their private jet. And that's a good point to reach, but the good news is you don't need a private jet to get to that realization, because otherwise the chances for most of us would be slim of realization were only possible through the acquisition of a private jet, or at least a share in, a time share in a jet, which you can buy, but that's still very expensive.

So the surface level is not to be totally denied, because undoubtedly you exist here on the level of form also, and there are things to do and to acquire on the surface level as part of who you are on the level of form. So you need to be able to operate well on the level of form, learning new things, trying out new things, creating things on the level of form, whatever it is that you may want to create, or simply being engaged in certain activities on the level of form, having a personality that's not going to totally evaporate, so there's still things that are in you. You need to honor also that level of who you are, which does not mean being totally absorbed by it, trapped in it, and only know yourself as that.

So to to do, to be active, that happens on the on the surface level of life, that's fine. If you live in a place that is not the best, that way perhaps it's noisy or not nice enough, why not see if you can find a better place to live or get a better job? These things still operate.

Where it doesn't work is expecting some ultimate fulfillment through whatever you achieve, and then it, because if you expect some ultimate fulfillment, ultimate happiness, then you're telling the world, the world in whatever form it manifests to you, you're telling the world, make me happy. You have, you place expectations upon the world that it cannot meet. So the world, the world includes whatever happens to you,

whatever other people, places, activities, relationships, it's all the, that's all the world, what you own, experiences on the level of form, all that is fine, is part of the dance of life, but if you expect it to make you happy, it's frustrating.

If you no longer expect these things to make you happy, they actually are quite pleasant. You can experience many things, it's very pleasant things. You visit new places, it's nice, you don't expect that someplace you should find some ultimate fulfillment just because you've moved from A to B, or you meet a new person, a relationship, without placing an impossible demand upon the other person, looking for the ultimate spiritual partner to make me happy, please apply here, send your photo too.

So the, when you, when you don't have the expectation that this person should make you happy, then the relationship actually works much better. But how can you not have that expectation only if at the same time that you operate on the level of form, you also are connected with the essence of who you are, you also realize experientially in the present moment, the meaning of the letter E, the inscription, you are. So what the inscription is telling you is to have that realization in the background of your life, so to speak, continuously, to have that inner spaciousness continuously as a backdrop, so to speak, to your life.

So when you do things, not just when you meditate, not just, although it's nice to have glimpses of it, or realizations when you, I mean, there are people who've been meditating for 20 years and never even had a glimpse of that, because they always try to get somewhere through their meditation, not realizing the meditation is not a doing. So if you practice meditation as a doing, you'll continuously miss it, because doing implies you want to get somewhere, which means it keeps you trapped on the surface level, because only on the surface level you can get somewhere. On the depth level, you already are somewhere, or nowhere.

On the depth level, that's the letter E, you are the beingness, to note, and that is the inner spaciousness where you, that consciousness that you are transcends the person, and that is where the sense of being at home, or to put it in a more conventional language, to be comfortable, there's an expression in English, to be comfortable in your own skin, of course it's more than that, it's deeper than in your own skin, but it points to that, to feel that sense of rootedness in something indestructible, and that is knowing that you are, and it's nothing to do with thinking, it's not a concept, it is knowing yourself as consciousness. Now as you might have guessed, I have a bit more yin than yang, this does not mean I'm going to burst into your lady's bathroom.

Another thing to be aware of, that's all part of it, is the yin and yang in every human being, the movement, the polarity manifests in every human being, of the feminine and the masculine, and again it's important to be, to not to stray too much to one extreme, or too much to the other extreme, nothing in excess, but there's no human being who is

totally in the middle, and if you're a man, it does not necessarily mean that you energetically have a more yang than yin, there are men who have more yin than some women, there are some women who have more yang than a man. Now as you might have guessed, I have a bit more yin than yang, this does not mean I'm going to burst into your lady's bathroom and claim my right to use it, and if you become aggressive with me and say get out of my bathroom, I can say, I have more yin than you, and the fact that you are aggressive towards me proves it, you should be in the yang bathroom.

Michael, our Swedish organizer, who just spoke to you just now, yin or yang? He has even more yin than me, that's why he's so lovable, but don't go too far with your yin, you have countries too that have predominant, are more yin or yang, in the United States, you have states that can be in the collective energy field, either more yin or yang, typical example, or for example, on the whole, doesn't mean that every individual in that state corresponds to that, but on the whole, probably most people would agree that California is more yin, Texas is more yang, so if your car breaks down in the middle of the night, and your cell phone doesn't work, you have to knock at the door, and if it's an extreme yang household, the door will open with a guy with a gun, what do you want?

Get off my property, if you come to an extreme yin household, oh hi, yes, you will come in and have some soup, now the danger is with the extreme yang, you have just not helped a person who is truly in need of assistance and help, and you're totally closed, your boundary is so rigid that nothing penetrates, you've desensitized yourself in your hardened attitude, it's an extreme form of yang, so you don't even know what you're doing to yourself ultimately, now there's also danger involved in the extreme form of yin, obviously, perhaps you're helping a person in need of help, or you invite somebody in who's going to rob and kill you, and this is because you are loss of awareness, you are not more in the middle, to stay in the middle, more or less, of course you'll fluctuate, I'm always, will always probably be more yin than yang, but in certain situations, I may suddenly be a bit more yang, but that requires wisdom, it requires openness to the present moment, rather than living through mental concepts, and then your response to that situation will be correct, it will be either, there will be more yin in it or more yang in it, on the whole, and that is not a bad thing, Western civilization shifted from a very long time being predominantly and excessively yang, began to shift in the 60s more towards yin, and that was a wonderful thing, absolutely necessary, and that enabled a lot of this spirituality to come in from, spirituality come in from the East, the human potential movement, the equality for women, the respect for people who are outsiders, rather than empathy towards other human beings who are of a different race, or who are of type of minority, or human beings who are other different gay people, finally, the acceptance of gay people, all these wonderful things that happened through the shift to a more empathetic, state of consciousness through shifting to yin, and that was a great thing, otherwise we probably wouldn't even be here talking, but you have to be careful with the movement because when once it starts and there's not enough awareness, it

can go on and on and on, and so the empathy towards others, which is a great thing, if you take it to an extreme, it becomes political correctness that can be very extreme, so you cannot say many things you can't say anymore, don't disagree with me because, or with us, because anything you disagree with is hate speech, stop, don't talk, of course, there is such a thing as hate speech, and that is clearly recognizable, so just as an example of an extreme form of permissiveness, well, actually, there was already a great thing, education changed very much, that's much more respecting the child, the end of corporal punishment, all wonderful things, then, of course, permissiveness came so much that there was a total lack of guidance given to a child, so it went too much that way, another interesting thing is, in many schools these days, they don't want to differentiate between children's achievement anymore, and I can see why, because it makes a child feel bad to be said, this, you are better than, you are not as good as that one, so when I was a child, we had sports events, and I wasn't very good, as you might have guessed, at sports, and it was a little bit like the Olympics, you needed to have a certain number of points, and then you got a bronze medal, and then for even better, more points, you got a silver medal, and then you got a gold medal, and I got 39 points, which was just one point below the bronze medal, and all the bigger boys condescendingly came to me and said, oh, you did really well, I'm so surprised, now, nowadays, perhaps, I would have received a gold medal, don't even have to make an effort, is that a good thing? You have to see, finally, nothing in excess, it didn't kill me that I didn't get a bronze medal, I realized that I knew that already, the physical was not my strength, being a puny weakling, oh, as Arnold says, don't be a puny loser, so, just to give a very extreme point of view now, you have to allow the child to choose their own gender at the age of seven already, so if they feel they're a tomboy, a girl is a tomboy, says, would you rather be a boy? Might be a good idea, don't you want to be a boy? Yeah, yeah, I want to be a boy, okay, you dress you up as a boy, and there's a new, I couldn't believe it at first, in Ontario, Canada, there's a new law, if the parents, if the child expresses his or her desire to be the opposite gender, this seems almost incredible, and I hope it's not true, but several people have told me it's true, and I saw it on the internet, a reliable source, not fake news, if the child expresses a desire to be the opposite gender, might be an eight-year-old or a 10-year-old, and the parents refuse to take this child to a doctor for hormone treatment, the state authorities are entitled to take the child away from the parents, seems incredible, but there will be an extreme form of where something has gone wrong, so we need to be very careful with balancing things between the two. Templar tend to identify with a particular movement, so even though yang lends itself more to ego, yin also can become ego, if you're unconscious and you identify, that means it then determines the way you think, and the way you see things, if I've said anything that you feel angry about right now, it means you have identified with something, and your ego identity, you derive from that particular collective position, and that's fine, at least now you know it.

Perhaps that is, this has become the teaching, so the understanding of what happened

to me, gradually became the teaching, and I realize it's not complicated at all, and I realize many humans are ready for it.

[Speaker 4] (6:28:30 - 6:28:52)

You said this happened, this peacefulness, awareness, happened to you spontaneously, and I wonder why did it happen to you, and exactly how did that happen, and?

[Speaker 1] (6:28:56 - 6:38:01)

Okay, the first one, I don't know if I'll be able to, the first part of it, I don't know if I'll be able to answer it, it just happened. Well, I can say that it happened because the egoic sense of self got eroded, and what happened was a disidentification from thinking, this is what happened, but I didn't know that that's what happened when it first happened, it just happened, I couldn't have explained it. The last thought that I was identified with was I can't live with myself any longer, and then I looked at the thought, well, there was myself, who am I?

I didn't know that at the time when this thought came, who am I if I can't live with myself any longer? Who is the self and who am I? I didn't know at the time that I had voiced an ancient question that has been used in meditation for hundreds or thousands of years, the question, who am I?

It's spiritual teachers in India have used that question to take people into this realization since ancient times, and the question arose spontaneously in my mind, who am I? Because it seemed strange, I no longer know if the sentence, I cannot live with myself any longer, seemed so strange because there seemed to be two people there, the I and the self, and that was so strange that I was wondering, who am I if I can't live with myself? And that simple question, who am I, led to a realization of the essence of I, of what I means, and the I I realized is not my thoughts, so I disidentified from the unhappy self that was telling itself unhappy stories all the time, and so the sense of I was no longer lodged in thought, it removed itself from thought because it just couldn't stand it anymore, simple as that, that's why it happened, it couldn't stand it anymore, it removed itself, it was too painful, and all was left was that the sense of I-ness or beingness or presence, which is inherently peaceful, which has no problems in it, is timeless, and that is the true source of everybody's identity, the true source of the beingness, the formless, and then the self that consisted of thinking, identification with thinking, couldn't survive the sense of self that was no longer invested with the identification, so the unhappy me, as I called it later, dissolved, and what's left was just the I-presence, it seemed so simple, but even that I couldn't have explained at the time, it took years before I could verbalize something like this, what I'm saying now, but it is basically a very simple thing, in a way it's a very natural thing, and it could well be that at some point in human evolution, perhaps soon, there could be a natural thing that happens to people when they reach adulthood, I would suggest that as you grow up, you're a teenager, it seems a natural

stage to still be at, perhaps to still be identified with the ego, to grow identified with thinking and so on, and then you become an adult, and then to outgrow that, and then perhaps ancient cultures, as you know, had rituals and ceremonies, and in ancient Greece, you had the mysteries that people underwent, they were kind of workshops, I suppose, but where transformation of consciousness happened, and so that could happen in a more enlightened culture, as people reach young adulthood, perhaps these are the new mysteries that we can create, mysteries was what is described, not everybody here may know what in ancient Greece was called mysteries, was a kind of initiation process, people were not supposed to talk about it, so nobody knows exactly what they did, but it was some kind of deepening of the human being, there were ancient things going back to ancient times, to Egypt and to India, so we could have this modern mysteries where people step out of identification with egoic self and simply realize the I, the I-ness, perhaps this has become the teaching, so the understanding of what happened to me gradually became the teaching, and I realized it's not complicated at all, and I realized many humans are ready for it, it was a surprise when I realized that, I first realized it when the power of now came out and without any advertising or anything, more and more people started to read it in the first few months, at first when the book was finished, I thought a few people may respond to it, and that's fine, if nobody wants to buy it, that's fine too, I said I will go and sell tomatoes to make a living, why I said that, I don't know, it just came, and then I realized far more people are ready, they actually went into the book and understood it or realized the truth of it because they were ready to hear it, it wasn't totally new, they were ready to hear it, yes, yes, it's always a recognition when you read or listen to true spiritual teaching, something in you already knew it, it's not totally new, and that is the power of the spiritual teaching, is the presence in you that's already there, recognizes the truth when it sees it, and then you feel it, you respond, yes, it's always a recognition, it's never somebody telling you something new, you can read other books, you get lots of new facts that you had never heard of and say, wow, that's interesting, yeah, it may be interesting, but it won't transform you, only things that you recognize as true actually then bring out that level in you, that dimension in you, and that's the power of a spiritual book, and I didn't realize how many humans actually were ready for that, it's only when they start writing to me, at that time people were still writing letters, writing to me and saying, I bought five copies for my four friends or relatives, and then somebody else said, I bought three copies, and there was people, so wow, it's amazing that so many people seem to be ready for it, so that's good, it's happening, it's a relatively simple process, and- Theoretically. Yes, there is still, of course, the old consciousness still has its gravitational pull upon people, but everyone who is here or wherever you are listening to this, seeing this is part of the transformation and contributes to the awakening, so it is a very significant thing that as you awaken, and most people who join us here or here in this room or at home are already undergoing the awakening process, in a few people it comes very suddenly, but that's rare, in most, it's a gradual awakening, and then it doesn't go like that, it goes more in a spiral, you go, this presence arises, and then you

fall back, and then again it's, and so it gradually goes, it grows slowly with setbacks.

[Speaker 5] (6:38:01 - 6:38:03)

Why do you think it happened like that for you?

[Speaker 1] (6:38:04 - 6:39:46)

Well, for some reason, it happens for a few people like that, but it seems to be rare, I cannot tell you why that is, there was, it's better, it's good not to look for an event, I almost regret telling people how it happened to me later, because it makes people to look for an event, and in a way what happened, I describe it as something happening, it's not real, it's more of a non-event than an event, because it's a, it's a, you kind of disappear in that, the form, the form self, the form identity kind of dissolves, so it's more of a non-event than an event, it's better not to look for it, it's not an, for most people, it may come as an occasional glimpses, you have the famous Satori in Zen, Satori is a flash of enlightenment, when you suddenly go, wow, yeah, but that doesn't necessarily last, if you have a Satori, it doesn't mean that the next day you're still conscious, but it's a nice thing when it happens, it's a flash of realization, so the Zen master tries to sometimes bring about in you the flash, and that's good, but it's not, of course, it's not the permanent state, that comes gradually, it's an adventure in consciousness, and we can enjoy it while it happens.

[Speaker 7] (6:39:50 - 6:39:52)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (6:39:58 - 6:41:36)

Oh, let's ring the bell. You wanted to go on? Yeah, well, it's in, it goes on in you now.

Oh, it's now. It's already now?

[Speaker 6] (6:42:07 - 6:42:08)

Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (6:42:37 - 6:42:51)

Hello Eckhart, my question is not about your breakfast, but a little bit personal, it's about something that I read about you, that at one point in your life, you picked up the name Eckhart for yourself.

[Speaker 6] (6:42:52 - 6:42:53)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (6:42:53 - 6:43:17)

So you were talking about today, in your books, about form identity, about pain body, about the surface self accumulating the stories of the past, and I just want to know, what was the motivation, or the urge behind that choice, that urge?

[Speaker 6] (6:43:17 - 6:43:18)

Right.

[Speaker 3] (6:43:19 - 6:43:26)

And were there any impacts on your wellbeing, afterwards, of making that change?

[Speaker 1] (6:43:26 - 6:53:15)

Right. Well, one has to come with some kind of arrangement, with a world of form, the world of labels, and so on. Sometimes it's convenient, when somebody asks you, what's your name?

Before I answer your question, I'll get there in a minute. Somebody asks you, what is your name? And then it is more practical, and avoids a lot of complication to say, my name is so-and-so.

It doesn't mean that you identify with that particular sound, but it works better than to say, I have no name and no form. No, that'll throw them. And it'll probably be the end of the conversation.

So it helps to have a name, in normal life. But there's another thing, these are forms, thought forms. And your name, of course, is something connected with your form identity.

And as you grow up, and go through life, you have all kinds of experiences. And your name then kind of absorbs, one could say, the flavor of all those experiences that you have. They become part of what the name absorbs.

So a name can become heavy after years and years, especially of suffering. Then the name reflects the suffering of your whole past. There's a reason why, in many or most spiritual traditions, when you enter the formal spiritual path, whether it's in Christianity, or in Hinduism, Buddhism, you adopt a different name.

And the idea behind it is, that you let go of your past completely, because the name kind of symbolizes your entire past. And sometimes even carries an energetic charge to it, that comes from the past. All the things that cling to that name.

So the idea in many spiritual traditions is, as you embark on the spiritual path, you adopt

a spiritual name, which you then regard as more real, or it's not ultimately real, because it's just another sound, but more real than your old birth name. And definitely it's something that does not have this weight of past to it. But the danger with that, of course, is the moment you adopt a spiritual name, then everybody will know that it's a spiritual name.

And so very quickly, there could be an egoic identification with you as having a spiritual name, which immediately makes you superior to all these other people who have not yet chosen the spiritual path, and are still using their birth names, all these unawakened people. But I now have a spiritual name, because I'm spiritual. And so the ego, again, always comes in through the back door.

In my case, there has been a, I felt as the awakening happened, the shift in consciousness, there was a certain or considerable degree of discontinuity with my past. And I felt that my past, my childhood was predominantly unhappy with a few happy moments, of course, but predominantly unhappy caused by parents' unconsciousness. They were not bad parents.

They did their best. I never experienced any kind of physical punishment. And yet there was continuous drama in my parents' home.

I was the only child. My pain body grew through that. It was nightmare living there.

And I sometimes felt, how did I get here? This is so crazy. So there was a lot of suffering, a lot of ideas of suicide.

My first idea of suicide came at the age of about eight. And I was very happy when scaffolding, they built the house where we lived. They painted the exterior of the house and they were scaffolding up to the third or fourth floor, and a ladder going up.

And I said, oh, as long as it's there, I can always climb up and jump down. That's great. So I'm lucky that scaffolding is there.

I can always end it. I'm laughing now because it's gone. It's kind of dissolved completely.

I wasn't laughing then. And then there was already a sense of dissociation from my name and my entire personal past, so that I could remember it. And then the two events that led to it were two synchronistic events.

One is a dream I had in which I walked up the stairs into some circular tower. And in that circular tower, there was a table and on the table, there were some books. They had the name Eckhart on them.

And some, I can't remember what visual, what picture was there. And they had the name Eckhart. And I knew I had written those books, but at that time, my name was not

Eckhart.

So that was a strange thing that I saw these books. I had written them, but the name was Eckhart. So I woke up the next morning.

That's how strange. And a few days later, I was walking down the high street, the town I was living in. I mentioned it yesterday.

It was a town that attracts all kinds of spiritual as well as weird people. So I felt quite at home there. It was Glastonbury in Somerset, England.

And I was walking down the high street. Of course, if you live there for a few years, you know almost everybody. And almost everybody is either a channeler or a psychic or a clairvoyant or a reincarnation of King Arthur.

That's all. At any given time, there are several reincarnations of King Arthur living in Glastonbury. And so I ran into this person and he was a psychic, but he wasn't doing any psychic work at that moment.

But he said, hi, Eckhart. I said, what? Oh, he said, oh, I'm sorry.

I don't know why that came. I came into my head that name. And that was that.

That was a synchronistic thing that happened a few days after the dream. And I was ready to let go of the past and to let go of the old name. And that seemed to be a sign to me that it is time for that.

And only later did I... I knew, I was aware at that time already of the medieval mystic, Meister Eckhart. If you have not read Meister Eckhart, I highly recommend the wonderful, deep teachings.

And I often say, if you really want to... Of course, Meister Eckhart was a monk in the Christian tradition in medieval times. But I often say, if you really want to understand Buddhism, Meister Eckhart, of course, had never heard of Buddhism.

If you really want to understand Buddhism, read Meister Eckhart, because he really shows you the essence of Buddhism. And he's very... In Christianity, he's a very strange figure.

He was lucky that he was not burnt or anything. So he survived until he passed away. And only later did I realize interesting things that Eck is Sanskrit for one.

And heart is lovely too. So that became then the... It's still just a name.

It's not... At some point that dissolves and it's fine. It's something that is like a piece of clothes that you wear until you don't wear it anymore.

So it's fine. And basically that's how it happened. Are you considering changing your name or have you done it already?

I am considering. Right. Are you waiting for some kind of sign?

Not really. No, okay.

[Speaker 3] (6:53:15 - 6:53:23)

I just wanted... I read it in your biography and I was just wondering your personal perspective.

[Speaker 1] (6:53:23 - 6:53:52)

And thank you very much for sharing it. Oh, you're welcome. So I was given a kind of sign that's a synchronistic thing.

Often it's very interesting when synchronistic events like that happen. So I wish you well. Thank you.

And maybe at some future retreat or if there are any future... Well, there are no future retreats, but another retreat. Let me know if you have adopted a new name.

[Speaker 8] (6:53:52 - 6:53:52)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (6:53:53 - 6:54:03)

But of course, realizing the essence of who you are is Anami, nameless, no name.

[Speaker 6] (6:54:04 - 6:54:05)

Thanks.

[Speaker 1] (6:54:25 - 7:52:39)

That is the reason why suffering has a purpose in this world. Suffering is here, including even those forms of suffering that are entirely generated by the mind. And that too is there to ultimately awaken you.

So you have the suffering that is generated through this misuse of the mind, unconscious thinking, and you have suffering that comes through encountering disaster in one form or another in your life. And that's not to be denied. And in the course of this weekend, we will explore how that also can become an opening into transcendence.

And it often is, you will hear stories of people who were confronted with the most extreme forms of suffering and were able to go beyond it, not by denying it, but by

transcending. There's a huge difference between denial and transcendence. We'll be looking at that.

So there's the person who lives confronted with problems and with challenges. And there is the potential of discovering, and sometimes through encountering extreme forms of disaster, but not always, not necessarily, but there's a potential of discovering within yourself a dimension of depth that transcends who you are as a person. And in this moment, when the thinking mind stops for a moment and is replaced with an aware presence, then the transcendent dimension has emerged in you.

And the invitation to you is right here and now, to see if you can invite that dimension into your life. And it is almost as if you disappeared temporarily, what you before you called I, because when you're not thinking and just are aware, then the person has temporarily subsided and an aware presence has arisen. And that's the discovery of the transcendent you, or as I call it sometimes, the deep I.

And for some people it comes, and there are many, many accounts throughout history, it comes through encountering extreme forms of suffering. I know that Steve Taylor will probably address it. He's done a lot of research, and we have one speaker, I don't want to say too much, who encountered awakening through very extreme form of suffering.

And that is the potential for awakening that is hiding beyond the seemingly most dreadful thing that could happen to you. And it's all expressed symbolically, whether or not you relate to it as whether you're a Christian or you're not a Christian, you simply understand there's something there that the symbol of the cross points to. This is something I don't think it's fully understood by most churches or conventional Christians, that what the symbol of the cross points to, and a man who is dying on the cross, to me that is the archetype of human and what is possible.

The cross is a torture instrument. It's an expression of extreme suffering. So you have this human being on a torture instrument.

Now, then something happens. There is this human being dies, this in a state of surrender, not my will, but thy will be done. The human being dies in a state of surrender and the very torture instrument is a symbol for the divine.

The cross is a sacred symbol, but the cross is also a torture instrument. The torture instrument, the greatest obstacle to fulfillment, the greatest obstacle to life, it seems, is also potentially the opening into the transcendent dimension. And I believe this to me is the deep symbolism of the cross.

And traditionally, the humans, many humans who encountered awakening, encountered it through extreme suffering. And that drove them to a point of surrender. That drove them, because they couldn't stand the pain anymore, that drove them to the state of

acceptance of what is.

And then suddenly the vertical dimension opened up. That's also, you could say the cross also points to the two dimensions of what is. The horizontal dimension and the vertical dimension.

So as awareness arises or presence, then it begins to shine through the person. The person no longer has, does no longer have the density that completely obscures the awareness, the consciousness, the unconditioned consciousness underneath. And it's often the case that the density is destroyed by a suffering.

And that is the reason why suffering has a purpose in this world. Suffering is here, including even those forms of suffering that are entirely generated by the mind, that too is there to ultimately awaken you. So you suffer and the suffering, and all of you have been through different forms of suffering, some very deep, some just a succession of many, many minor frustrations and things going wrong.

So you somehow lost confidence in, you lost belief that this world would ultimately be able to satisfy you or make you happy. That's not it. And perhaps you became frustrated with yourself.

That's possible too. So the suffering is a potential awakener. It has a purpose and it is there to destroy you ultimately, or at least to crack, to create a crack in the egoic shell.

And then something emerges through the crack. Some people in this lifetime continue to have an ego, but it's no longer totally, it's no longer a impenetrable shell. Through suffering, it has received cracks here and there.

There's a, is it Leonard Cohen? I think he has a song or poem. There is a crack, a crack in everything.

That's how the light gets in or gets out, I would say. So suffering destroys the false self, the identification, complete identification with your form identity. So what I call presence, there are other words for it, such as awareness is a state of consciousness that transcends thinking.

You may have noticed that most of the time you have a voice in your head that never stops speaking. And what I call the voice in the head are your habitual thought processes. For many people, the voice in the head, which is the self-talk is not, is predominantly unpleasant because for many people, the self-talk tends to be to a large extent negative.

In fact, there are millions of people in this world who are tortured by their own minds, by the self-talk in the head, which of course is the conditioning of their minds. But they don't even know that because they're so identified with the voice in the head that there's

no space beyond from where they can realize that there is a voice in the head because when they're identified with the voice in the head, they are the voice in the head. Presence is the arising of a dimension of consciousness from where you can become aware that there is the voice in the head.

That awareness is above thinking. It's a space of consciousness where you can be the observer of your own mind, the awareness behind the thought processes. And for human beings to discover that dimension within themselves is extraordinarily important.

It is, in fact, as I see it, the next step in the evolution of humanity to discover that unconditioned dimension of consciousness within themselves. And that's an amazing shift. All the ancient spiritual teachers have already pointed to the possibility from the Buddha to Jesus and so on.

But until now, only very few people have been able to actually experience that state of consciousness and embody that state of consciousness. One could say that until now or until fairly recently, it's been a luxury for human beings to attain that new consciousness. But the world situation that we are at now is so critical.

We're faced by so many problems collectively that the transformation of human consciousness, which is what the arising of presence is, is no longer a luxury. It's a necessity for the survival of humanity. The problems that we are facing, most of the problems, if not all the problems we are facing as a species, are actually generated by our own minds.

So all the problems are not problems of natural disaster or anything except disasters that were created by humans. So there is a strong element of, one could almost say, insanity or dysfunction in what I call the old consciousness, the normal human consciousness. It has produced an enormous amount of suffering quite unnecessarily.

And already the ancient teachers have pointed to that. The Buddha said the human condition is one of suffering. And Jesus said, what we need is to find the kingdom of heaven within.

We need salvation. And only now are many, many humans on the planet, still a minority, but far more than ever before, are ready to enter that new state of consciousness and make presence part of their lives so that there is a shift, for most people, a gradual shift, for some, a few people, a radical sudden shift from the state of consciousness of being identified with the continuous stream of thinking, a lot of it dysfunctional, as I said, the shift from that to discovering the possibility and the reality of another dimension of consciousness within you that is the space of presence or awareness. And from there, you can observe your own thought processes and you're no longer trapped, completely identified in the conditioned mind.

That's about the most important thing in your life, to undergo that shift. And it's not extraordinarily difficult. It's not, unfortunately, it's not yet knowledge, general knowledge in the mainstream culture that such a thing is even possible.

So the arising of presence is something that needs to happen now. Humans are ready for it. You are ready for it.

And as this gradually, this new state of consciousness arises in you, you will begin to notice changes in the way in which you react to events in your life, changes in the way in which you relate to other people. And they're all changes for the better. You will find, for example, that situations that before caused you a considerable amount of pain or suffering no longer have the power to cause you that pain or suffering.

You'll also discover the amazing truth. You will discover it experientially within yourself. You can verify what I'm saying now by becoming aware of situations in your life and observe how, when you become unhappy in situations, unhappy in whatever form, unhappiness takes on many forms, whether even irritation is a small form of unhappiness, irritation, anger, resentment, many, many kinds of unhappiness, self-pity, and or...

And you become aware that the unhappiness in your life, to a large extent, is actually due to the thought processes in your mind rather than the actual situation. So you feel unhappy because not in majority of cases, not about the situation you find yourself in, but about what your mind is telling you about the situation. I often give the example of being in a lineup, either at the airport or in a supermarket, and it's not moving, and there's some kind of delay because people are not...

They are too slow, not efficient enough. And easily people get irritated, angry, upset in situations like that. And this is just a minor example.

And they believe that they are being upset because of the situation. However, if they looked more closely into the origin of unhappiness, they would find that they're not unhappy because they're standing there in line. They're unhappy because their mind is saying that it is a bad situation to be standing there in line.

It says all kinds of things. The voice in the head comments. If you could be aware of this, if you were present in that situation, you would become aware of what your mind is saying.

And if you were present in that situation and many, many other situations, even so-called serious situations, if you were really present in that situation, you would see that the unhappiness that you experience actually arises in your mind is not ultimately caused by the situation you find yourself in. And when you discover that, the possibility of freedom comes in, the possibility of choice, because now you have the choice. Do I

want to continue thinking these thoughts and feeling unhappy, or would I rather be free of that unhappiness in this situation?

And then presence arises more strongly and suddenly you accept this moment as it is because there's nothing much you can do. And there's a complete shift in the way in which you experience that moment. You'll be free of the burden of unhappiness.

This is just one small example of how presence can actually transform your life. And of course, talking about relationships, when you no longer judge people continuously, through the conditioned mind, you experience many changes in the way in which you relate to other human beings. So I would suggest to you that the most important thing that can happen to you in this lifetime is to undergo this shift in your life so that you're no longer at the mercy of the conditioning of your mind, which has been conditioned through your whole upbringing, your childhood, many, many influences.

And so instead of being at the mercy of the conditioning of your mind, and there's no freedom in that, suddenly the possibility arises of transcending the conditioning of your mind and actually becoming free. And that's why the term liberation is sometimes used in various spiritual traditions. Becoming free, becoming liberated.

Liberated from what? Liberated ultimately from your own mind. And then you're able to use your mind and your thinking ability in a much more effective way.

What changes is that you are no longer used by your mind, but you are using your mind. And that's a vast difference. When you're identified with that continuous stream of thinking that ultimately you are not thinking, the thinking happens to you.

You don't even know it. You identify with it and you think it's you thinking, but it's just the conditioned mind thinking in you and you give it a sense of self. But there is really no self in it as the Buddha already pointed out a long time ago.

So there's a shift from being self-identified with a stream of thinking then discovering that there is a stream of thinking in you, discovering that very often it interprets reality in a certain way that actually produces suffering for yourself and others. And then discovering that you can be free of it. And coming back to the example I just gave just now, a simple situation, you're standing in line at the airport or the supermarket, getting very upset and you discover you can actually be free of unhappiness in that moment by not adding a dysfunctional mental commentary to the situation.

And suddenly the situation is the way it is and you actually feel quite good. So, and this is a small example, but presence affects all areas of your life as you will discover. So if you get a sense of what I'm talking about and it sounds, oh yes, that's interesting, that means you're probably ready for this shift in consciousness.

If, however, you have not the slightest idea of what I'm talking about and it sounds like a

load of nonsense, that probably means you're not quite ready yet and I'm not, won't try to convince you that you should be ready. And it also means that you just need a little bit more suffering before you're ready. So we will meet again in a few years time.

Thank you. But this is almost an analogy for the rest of your life too. If things don't get difficult, then there is no growth in consciousness.

So to become aware of presence is not really it. You become aware of yourself as presence. That's a bit better.

Or perhaps even better, presence or consciousness becomes aware of itself. That's kind of the closest you can get if you want to get it as far as language is concerned. So it is important to experience, to awareness, not in relation to, let's forget for a moment our sense perceptions because we talk about that also, how to perceive without conceptualization.

Unless conceptualization is needed, then it's fine and you bring it in and so on. But now awareness, just awareness, which is in essence, this is the essence of meditation. The essence of meditation is not something that you do because it's misleading to think of meditation as a doing, because any kind of doing requires time.

You can't do without time. It implies that there's something, you're moving towards something. So even the underlying idea when you meditate, that you're doing meditation can be an obstacle to true meditation.

So meditation is not a doing because meditation is a realization of being. So you have these two dimensions, the doing dimension, which is to do with the world of form and the transcendent dimension, which is the timeless being itself, the formless, which is consciousness. We want to give it a label.

And you embody both. One could say there's two of you almost. This is not the ultimate truth, but it's a way of putting it.

There's two of you. There is the personal being, the person, the personal self, the human, the human you, and you know that very well. The human you is not easy, doesn't have an easy life.

No human has an easy life. And if you, and maybe one or two of you who were born into very privileged circumstances, and you might say, oh, that's an easy, I'd like to have a life like that, to have a, never need to worry about making enough money, or it's all there already provided. There's a trust fund.

You're born with a baby, you have a trust fund baby. Then for the rest of your life, you have to worry about that. Okay, I love that.

And then everything you want is immediately given to you in your childhood. And then you go on. So it seems an easy life.

And this very easy life would turn out to be your greatest obstacle and create the greatest amount of suffering for you, because you will develop into a very superficial, egoic creature that makes life difficult for yourself and others. And then you suffer more and more. So you can't escape it.

You can't escape the challenges of life, no matter how you imagine it to be. The human is here in order to be challenged. The human is not here in order to find ultimate happiness, ultimate satisfaction or fulfillment on the level of the human.

The level of the human is not designed for that. And the world doesn't know that yet, because humans are looking for solutions, the real solutions on the horizontal level of the human dimension. And it's not there.

You get challenged. And whatever situation you go into, you will find the element of dukkha, the word mentioned last night, unsatisfactoriness, suffering, unhappiness, misery will creep up, creep into whatever you do somehow, sooner or later. If it hasn't crept in yet, just wait a little and you'll find, even if you meet the most wonderful person and then you get married or you don't or whatever, but you start living together and sooner or later, you'll discover this most wonderful person that you thought is going to make you happy, also makes you unhappy, because you hadn't seen the full person yet.

There was something hidden that only reveals itself when you start living together. As long as you only go to have dates, it's fine. You can gaze into each other's eyes and it's wonderful.

So you can't escape it on the human level. You get challenged and that's fine. You need the challenge and you need to challenge yourself.

If you want to create something, if you want to bring about some change in this world, you want to make your life, your so-called life better, you're looking to achieve this or to learn this or to acquire this, that's part of being human. We don't deny that. And if you don't want to achieve anything, let's say you have no ambition whatsoever, you say, oh, it's all pointless because you don't want to challenge yourself, then life will challenge you even more.

If you challenging yourself would be even to engage in physical activity and jogging. You're challenging yourself or you're lifting weights or you're challenging the body on a physical level. The only way you can make the body stronger, the physical body is by making, let's put it like this, it's a strange way of putting it, but it's true.

You have to make life difficult for your body. Otherwise it doesn't get stronger. Well, to lift a weight is, I mean, if you ask the body, would you rather have a good, just relax or

lift this weight?

Oh no, I just want to relax. I don't want to make my life more difficult than it needs to be. So I just, okay, you don't get stronger without, but when you make life difficult for the body, then more energy is demanded and more energy comes flowing in.

Energy doesn't come until you demand it. There's a request or a demand for energy because there's a gap between what you want and what, at the moment, the body doesn't have enough energy and suddenly it comes. Then you reach a point when an influx of energy starts, then it's no longer perceived that you make life difficult for your body once the energy starts flowing.

The body enjoys this flow of energy, but before the energy starts flowing, life was difficult for the body. And so you always, you meet always the threshold of life gets difficult for the body and then energy comes in and then suddenly not even perceived as difficult anymore. And that you may experience it every day when you start exercising.

And this is, but this is almost an analogy for the rest of your life too. If things don't get difficult, then there is no growth in consciousness. We talked about the influx of energy for the physical body, but energy can manifest in many frequencies and ultimately it is consciousness.

And so you cannot become a more conscious human being unless you experience the challenges of life. And it's good to create, want to create this or that. So you are choosing to some extent, you can choose the challenges that you want to experience.

Whenever you want to bring about something new in this world, it's a challenge, but you created it. You say, you want to create this. Hopefully it comes from a deeper level, not the ego that says, I need, I need this.

Otherwise I won't be happy and fulfilled. I won't be completely myself. I need to achieve this in order to become happy and recognized and make it, I want to make it.

Weird expression, make what? Myself, I want to make myself. And if you don't challenge yourself, life will challenge you and you will encounter challenges where you certainly didn't want that.

So you can't escape. It's good to challenge yourself in a sane way, not in an insane way. And so one part of the challenges of life is the challenges that you yourself create and that can be divided into conscious creation.

You want to manifest something new, whatever it is that you want to in your career or something you want to build up. And then there are challenges that you create unconsciously through the conditioned mind. And that's a huge amount of suffering for humans.

They create their own challenges, but they perceive it as if the challenges were coming at them from the outside. Not knowing that a huge amount of problems, difficulties, challenges, whatever you want to call it, are created by their unconsciousness in relation to other people, in relation to situations. The reactivity that amplifies every little problem that comes from the outside through other human beings or situations.

The reactivity, the unconscious reactivity of the ego amplifies the problem and makes a drama out of relatively little. It doesn't have, it didn't need to become a drama, but it becomes a drama through reactivity. These are challenges that humans create unconsciously for themselves.

And it's a great moment of awakening when you realize that many of your difficulties, you were a significant contributing factor. Let's put it like that. In the difficulties that you seem to encounter in situations and through other people and so on.

And you discover your own reactivity example. That's a huge discovery. And then there are other types of challenges that come at you seemingly out of nowhere.

It could be that an earthquake could happen here in a minute. Or let's not manifest it. And we don't know, it comes out of nowhere.

Who knows? Or aliens suddenly land. So challenges, some challenges seem to come out of nowhere, but you can't, there are so many different types of difficulties or challenges that you encounter, but you cannot escape the difficulties and the challenges.

And because it is not only on the human level, animals encounter their own challenges. Even plants and trees encounter their own challenges. Every life form encounters obstacles, opposition.

Every life form experiences the fragility of life that it's not, it's very, life is fleeting and uncertain. And that is how gradually consciousness evolved because consciousness needs to come in as a response to the challenges of life. And that is, once we realize that life is meant to be challenging or difficult, once you realize that, then a huge, you become free of the huge illusion that there's something wrong when your life becomes difficult.

It's because these are all necessary and you need to, you need that. That's the good news or bad news. The world isn't here to make you happy.

This is how I put it. The world is not here to make you, this is the human level of this. It's not here to make you happy.

It can't do that, no matter how hard you try. It's here to make you conscious by challenging you. By making your life difficult.

And of course, as I said, that part of, great part of it may be your own unconsciousness, but that's how you, if you make your own life difficult through your unconsciousness, you begin to suffer more and more and more. And you don't even, for a long time, you don't know that you're creating your own suffering. It's always like, it's them, it's there, it's there.

The most unconscious people are continuously projecting that all causes of their misery and unhappiness are outside. It's all outside. When you listen to a very unconscious person, you listen to the themes that run through them, their narrative are blaming, complaining.

It's always, it's them, him, her, them. All the situations, all the places. Emotions do not make their home in you.

You could have, let's see, I don't remember the last time I was angry. I'll have to think. It's not that when you awaken that you no longer experience emotions.

Certain emotions will still arise, but less than in the unawakened state. But certain emotions, such as when there's the death of a loved one, you will feel an emotion, you will weep, and you will experience that emotion. The Zen master who experienced probably the emotion that he experienced, that he detected through becoming aware of his, the palm of his hands becoming moist, was probably anxiety.

But these are different things, different causal factors for these emotions. The Zen master was justified in saying that I'm not, I'm still, this shows me that I'm still in the conceptual mind and I'm not free of role-playing ultimately, because the person who came to him had a particular social role and he proved that to be a reality. On the whole though, emotions are to be accepted and recognized as emotions.

Every emotion that arises in you is something that you are aware of. And then you say, well, there it is. And the strange thing is, the more you live in acceptance of the present moment, the less will you experience negative emotions, because most negative emotions arise through non-acceptance of the is-ness of things, of the present moment.

Some emotions may still be there, but rarely would you experience negative emotions. You may still, but they will be short-lived. Emotions do not make their home in you.

You could have, let's see, I don't remember the last time I was angry. I'll have to think. I can't remember.

It can't have been very long, but it can happen. But it's short-lived because the mind does not keep it alive. The emotion is there and an emotion arises.

It's certainly an emotion of deep sadness that arose when my parents died. Within the space of five months, they both died in the same year, although they lived in different

countries. And so I went to the funeral of my mother in the summer.

And in the fall, suddenly my dad died, and I went to the funeral of my dad. And then I was able to experience this, the sadness. And I cried a few times.

I sat with my mother's body, and I sat with my dad's body. And it was very clear that there was an emotion of pain, there was emotional pain. And it was also clear that there was a deep peace behind the pain.

And this is what I described yesterday or whenever it was as the transcendent dimension, like the hint of a smile of the Buddha being in the background. That is, and that comes through acceptance, through acceptance that arises more quickly and more strongly. When you accept something, there's still the emotion on the surface, but, and you accept the emotion, and then there's a peace underneath it.

It's two things that when I talk about them, they almost seem incompatible, but they are totally compatible. Now, without the transcendent dimension, it's a devastating experience. And without awareness, there are people who carry the sadness of the mourning of when somebody close to them dies.

There are people who carry that for, not for a few months, they can carry it for years. Because in the lack of awareness, it gets continuously revived. The emotion is fed again and again by mind activity.

And then you think all those memories and all that's gone, all the times we spent together, three years after they die, you're still weeping at night because you remember all those times and it's all gone, it's all dissolved. And you're continuously devastated. That becomes dysfunctional.

And that arises because there is not enough awareness in you. So the emotion makes its home in you and starts to, it kind of says, oh, I like to be here, actually becomes incorporated into your pain body. And then you continuously suffer the same emotion, which in an aware person, the emotion has a certain lifespan, the sadness, and then it becomes transmuted.

And then it becomes, I still, sometimes I look at photos, my mom, my dad, I have a, my mother, when she died, I had to, within a space of a couple of days, I had to get rid of all her belongings because she lived in Europe. I could only spend a few days there. So I just rescued a few small items that I could take back home.

One is a rug and one is a little clock that she had had for 30 years. And so it's a little clock in a glass dome and it's electric, but it has this revolving thing that goes. And I had that when I visited my mom once a year, I would hear that, the room where I slept at my mom's place, I could hear the ticking of that clock around Christmas time.

And I was there, I heard this tick, tick, tick. And now I have this clock at home and it's still working. And I, this clock to me, I, is the memory of my mother.

When I look at it and I listen to the ticking noise, it's the memory of my mother. It is also a symbol of impermanence of all life forms. And once you accept the impermanence of all life forms, that brings about a deepening in you because you see how fleeting all this is.

And then suddenly you become deeper. And also this little clock, it goes tick, tick, tick. That symbolizes to me, there's the ticking is time, but in between the ticking, there is silence.

And that is the timeless dimension. So I, this clock is more than a clock to me. But when I look at this clock, I no longer experience any painful emotion.

That is gone. I don't experience a painful emotion when I look at pictures of my mom or dad. I only experience a deep peace and a very strong awareness of the fleetingness of all life forms.

And that's a beautiful, very deep and peaceful thing. So in the presence of awareness, certain emotions are natural and are actually fine, but they have a relatively short lifespan. They are not, they don't make their home in you.

Similar is something, somebody makes you angry. Somebody offends you. Somebody does something to you or take something away from you.

You may feel an angry reaction. And that angry reaction has a lifespan. If there's awareness, suddenly you're aware that you're angry, but there it is, you're angry.

And you might even shout something in your anger and then you're aware, okay, there's the anger. And then you become aware of the anger directly, which means it cannot make its home in you. And then it becomes transmuted.

It's not as quick as the duck that I describe in one of my books. When the duck gets into a fight with another duck, the fight doesn't last long and the energy builds up. And every duck, after they separate, they stop fighting, gets up on the water a bit and flaps their wings vigorously, the duck.

And then after that, the duck becomes completely peaceful again. So this, humans are not quite that quick, even aware humans. But metaphorically speaking, that's through awareness, you're able to, the emotion is released and then it leaves you.

So certain emotions have their place and that's fine. But there are many, many emotions that are produced, negative emotions that are produced by mental dysfunction, such as you wake up in the middle of the night and there's enormous anxiety. And you start

thinking about all the things that are going to go wrong.

Or you have, you start thinking about the past and you have terrible regret and you have resentment and you have sadness and you're thinking and thinking and you feel more and more the emotion that corresponds to your thinking. And every night it happens. That is not the kind of emotion that is natural to you.

It's not the kind of emotion you need to recognize. Where does this come from? It's produced by my thoughts.

I am producing this emotion every night when I can't sleep. And even during the daytime, I am producing this emotion. And then if there's enough awareness in the moment of thinking those anxious thoughts, you suddenly know what you're doing.

You suddenly realize what you're doing. And then you say, okay, you suddenly remember, oh, Eckhart talked about the inner body. What happens if I stop thinking these thoughts that are totally useless and completely unnecessary and harmful actually?

Why do I not instead choose to place my awareness in the inner body right now instead of thinking? So there's enough awareness. Then you no longer produce all those emotions that are part of dysfunctional misuse of the mind or rather being used by your mind.

So all those emotions, as you become aware, you don't produce them anymore. Certain emotions remain, but their lifespan is short and they are seen for what they are. And that's fine.

So do not believe that you need to arrive at a state where you no longer experience any emotion whatsoever. So some emotions go with the human form. They're part of the human form.

There's a story, I believe I quoted it in one of the books. One of the ancient Greek philosophers, he belonged to the school of Stoicism, which is a wonderful philosophy, but Marcus Aurelius' book, Meditations is one of my favorite books written 2,000 years ago, if you haven't read it. Meditations by Marcus Aurelius, the Roman emperor, is a beautiful, beautiful book.

But that's the school of Stoicism. There was one Stoic philosopher, I can't remember his name. People came to him and said, your son has just died in an accident.

They were, my God, your son has died in an accident. He fell off the horse. And the Stoic philosopher said, I knew he was not immortal.

Now, the question is, we cannot judge what he said because we do not know what, out of

what state of consciousness these words arose. Perhaps there was an emotion, but he didn't express it. Perhaps he had already repressed all emotions, it's possible.

I like to believe that he was aware and the emotion was in him, but he didn't express it. And the statement was a statement that came from a deeper consciousness, which is very true because death can happen to any of us at any moment. And I knew he was, and I don't know in what way he said it, but did he say it in a facile way?

Oh, I knew he was, no. Or did he say it, I knew he was not immortal. So you could, perhaps there was an emotion, but there was also a deep awareness there at the same time.

I love the Stoics, so I like to believe that there was an awareness at the same time. Oh, thank you.

[Speaker 6] (7:52:39 - 7:52:39)

Thank you, Jacob.

[Speaker 1] (7:53:01 - 8:08:05)

Here's my wife. And she's better looking than yours. Now you begin to lose the present moment internally when the place you want to get to, whatever that may be, whether it's tomorrow or in five years time, or even a few, five minutes from now, you lose the present moment and your state of mind becomes somewhat or very dysfunctional when whatever goal you have or destination you have in the future occupies more of your attention than the present moment. So the place you want to get to or achieve one day when I'll become a great this or that, perhaps you have a great idea of, maybe let's say you want to become a rock star.

I want to be a rock star. Okay. Well, hopefully you enjoy music and have not just a mental image of who you want to be as somebody important, but you don't enjoy the several years that you need to get there.

If you don't enjoy the journey, which is always now the step you're taking at this moment, if there's a lack of enjoyment, then you have lost the present moment and the place you want to get to has assumed an importance that becomes dysfunctional. So this is already mentioned in ancient scriptures as a teaching, for example, in the ancient Bhagavad Gita, wonderful if you haven't read it yet, wonderful ancient Indian scripture. It talks of not being too attached to what it calls the fruit of your action, which is the outcome, which is you project yourself one day, I'm going to be happy.

That's the fruit. One day when I get, when people realize that I'm a fantastic human being and I get all the recognition from people, then I'll be fine. When I have those possessions that I need, I won't be happy until I have a private jet.

It doesn't have to be big, just a little one. I won't be happy until I, then I feel I'm fully myself. I cannot be fully myself unless I have a car that's better than most people's cars.

And so you strive towards that. And in the meantime, you're not happy because you're striving towards a place that promises some form of fulfillment, whether you call it happiness or having arrived or this weird expression in the English language, making it, making what? I want to make it.

And then you have weird ideas in your mind. An enormous amount of fear arises because you have certain thoughts, especially at three o'clock in the morning, you wake up and the mind starts up and a weird word comes. I don't want to be a loser, a loser.

Oh my God. And then fear, maybe I will be a loser. Maybe I'm not going to get this car and maybe I'm not going to become the greatest this or that.

Or maybe I'm not going to find the person who's going to make me happy. Well, you won't. There is no human being on the planet that can make you happy unless you find the source of happiness within yourself, in which case you'll be quite happy with somebody.

It's likely, but that person will not cause you the happiness except while you are going through the honeymoon period. And that is human beings. They look to, you look to human beings, some future, I need to meet my soulmate.

I need to meet my, or whatever it is, or it's a, maybe it's a trophy wife. It can show off, here's my wife. And she's better looking than yours.

Because she wouldn't be with a loser, would she? So, and then of course, after a little while, the trophy wife won't satisfy you. And then you have to look somewhere else.

In fact, she might make you unhappy. And or you make her unhappy, you make each other unhappy. So this is very common.

Many of you may have experienced as far as looking to a human being to make you happy. You may already have experienced that that didn't work because the very human being that you chose to make you happy, only two or three years later, or four, five, made you unhappy. The very same person whose purpose it was to make you happy and you signed a contract.

So it was all fine. The contract was signed. And then something happened that wasn't supposed to happen.

The person who's supposed to make you happy suddenly starts making you unhappy. And you may not realize that you are making him or her unhappy too. Self-knowledge is more difficult than knowing somebody else.

So always looking to some future moment. And then you realize on a practical level, future works. But on a deeper level of finding a true satisfaction in life, you have to look somewhere else.

All these things are good. Achieving things is good. Even relationships, of course, if they're conscious, then all the better.

I'm not saying stop looking for somebody to marry. That's fine. But don't look for somebody to make you happy.

They're always, I don't look at these things anymore. But in the past, when people put ads, I sometimes enjoyed reading ads. And when they had newspaper ads for finding relationships or marriage ads, it was always amusing what people were looking for.

Nowadays, of course, it's all on your phone. It's called Tinder. And the hand movement associated with it, apparently, I've never actually looked at Tinder, but I know that the hand movement associated with it goes like this.

And each wife represents a human being. Well, that's weird. Very weird.

So when I saw, I enjoyed reading the newspaper ads, and sometimes it said, looking for woman or man to make me happy. Oh dear, I thought. So the future then, what is the future that never appears, that can completely occupy our attention?

To such an extent that we lose, actually, the most important thing in life. And that is to be at home with yourself in the present moment, to feel where you are, to feel a kind of, this may sound a little strange, to feel a connectedness with being, the connectedness with being. So you're rooted in something deep, abiding.

There's a deep peace, not a dead kind of peace, but an alive peace to be rooted within yourself, to be yourself here and now in this moment. Losing that or never discovering it, never realizing even the possibility of this existing in your life, then if you don't find the true meaning of present moment of the now, which is very deep, as we will see, we will see. It's very deep.

Then you live flitting around the surface of life. There's always some future moment to either be afraid of or be attracted to. The future is a two-edged sword, as you might discover when you're starting to think and worry and you're, oh, there's the hope that the future is going to make me happy in some way through a human being, some attainment, a possession, some recognition, whatever it may be, or security, ultimate security.

One day, I just want to feel secure. I want to feel secure. And they might even sell you life insurance and say, you will feel really secure just by this.

And you have a pension plan, and then I'll be okay. I just need a good pension plan. Life insurance, of course, means you have to die first before anything.

So it should be called death insurance. It's security. I'm looking for some sense of security.

And you look some security in external conditions. I want to have a place. Yes, it's a very human thing.

But you may need to live for a while to realize, no matter what situation you go into, no matter who you are with, and no matter what you achieve in life, always this sense of insecurity, of fear, of insufficiency, of some underlying sense of lack or something not quite right, always it resurfaces. Sooner or later, and usually sooner. And so if you thought, let's say you achieve everything that commonly in our civilization, the media and so on, or the magazines or internet, whatever, tell you that the highest you can achieve is wealth and fame.

And then you think, oh, if I only had all that, then I would be a happy human being. I would have security. And of course, many human beings who have achieved it, I have met quite a few, that was quite interesting, who in the eyes of the world had everything and they were unhappy.

In fact, some of them were more unhappy when they got everything than before when they still were striving to achieve those things. They were more unhappy because now, when you have already tasted everything, you no longer have some ideas. Once I achieve that, I'll be happy.

Well, you have everything. What can you achieve now? Okay, well, you could think enlightenment.

I've got the private jet. I've got all the money that I can do anything, but I'm still unhappy. Okay, if the unhappiness that arises there, if that brings you to the possibility of awakening, then that's a good thing.

Now, the thing we need to recognize is no matter what you achieve, there's nothing wrong with achievement. But ultimately, that is not which is going to give you this sense of self that you are looking for, that sense of being rooted, that sense of security. Everything in this world is insecure, ultimately.

No matter how secure your job may be, whatever, there's the radical insecurity. And uncertainty, nobody knows what the next moment will bring because it can only appear as this moment. What is the future then that everybody looks to?

It's always associated with a thinking. It's a thought. On a deeper level, future is a thought in your head and you only experience it ever as a thought in your head.

That's the only reality future has. Isn't that interesting? It has no actual immediate existential reality except as a thought that you're thinking about some future moment.

But even while you're thinking that thought, it's still the present moment and you don't even know it because nothing can happen that's not in the present moment. And then there's the past. When you think about the past, again, where is the past?

It's in your head. It's a thought in your head or a lot sequence of thoughts in your head.

[Speaker 8] (8:08:06 - 8:08:13)

So future and past are associated intrinsically linked with the activity of thinking.

[Speaker 1] (8:08:57 - 8:17:42)

Wisdom can only come if you access the dimension of no thought in yourself. The only thing a wise person has that you don't have, or that's the wrong way of putting it, the wise woman, the wise man has nothing that you don't have. He or she is simply aware of the dimension of stillness, the dimension of no thought, that's out of which all wisdom comes, which is also in you.

So bringing that into everyday life through being aware of the inner energy field of the body, being alert to sense perceptions, another way of entering the state of alert thoughtless presence. Look around the room a few times a day where you're sitting as if you had just been born into that room. It requires a high degree of alertness.

Yes, but that is in you. So periodically, even if it's only five seconds at a time, you bring in thoughtlessness, not in its usual... Thoughtlessness usually is a negative term, but here thoughtlessness implies more consciousness, more intense awakeness, to awaken.

Ah, and then you realize the compulsion to think is just a habit, deep seated habit. And you don't listen to the mind when the mind says, I have no time to be present now, not even 10 seconds. Not true.

You're waiting at the elevator, the lift, press the button. Are you projecting yourself mentally to where you want to get, or are you really there? Are you immersed in thought, or are you using that opportunity to simply be present with your entire being standing there, not waiting for anything?

Because most people spend maybe 70% of their lives waiting for something. There's always the next thing to do that hasn't quite been finished yet. There's always the next thing to happen that I'm just waiting for this.

Why not use all waiting periods for being present? And then you step into the elevator and you press ground floor, and it's going down. And there is an aliveness in your entire energy field, and it's beautiful.

That moment has a fullness to it that is more than the externals that you perceive, because after all, there's only four walls around you, and a light above you, and some buttons. So on the external level, this moment has nothing to fulfill me. But if you go deeper into that moment, which is into yourself, it's actually very fulfilling.

But you have to step out of that which takes you out of the moment. Learning what it means to be present and alert. And then perhaps you arrive at the ground floor, and you forget and you go about your business.

And 10 minutes later, you're in your car, the traffic lights stopping, thinking, come on. And suddenly you remember, oh, the now, this is the now. And then again, you look at the red light, and the red has an intensity to it that's quite beautiful.

That before to notice that, you would have had to take acid. Because taking acid, I'm not recommending this, but for some people, it can give them a first glimpse of what it means not to be burdened by continuous mental commentaries. But it doesn't really raise your consciousness.

It simply amplifies sense perceptions. And the red of the traffic light, don't do it. The red of the traffic light becomes so intense, you haven't got, you can't think about it anymore.

It just is overwhelming. So it gives you a little, it only, I took it once just to try it out, because people told me, people told me, this is like acid, isn't it? And I always had to say, I don't know, I haven't taken it.

And finally, I said, okay, I need to be able to answer these people. So I'm going to try it once. And so what I've experienced was the amplification, everything was vibrating.

There was intensity of smell, hearing, the visual, tasting, everything was amplified. Nothing special that I experienced otherwise. But some people say, wow, the world can be so alive.

It always is. You just don't know it because of the screen of your thinking. So here, this is much better than acid.

But it's a, there's a slight similarity, yes. But here you'd notice it because you become more awake. There's the traffic light.

And here I am. And you feel the energy field in your body as you sit there. And you become aware of the movement of people.

And you just look. The movement of cars, you just look. Oh, it's not that bad.

Before you were complaining about that moment. What's this? Why am I sitting in this?

I should be there, but I'm here. Yes. Can you argue with that?

Well, you can, but it's mad. So you accept the is-ness of that moment and enter that moment more fully. So nobody can tell me that they cannot bring that into their everyday life.

Not continuously, yet it's not required. It is more important how often you become, you awaken out of thinking than it is how long you remain in the state of not thinking. That looks after itself.

Yes, after a while, that will be longer. More important, how often you step out of thinking, becoming alert. There's an intelligence there that wasn't there before.

And it doesn't need to call the world. You know what you're looking at without concepts. You look deeply.

You also sense a certain aliveness in whatever you look at, which is no different from the aliveness that is in you. Everything has being-ness to it. Everything has presence to it.

Even so-called inanimate objects have a beautiful presence when you are not thinking about them, just looking. So I'm not telling you now you must live in that state of consciousness. Just occasionally bring it in.

Enter it. Five seconds is fine. Two seconds.

See the change in relationships as you are able to face another human being without the compulsive judgments and labels of the mind.

[Speaker 7] (8:17:52 - 8:18:38)

First off, I want to say thank you. And just like the lady said earlier, the power of now changed my life. I listened to the book about a year and a half before I got out of the army.

And I just returned from Afghanistan and I experienced acute combat stress. And so just to give you the context of my question, I've created a lot of karma in this life. I'm studying all the teachers, spiritual teachers, and obviously being here now.

My question is, no matter how much karma you create in this life, the life we're all living right now, is liberation possible? Well, that's the question.

[Speaker 1] (8:18:38 - 8:22:50)

Okay, thank you. Thank you. Some people believe they are not right.

Even some teachings would tell you that liberation is achieved by gradually improving your karma. So it's a kind of progression of gradually you get better and you get better lifetimes and better karma and so on. But that's not really how it works.

Because even to have a very good karma is not liberation. You're not free of the conditioning of your mind. At any point within the wheel of karma, it's possible to jump off the wheel of karma.

And it is precisely at the worst times that the opportunities are greatest. So if there is intense suffering in your life, those are times when the opportunity to transcend karma and to step off the wheel, so to speak, is greatest. So you don't need to be concerned about that.

But what you have suffered actually can become an extremely helpful thing in your life because it's the great awakener. Suffering that others inflict on you, suffering that you inflict on others because you are part of this huge, massive accumulation of unconsciousness that is when you're going to a war situation. You are part of a massive accumulation of collective unconsciousness.

And there, of course, you get drawn into that collective karma. You participate in it, become part of it, and then you come out of it. Then your egoic self is at a state of perhaps greater readiness than ever to crack open, and this has brought you here.

So there have been people in prison for many years in prison because they murdered people or whatever. And I regularly receive correspondence from people in prison who have disidentified from the egoic self and their entire life history as if they're emerging out of like a butterfly, the caterpillar becoming transformed into a butterfly. So the important thing for you is not to misinterpret in your mind what has happened in your past and to make it into something that some form of guilt identity could build up.

And this could just become a very heavy mind form, and that would be the obstacle, not what has happened. You were part of this massive unconsciousness, and already you are coming out of it. You responded to the power of now, which means you were already ready.

At what point in your life did that happen? Was that where you at that time before you went to Afghanistan or in the middle or after?

[Speaker 7] (8:22:51 - 8:23:10)

Well, it was after redeploying over and over again, and then I got injured, and then I went back and had anger aggression. Yes. And then by chance, I started meditating and doing yoga, and then I found...

[Speaker 1] (8:23:10 - 8:25:14)

Okay, well, it wasn't by chance. So you are on an accelerated path of awakening. That's because you were in that situation can be described as an accelerated path of awakening, and it brought you to that point of readiness.

And the awakening process has already begun in you quite clearly. The only obstacle would be your mind misinterpreting your past. So if you don't realize that you are on an accelerated path of awakening, and if you realize it, you will have gratitude for what happened in the past.

So thank you for giving me this accelerated awakening experience, and then you will no longer misinterpret, because when you came here, I could see the beginnings of a misinterpretation of the past. This is not something that has anything to do with your true identity. So be grateful and allow presence to emerge in you, through you, more fully now.

And the universe gave that to you because it saw that you needed it, and it wanted you to awaken quickly. Otherwise, you would have had a more comfortable, a much more prolonged path. So thank you.

I wish you well. You're on your way.

[Speaker 6] (8:25:15 - 8:25:16)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (8:26:32 - 8:37:22)

Sometimes, there's awareness there, and there's the pain body there, and you've chosen awareness. Not that the pain body goes away, but then you get to almost like witness your pain body. So you're not in a reaction mode.

You can feel the energy of the pain body, but you witness it. Maybe some words may come out, and you witness that, and you might go, oh my goodness, why did I say that? But you remain present in that awareness, because sometimes this pain body has something to teach us.

So don't be in a hurry, into a rush to think that, and desire that you have no more pain body. Because to tell you the truth, without this pain body, I would not be sitting up here today. And same with Eckhart, without that pain body that he experienced, he would not be here today teaching.

Now, it seldom happens with people to be free of the pain body and free of the ego, virtually overnight, like it happened with Eckhart. And if some of you are wanting that, but I want that, I want it gone. And I want it gone now, and never to come back.

You are in your mind. That is a thought. It can be gone right now, if you choose the present moment.

And choose the unconditioned self. Could be gone right now. And only the mind will come in, and bring in time, and start thinking, oh, but will it be gone forever?

This moment is forever. There's only ever this moment. Time, and it's useful, is a concept.

And we all agree what time it is. What time it is here in Greece. What time it is in Germany.

What time it is in Canada. Those are all agreements that we have made. And we forget that it is just a concept.

There is no time. But this time as a concept is useful, because it gets us, say, for example, here. Otherwise, if we didn't have this concept of time, it may take us a million years for all of us to get here, and be with each other.

So it just, it's useful. Concepts are useful. But we forget that it's just a concept.

Just as we say, we are in Greece. Yes, that's a concept. We are in Greece.

But does Greece really exist? Does Canada exist? Does the USA exist?

No, it's just a concept. And yet we believe in this concept, that we are willing to fight for that concept. We are willing to kill to keep that concept alive.

And yet it doesn't exist. So if no time exists, your name doesn't even exist. Your gender doesn't even exist.

The countries don't exist. What is there? Look within.

It's that sense of Self. The Self with a capital S. That stillness.

The essence of who we are. The nothingness. The Tao that cannot be named.

Your God essence. Consciousness. Your Buddha nature.

So all these are names that point to the formless dimension. I've had many people experience that formless dimension. And then they'll experience a thought.

Now what? What's next? It's that momentum of the mind that will keep going and keep alive.

Keep itself alive for a while. And not that the mind, we don't know, it's not that the mind, we want it to go away. We just don't want that mind to be controlling us with those thoughts.

And they're habitual thoughts. But it's that nothingness, that no-thingness, to be comfortable with that emptiness. So I like the Buddha's teaching where it, you couldn't really hang on to anything.

How can you hang on to emptiness? It's formless. To be comfortable with that.

At first, when that formless dimension arises in you and you're aware of it, it feels a little bit like getting into an elevator. And you're alone and it's okay being alone. And then somebody enters and then it's that awkward feeling.

So become comfortable with the unknown. No thought is it. No emotion is it.

No experience that you have is it. I used to travel to India quite a bit to go meditate in the caves and visit spiritual teachers in India. And I remember being in this temple and suddenly I was just, had this magnificent experience.

Oh my gosh. I saw the sky open up and I saw angels. And I heard music where I don't even know where it was coming from, but it wasn't coming from the earthly realm.

And it was just like, oh my God, wow, this is incredible. It's like, I saw God. And that evening I went to go visit a spiritual teacher and I told him of my experience.

And he says to me, that's not it. I go, no, no, no, no, no. You didn't hear it.

Or maybe you didn't hear me. I saw angels. I saw God.

I heard music. The sky opened up. That's not it.

And this went back and forth, me repeating myself, really believing that I saw angels. I saw God, etc. And him just saying, that's not it.

And his wife who was there said, I'm going to bed. And so I don't know, maybe 20 minutes went by going back and forth. Just, he would just repeat the same thing.

That's not it. That's not it. And me really determined to think, no, no, no, no.

I experienced it. I saw it. That's not it.

And then suddenly, after his, the last time of saying, that's not it, I understood. I didn't have to repeat anymore. That's why it was the last time.

I went, oh my God, you're right. No experience is it. We've all perhaps had that wonderful, profound meditation where you're sitting there and you're just like, wow, you finish the meditation and you go, oh my God, that was great.

Wow. That was incredible. And then the next day you come to sit in your sitting meditation and hidden behind in the background in your mind is that you want the same experience.

And you're just sitting there trying to get that same experience. Of course, that experience will never happen again. And then you finish that meditation.

You go, damn it. Why didn't I have that same experience? You will never have the same experience.

If you want the same experience, you are holding onto the past. And you will never experience this moment again, which may or may not be more profound than the last experience.

[Speaker 1] (8:37:49 - 9:49:39)

So thinking is a wonderful thing if you are not possessed by it. If you're able to use thinking, it's a beautiful, amazing tool for creation. But if thinking becomes a basis for your sense of identity, in other words, a narrative in your mind of who you are, the story of me, then thinking becomes a kind of prison.

Or to use a different analogy, thinking becomes then almost like something that possesses you and you don't even know it. And when you make the statement, I think, I am thinking, it's not quite accurate. It would be more accurate to say, thinking is happening to me.

If you can't stop it, that means it must be happening to you. If you don't even want to stop it, it must be because you are almost addicted to it. You think you would die without it.

So if you can't stop thinking, then you are not thinking. Thinking is happening to you. Or you could say you are being thought.

You are not thinking. Oh, by the way, while I speak to you, and many of you know this, but it's easy to forget, too, since this is a kind of meditation session, although not a conventional one, while I'm speaking to you, be aware of the silent gaps between sentences, between words. Be aware, notice them, be aware of them, because the meditation part of our session together here is in the silent gaps.

The rest is just the words that point us towards the silent gaps, that point us towards stillness. When you become aware of the silent gaps while I speak, breathe, like now. And now, and now, while you notice the silent gaps, acknowledge them, you may also notice that you are not thinking while you notice the gaps, and that's meditation.

In that way, I can talk you into the meditative state, but you have to be aware that our session has two dimensions, the words and the space. The space is the silent gaps. And not only the silent gaps, it's also an underlying silence, or stillness would be a better word.

So you notice those gaps, that's meditation, and in the moment of noticing, you're not thinking. And as you practice here, when you go into your daily, back into your daily life, you may notice silent gaps within yourself, between two thoughts, the space of no

thought between two thoughts. Don't need to measure it in time, who knows, three seconds, four.

So you have now, you have then access to a deeper or higher, depending how you want to use the word, dimension of consciousness. And when you notice the gaps between two thoughts in yourself, in daily life, then they deepen, or you become more aware of them, and they get a little longer. Another word for the gaps between thoughts is stillness.

To realize that behind all thoughts, there is a realm of stillness. And you become aware of it when one thought comes to an end, and the other one hasn't started yet, suddenly you become aware of what is beyond thought, consciousness. And then you begin to embody that dimension in your daily life.

And then you become a two-dimensional being, you're a person, and you are an expression of consciousness, which transcends the person. It's the consciousness of the universe, of which you are in your personal self, a temporary expression. You are the universe being conscious in you.

You are the consciousness of the universe. That's a very significant thing. It doesn't matter what you have achieved or not achieved as a person, more fundamentally, you are the consciousness of the universe.

You are a focal point of that consciousness. Of course, the consciousness of the universe pervades all space, but you are a focal point of that consciousness, appearing temporarily under the guise of a person. Not for too long, when the person evaporates, like a soap bubble, it goes pop.

Many people have a problem with self-esteem, with thoughts arising that say, I'm not good enough. I'm not as good as those people or that person. I'm not as good looking, not as physically strong, not as knowledgeable, not as intelligent, not as popular.

But when you, of course, you could work on self-esteem on the level of the person with limited success, some success, yes. You can repeat affirmations. I am good enough.

I am good at everything I do. I'm getting better and better every day in every way. I'm getting better and better.

No doubt that is, that was one of the first affirmations that somebody came up with a long time ago when books started to appear about positive things. Thinking, yes, it is a positive statement. Every day in every way, I am getting better and better.

But who is that I am? The person, not the person. Yes, things can get better.

And then they get worse. And then they get better again. And then something else

happens.

So the person exists within the polarities of gain and loss, good and bad, up and down. That's inevitable. There's nobody who can continuously be successful.

The life will put obstacles in your path of different kinds. That's how it is. So you can get better up to a point, but not continuously.

There are polarities, but there's a deeper dimension in you that exists beyond the polarities of good and bad, gain and loss. This dimension is not dependent on the polarities, good and bad, gain and loss. That's a transcendent dimension.

And then you're in touch with something which we could call, if we wanted to use a terminology used by the ancient Greek philosophers, such as Socrates, the good. The good is the ultimate. Sometimes the good, as they use this term, means perhaps something like God.

It just happens to be that the English language good and God are very similar. Words, perhaps that's no coincidence, but that's only in English. Well, in some Germanic languages too.

So you feel there is a good deep down, a something. It's not something. Let's just call it something.

Language always refers to things. Something that is beyond the polarities, that there's a good that's also even there, even when you're experiencing great loss. And sometimes, particularly in those times, when you experience great loss, you feel that which is beyond the polarities of good and bad.

There's a deep peace. It's nothing to do with a person. It transcends the person.

But when there's no cessation in the continuous stream of thinking, then you're unaware of that dimension. People don't realize how much of a burden they carry through overthinking, excessive thinking, purposeless. How many people are making themselves unhappy continuously through unconscious mind activity, judgments, interpretations, negative interpretations of themselves, of other people, of situations.

That's habitual thought patterns that you're identified with and that is karma creates in the external confirmation that it is correct. So if you think the world is full of evil people, you will meet many evil people. Now, of course, everybody is born into a certain external environment and also is born with certain predispositions.

They may be partly genetic. They may be other things that a person is born with certain patterns. In other words, we don't need to examine where they come from, but just to see the fact that the human being is first of all born into a certain environment, which

may be violent or it may be relatively peaceful and the person is born with inner patterns.

You inherit certain, even pain bodies, partly inherited. Some babies cry a lot. They have a relatively heavy pain body already in this world.

It doesn't mean they're spiritually less advanced. The opposite may be the case, which there's no knowing. Other babies are relatively peaceful and so there's a whole set of conditioning that happens.

You come into the environment with certain predispositions. Then the environment conditions you further and in all that, there's no choice involved. There's just influences.

And so you find yourself in this world with certain unconscious patterns that have become the conditioning of who the person is, the unconscious conditioning. So karma, as I see it, is the unconscious conditioning that runs your life and that still applies to many humans. And karma is partly collective.

You've been born into it and partly personal. They come together. So really, you can only understand karma not as an abstract subject external to yourself because then you get into belief systems and philosophy.

We're not going that way. You can only understand karma by observing yourself and by observing, and then you'll know many other things. But you need to, really, if you want to understand karma, you need to look at yourself.

And so I began to understand what karma is when there was something arose that was not part of karma at all. And really, here we come to the key. The arising of consciousness or presence or spiritual awakening is not part of karma.

It is another dimension that breaks into the karmic realm. So you do not become awakened by accumulating, as they sometimes say in the East, good karma. That's fine on this level.

You can make the walls or the furniture in your prison a little bit more comfortable. But there is something totally from beyond karma that can come into your life at any point within the wheel of karma and rebirth. Rebirth is, of course, part of karma.

The deeper meaning of rebirth is identification with form. We don't need to even believe in transmigration or whatever. You can look at rebirth in your own life.

Every time you identify with a thought that arises, which is form, you are born into that thought. Because identify, your sense of self is in it. That's karma.

You are reborn. Karma then is unconscious identification with these patterns that you have inherited, the conditioned. Complete identification of consciousness with the

conditioned patterns.

So consciousness is dreaming. One could say. This is why we use the word awakening in many spiritual traditions.

Consciousness is awakening. Consciousness is in a dreamlike state when you're identified with the unconscious patterns. And then you are condemned to rebirth.

In fact, many times every day, you are reborn into a reaction, an emotional, mental reaction. No presence at all. Just rebirth into some form.

Or you're reborn into thoughts that arise and you completely believe in every thought. And then you act from those thoughts and emotions. And the action creates further reactions.

And the actions confirm to you that you were right. If you have certain mind patterns about, for example, that other people are basically dishonest. Just one example of people.

People are so dishonest. They're all trying to get something from me. That tends to confirm itself in your life experience.

You can try it out. Or you may have experienced it before you became more conscious. That's habitual thought patterns that you're identified with.

And that is karma. Karma creates, in the external, confirmation that it is correct. So if you think the world is full of evil people, you will meet many evil people.

And in other words, unconscious people. And even people who are on the brink or who are halfway between conscious and unconscious, when you come together with them, your belief will pull them into unconsciousness. And that's karma.

So karma is the complete absence of conscious presence. And so it's automatic. It plays itself out.

And time does not free you of karma. That is a misperception that if you only spend enough time, eventually you can become free of karma. Karma renews itself and repeats itself.

It's a wheel. And so the only thing that can free you of karma is the arising of presence. And how is it that some person's presence arises?

I cannot tell you why. I only know that at any point in the wheel of karma, presence can come in. It can happen to a criminal in prison, condemned to death.

It can happen to somebody who has never heard of anything spiritual. It can happen to

somebody who has been meditating for 30 years or not happen to the same person who has been meditating for 30 years. So in your own life, I can see from what you're saying that presence has already, I can sense that presence has already come into your life.

And presence frees you from karma, not all at once. Karma has an enormous momentum, meaning the patterns in yourself, the thought patterns, the emotional patterns, the reactive patterns. There's enormous momentum behind that.

But as presence arises, gradually karma diminishes and the energy behind it diminishes. And gradually you experience a fading out of those patterns. They become weaker.

You're no longer completely in the grip of those patterns. So as presence arises, there's a gradual fading out of karma. Not that it matters that much anymore because once you are present, you can, as a previous questioner said, when we were talking about certain thoughts still arising, certain negative thoughts, that's still part of the karma, the old patterns, the unconscious habit patterns inherited.

They still arise, but it's no longer problematic and they no longer cause the suffering they would have caused before because they are seen in the light of awareness. So the light of awareness arises and in the light of awareness, the patterns no longer dominate your life. They no longer run your life.

And if occasionally it happens that the patterns do take over, then after a little while, your presence returns and you say, ah, well, there it was again. Pain body is part of karma, which may be strong in some people, not so strong in others. And so as presence arises, you are freed from karma.

And then you have another completely different factor coming into your life. And so, for example, for a person to become free of collective karma, you need a considerable amount of presence for that to come in to remove and it then will remove you in one way or another, either internally, you find yourself completely free. You might still live in a violent society, but internally you would be free.

There is a possibility you can have a holy man or woman living surrounded by violence. It's possible. It's rare, but possible.

Or very often it happens that life removes you out of there and you find yourself somewhere else. So let's say vast collective karma, for example, in the case of, let's say, you have the Taliban there, you have all kinds of unconscious movements. You had Soviet communism, you had national socialism in Germany.

And for a person being born into that and not being drawn into that unconsciousness, requires considerable presence. So not that many people, for example, in Germany when Hitler came to power, not many people were able to remove themselves somewhere. Some artists, some writers, they left, they could see what was happening and they were

strong enough not to be identified with the collective when there had been a tradition of obedience to authority for hundreds of years, a tradition of following your leader and so on.

To take yourself out of that collective karma requires considerable presence, but some people had it. So it is our destiny then to go beyond karma by being the receptacles for presence. All you can do to be helpful in this world and help others is those people that you come into contact with, everybody in this, who is awakening, will find that sooner or later they become a kind of teacher to others.

And what a spiritual teacher does, the teacher points out the possibility of awakening out of identification with unconscious patterns, which means the spiritual teacher teaches you to go beyond karma. And so that is your function and will become increasingly, you will find in your life, whether you become a formal teacher or an informal teacher, formal meaning that you say, okay, I'm giving a talk or somebody invites you and you give a talk, that becomes formal teaching. For many years before this, I became a formal teacher.

I mean, it's not my identity, it's just a functional thing. It would be terrible if I saw myself as a teacher. Any identity is an illusion, any form identity is an illusion.

But it's a functional thing. You can, I'm saying, you become a... For several years, the teaching happened informally on park benches at first, then in people's living rooms, then in little groups.

And so gradually it grows and some people will continue to teach informally. So people you come into contact with, some people are, more and more people are ready for spiritual awakening. Which means spiritual awakening and stepping out of karma is the same thing.

And so many people will be drawn to you. Anybody who is going through the awakening process is already a teacher. And the more you teach, teaching means you find yourself listening from spaciousness when somebody speaks or asks a question or tells you about their problems.

And then you may find yourself, an answer comes out of that stillness in which you listen. And that's the beginning of teaching. You don't have the sense that, okay, I'm going to teach this person now.

That's never it. You will find that teaching is spontaneous. So you will help people to step out of identification with unconsciousness, which means going beyond karma because it's already happening in your life.

And this applies to everybody who is awakening and going through the awakening process. What is the essence? Let's go there slowly.

What is the essence of who you are? What is the essence of the life that you are? I'm not saying that you should not try to improve the conditions of your life.

But more importantly is to realize that you do not have a life because people say my life. Now, if you look at the structure of that sentence, my life, there's a duality there. Because if you say my life, that implies that you have it, it's mine.

So it implies two duality. If you say my life, there's you and the life that you have. It belongs to me, it's mine.

So this thought, this language creates a duality in your mind. Call it my life. That's interesting.

So there's me and I have a life and then the fear comes in, if I have a life, I might lose it. And of course, then you visit the cemetery and you say, yes, they all once had a life and they lost it. They lost their life.

And that's going to happen to me too. Not realizing you are trapped in certain mental formations that create an illusory identity and create a duality. Actually create delusion.

You don't have a life because there is not a duality. Without life, there's no you. So you can't have it.

You are one with life. There isn't you and life. You are life.

You can't, you don't have it. Now, if you are it, you can't lose it. Because you are it.

But of course, we'll have to see more deeply what we mean when I say you are life. But let's for a moment stay with that. You are life.

You don't have a life. You are. So you can say it for yourself in your mind.

I don't have a life. I am life. This is the end of duality.

So you realize there's a oneness of you and life. And when I say life, we can use another word. The essence of being alive.

What is the essence? Let's go there slowly. What is the essence of who you are?

What is the essence of the life that you are? Okay, now, normal humans, which means unawakened humans, say, well, the essence of my life is my, whatever they identify with in there. It's my possessions, my, what I have, what I know, what I, my body, all those things that I identify with.

Let's see. The essence of who I am is whatever I derive my identity from. It could be the physical body, but, or it could be my car or my house or my work, my function in society.

Or it could be friends that I have, things that I have attained. It could also be, these things are all in the mind also. Because when you identify, let's say your sense of identity, which is, you compare yourself to others all the time.

This is you do when you're in your mind. You compare yourself to others. Let's say your body looks better than other people's body for a while, these two will pass.

But for a while, you can get in there and then you become, this is my body that also is a mental formation. So it's not so much you identify with the body, you identify the thought of my body. That's what you identify.

You don't identify with your Ferrari if you have one. It's the thought of my car, which is, makes you superior to others who only have a little car. Or your body makes you superior to others who have a puny and weak body.

So you can display for a few years, you display your body on the beach and feel good about yourself. And after a while, the day comes when you look in the mirror. What happened?

There's something wrong with the mirror. In the past, the mirrors that people made were so much better than the mirrors now. So for a while, you identify with this or that.

That is quite normal. And so when you ask, what is the essence of who you are? Most people would tell you, well, I am, this is who I am.

This is what my identity is derived from this, this, this, and this, and this bundle of things is who I am. It's not always positive because I was just talking about having a body that looks better than other people's body. You could have a body that looks worse than other people's body.

And so that serves too. You could either, either you look for something else that gives you an identity, like actually you're more intelligent than all these stupid beach bums. So you can say, look at these people, but you have so much more knowledge and intelligence and you can look down on them.

Or you can, or you can be more spiritual. So if you, I can't afford a Ferrari, I'm on my bicycle and you say, look at this materialistic person with Ferrari. So you can still, or if that doesn't work, you can see how, how unfairly treated by life you have been and how much more, so much more miserable you are than most, most people.

And you've really been a victim of, of circumstances. You've been a victim of your birth and of your, your parents did a dreadful job with you. Maybe if their parents had been more conscious, things could have worked out, but they weren't.

So, but that, that also gives you a strong conceptual identity. So if you can't have a

positive one, the negative ones can be just as strong, if not stronger. You can have a huge victim identity.

It's a favorite thing. Sometimes in the collective, certain egoic things become fashionable for a while. Nowadays it's the victim identity for certain groups of people are very fashionable.

So people can feel, oh, yes, we are all being victimized by those people. And of course there's some truth in it in some cases, but that doesn't, but to derive an identity is a delusion. To, to, to, to derive a sense of identity from that is a huge delusion.

That is not who you are. That's all my life. That's all.

So if you are not all those things, so when I ask, who are you? If I ask that question, don't go, let's do this for a moment. Don't go into the past.

Can you, can you feel or sense who you are without reference to the past in you? You don't even need to remember your name right now. What for?

You don't remember your email address or your phone number or what happened to you 10 years ago. Don't need to remember that. Can you still get a sense without reference to your personal history?

Can you get a sense of beingness or presence? There's no past in that at all. But what is that?

You can't really describe it. All you know is that you are. I am.

You can sense the underlying beingness or presence of you. But to really sense it, what needs to happen is that for a moment, the stream of thinking needs to subside. And it may be happening for many of you at this very moment.

The stream of thinking that is normal for most people, that never stops except when they fall asleep, the stream of thinking for a moment subsides. And when I asked you whether you can be, sense yourself without reference to your personal history, what I was really talking about, what I was really asking was, can you get a sense of your presence without thought? Ah, and there's enormous revelation here.

This question, who am I, does not have a real truthful answer on a conceptual level. It's not in thoughts or words. The true answer to who am I has no thought in it.

It is a sense of presence or beingness. And you can only sense that if it's only a moment. So the stream of thinking subsides, and what happened is you are completely present without your mind saying anything.

You can perceive everything. You can still, you can see, you can hear, you're fully there,

and your mind is still. Still does not mean that you've gone to sleep.

It's the opposite. You're actually more alert in that stillness than you would be if you were identified with this continuous stream of thinking. That's the stillness, the inherent stillness, that actually every human has that.

You don't need to work hard to attain stillness or think that if I follow the right course of action, it might take me 10 years, and then I'll be able to have a still mind. No, it's already there. And if you're not totally miserable and unhappy every moment of your life, that means without perhaps you knowing it, anybody who is not extremely miserable all the time has a little bit of access, without even knowing it, to that stillness within.

They don't know it. All they know is from time to time they feel a little bit good. They feel, ah, they don't know.

For three seconds, they stopped thinking. Ah, they might have some other explanation of why in that moment they felt good. Maybe they were looking at a dog.

And in that moment, because the dog wasn't thinking anything about them, because the dog doesn't think, the dog is conscious but not conceptual thinking, the dog does not have an opinion about you. And so when you were petting the dog, for perhaps you suddenly felt good about petting the dog. Why?

Because for a moment, the dog freed you of the judgmental, conceptual mind that otherwise would be very active if you were petting a human. It would say something. Of course, you can't do that because people would think you're insane.

You can't go up to a human, may I pet you? That would be nice if they did that to each other, but the humans have judgments about you. So whenever you go to a human, you know that he has certain thoughts about you.

So the other human cannot free you from your thoughts. But the dog or the cat can, for a short moment, free you from your thoughts. And in that moment, it feels good.

That's why people love their pets so deeply. There's a reason, a deeper reason why they love because the pet frees them a little bit from their minds. And there are moments when you interact with your animal that you can hear in brief moments of thoughtless awareness.

Two seconds, three seconds, but it's enough to keep you going. It's enough so that your life doesn't become totally miserable. And then you might have other moments.

You might have moments when you engage in some physical activity, you swim or you climb a mountain. And then there are moments that your total presence is required by

the activity so that there's not enough left for thinking. And again, you feel intensely alive.

Oh, that was so good. Why was it so good? I love it.

It's just so good. I don't know why it's good. Well, it's good because it freed you for a moment from the incessant stream of thinking.

And there was some degree of awareness or presence arising, but you didn't even know that. All the things that you identify with as yourself, whether it's your possessions, your relationships or the things you have achieved or the things you failed to achieve, your successes and failures, what other people think of you, they're all thought forms. They're all thought forms in your mind.

And then these thought forms in your mind, they come together, they congregate in a bundle. And then this bundle of recurring thoughts become the place where you derive your sense of self from. It's a story-based entity, the me, me and my story, me and this story is called my life.

Not my life. People think about my life is, I have to think about my life. I need to work out my life.

But my life is actually a mental construct, me and my life. It consists of your past and the memories and the things, the ways in which you interpret your memories, because the things that you think happen to you, that may already be a falsification. You know that when you ask siblings, ask one sibling what the parents did 20 years ago and ask the other sibling, no, this is not what happened at all.

They experienced something, their memory is totally different of the same event. So there's the egoic entity, the me, consisting of thought. And this little me, the person, the historical person, is never at ease for very long.

And many egos live in an almost permanent state of underlying discontent. They don't even know it because it's so permanent. The same way that you don't know the noise of a refrigerator, the humming when you're in the kitchen.

And suddenly it stops and you go, oh, wow. And you had no idea that the noise was going on all the time. So for many people, their state of consciousness is this underlying discontent or unhappiness is there except for brief moments when they step out of thought.

But usually because they're falling below thought, they're not rising above thought, they're falling below thought. So you need a few more drinks in order, at least now I can be a little bit happy. Of course, it doesn't work all the time.

In fact, some people, when they drink, they become even more unhappy and violent. So it doesn't necessarily free you. So you have the, your sense of self is derived from this thinking in your head, which is maybe predominantly personal for, but in, there are also collective aspects to it where you derive your sense of self from.

And in some cultures, more traditional cultures, a person's sense of self is predominantly a collective one, which means there are collective thought forms that this person identifies with. They have been taught at school and through their family background. And this may be an idea, a political ideology, or it may be a religious ideology that you totally identify with.

And it has you in its grip. You don't know it. You don't know that you are in the grip of certain deeply lodged thought forms and through the screen of those thought forms, you look at the world and then you interpret it through that and you react and you take, you act through that screen.

So you are a, you inhabit a conceptual reality cut off from the deeper levels of your being. Terrible, terrible. But that is a transitional stage for humans.

The awakening is to realize that you had been trapped in those thought forms, which we call the ego. And suddenly you realize there's something else in me that is not thinking, but it's conscious. So I can think, and the universe is telling me to stop speaking for a moment and come back to where we started, which is, you remember I said, when you listen to the silence underneath and in between the words, what happens inside you and what happens inside you is you stop thinking.

You cannot notice the silence, even just notice it like now. In the moment of noticing, you are conscious, but not thinking. Wow, that's an amazing discovery that you are able to be conscious without thinking.

Now, how long that can be sustained in you is another question. But first of all, don't ask, okay, don't try to sustain it by applying willpower that doesn't work or stop breathing. Okay, and don't push your thoughts away that is not to be recommended.

You may be able to stop thinking by using willpower and saying, okay, I'm not going to think now. And you will have to stop breathing too. And you can hold it for a while.

But when the thinking comes back, it'll be as if you had taken a lit of a boiling kettle because you have some catching up to do. So, the most amazing discovery, and that is the awakening of consciousness. And let's see if we can go more deeply into that.

The most amazing discovery in yourself is that the arising of that dimension of consciousness where you are conscious, but you're not thinking. I call that rising above thinking, as opposed to falling below thinking. We talked about that already.

Both free you from this problematic level where humans have lived for thousands of years. That is the conceptual thinking mind. Now, we had to go through that, the conceptual thinking mind is a wonderful, wonderful thing.

Where it becomes a burden and a huge source of suffering is when it becomes the source of your identity. Then when you look to thought for your sense of self, and that is a very unsatisfying place to look for yourself. Because that is what the ego does.

And if you look for yourself on the level of thought, you will never be satisfied for very long. You'll always come back to the state of dissatisfaction where you say, okay, that wasn't it. I thought that would free me.

I thought that would make me happy. I thought that person looked so ideal until we started living together. It didn't work.

They were supposed to make me happy. That was a deal. We even signed a paper.

And then you get really angry. You can get angry at that person because you didn't fulfill your side of the bargain. You can become angry at God.

Why don't you say, this is the right person. I want to, I demand a partner that makes me happy. And so you look for the other thing.

And maybe you look for happiness in an acquisition of something. A bigger house or a bigger car might give me a more satisfying sense of self. But this house or that car, when you get it, it's not really the house or the car that gives you temporarily a more inflated sense of self because you only can experience the house and the car as a thought form, as my house and my car.

So you're looking to the enhancement of your sense of self, not really through the car or the house, but it's because you only experience the car or the house as this thought form. This is my car and this is my house. Have you seen it?

It's mine, look. Now that temporarily enhances your sense of self, but that also is based on thought because these things are thought forms. Welcome to our live meditation.

Last month we had our live meditation from Amsterdam. I was still on a Europe tour and we used a webcam rather than a bigger camera as we used to do. And then I realized and many of you realized that our meditation or teaching, whatever it is, actually works better with a little webcam than it does with a bigger camera.

It may have something to do with the fact that I'm very close to this little webcam and there is a deeper sense of connectedness. So we can share this state of consciousness, presence, and we're using the medium, the technology. How it works, I don't know, but there's a transmission of presence and that's why we're here to enter that shared state

of consciousness, the dimension of inner space, stillness, presence, whatever you want to call it.

And while we are in that shared space, inner space ultimately, who you are as a person is of little or no importance. Who I am as a person is of no importance, at least while we're here. And then hopefully that will have some effect on the rest of your life when you go about your business so that the me, the person, loses its overriding importance in your life.

It's still there, but it's no longer what dominates your life. So it's really transcending the person and being here together can give you an intensified experience of the shift from being primarily a person to being primarily a presence. I don't speak to you as a person.

My mind is used as a tool through which presence speaks. That's why I have a little book called Stillness Speaks. Seems almost paradoxical.

This entire teaching, if you even want to call it that, does not come from a person. It only happens because the person got out of the way, became transparent, subsided, and so something deeper was able to come through into this dimension. That's your destiny and purpose also.

So to be the presence consciously, to experience yourself as that underlying presence is liberating. It frees you from the density of being only that person, knowing yourself only as that personal self, being a self in the Buddhist sense, which is ultimately a delusion, deluded. What emerges is, in Buddhist terms, we might say the no self, which is not something.

It's not an object. It has no form. Or in Hindu terms, the transcendent self emerges, the formless self, not the me anymore.

And it's timeless. There's no past and future to it. And so this is recognizing yourself as essentially timeless, timeless awareness.

[Speaker 8] (9:49:53 - 9:49:58)

So when you look at me, you're not looking at a person. You're looking at yourself.

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[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 43:01)

But you're connecting with yourself. So the depth of who you are is reflected back to you. That's all.

When you go back into your daily life, there may be times when the person reasserts itself completely. So you lose yourself again in the person. And then you wake up again.

And some presence comes back. There may also be times when you are primarily the presence. That's wonderful as that happens more and more in your life.

With that comes an openness, a non-judgment. The judgmental mind subsides. And a real sense of connectedness or rather oneness with other beings, human beings, other life forms.

And so that means the way in which you experience your so-called life, the way in which you experience the world, people, situations, events, that changes. The reactive person, the reactive me is no longer running the show. And where before there was a reactive, judgmental person, there's now a deep, benevolent presence.

When you go on the internet and read what people have to say about this or that, most of all that is the reactive person. And there are millions of people who are angry and upset and they can energize other people who are equally unconscious. And when you begin to notice in your daily life when things happened, things went wrong, people didn't do what they were supposed to do, which happens a lot, and you begin to notice where before there was an immediate reaction, an immediate complaint, an immediate judgment.

And now when something happens like that, there's a non-reaction, there's just an aware space, that in that space, here's the situation, there's the person, and that's what is. And that's wonderfully liberating when you don't need to react all the time. You can see how very unconscious people love their reactivity.

You can't take it away from them. They have to arrive at a point where they realize that they are causing themselves and others suffering. Until a human being arrives at that point, they don't want to let go of their reactivity.

The ego loves it. So you have to see how it makes your life difficult. You have to experience the suffering that it creates to a sufficient degree so that you reach that point of readiness, because this is really seeing that 90% of the suffering in your life is created by the conditioned mind, by your mind.

And it's good to arrive at a point where you say, I can't stand it anymore, I can't take this

anymore. But at that point, some people still think that what they can't take anymore is to do with whatever happens around them. But really, it's to do with their mind.

Now, when we go deeply into the present moment, which is the same as being still, when you're still, you're very present. You can sense within yourself this essential presence right now, which you cannot define or analyze. It can only be sensed directly It has no form, every thought has a form.

It's a thought form, an energy formation. It arises and it subsides. So everything has form, except the presence, without which you wouldn't even be able to be aware of any form, the light of presence.

It is formless, it has nothing to do with time. And there, when you sense that presence, that is the deeper self. That is a deeper sense of identity than anything in your personal history or your life situation, because all that is form.

But underlying that and pervading that is something much more vital. That is the presence of consciousness itself. And you can sense the presence with your entire being, with every cell of your body, right now, here and now.

Every cell of your body can partake of this sense of all pervasive presence in which you need no thinking to tell you who you are because beyond concepts, beyond thinking, you realize this is who essentially I am. Not some thought in my head that tells me who I am, good or bad. So sense the presence, that vital presence with your entire being.

Feel it in your legs, in your hands, in your entire body, but it's not the body. It's that which animates the body. It's the presence.

So here we have another word, another pointer. The presence is the stillness. The stillness is the presence.

The term stillness points to that reality in negative, one could say, in a negative way in the sense that to most people, stillness means lack of absence of noise. In this case, of course, it's the noise of thinking. Yes, it's the absence of the noise of thinking, but it's also a very powerful presence.

The Buddha called it emptiness, but it would be equally true to call it fullness, the fullness of life, the unconditioned life prior to form. Prior to the arising of form. Another term the Buddha used to point to it, he called it the unmanifested, the uncreated, the unborn.

And he said, you can be aware of that. Within yourself, it is already here. It requires a redirecting, one could say, of your attention.

In the unawakened state of consciousness, which is the normal state of consciousness or

unconsciousness, your attention is continuously, or your consciousness is continuously absorbed by form. Thoughts and sense perceptions and emotions. And you go into the seductive power of every thought, of every emotion, of every sense perception.

And then suddenly you become aware of the silent space between two thoughts. Or you become aware of a sense perception without the interference of thinking. Then you have the sense perception.

Like right now, you may be looking at the screen and hearing the words. So you have visual and auditory perception. But if this is working for you right now, there is little or no thinking.

And you haven't disappeared. There is a presence. And if it's working for you right now, there is, you are aware in the background of your sense perceptions, so to speak, you are aware of a powerful sense of presence.

Now that is self-realization. That is spiritual awakening. That is enormously liberating because it liberates you from the prison of your conditioned mind, from being controlled, possessed by your conditioned mind and whatever energies the conditioned mind attracts to itself.

Without this, without this dimension operating in your life, you are to a greater or lesser degree insane. And this is why a large part of human history, when you look at it objectively, is a history of collective mental illness. And once you discover this deeper dimension and you sense and realize its intense aliveness, but at the same time, peace.

So not the peace of drowsiness or unconsciousness, but a vibrantly alive sense of peace. And once you realize that that dimension is there in you and how it frees you from the conditioning, which maybe not all at once, which may continue to operate in your life here and there, but you're able to step out of it and go beyond it. And a deeper intelligence can then operate in your life.

And that is the unconditioned intelligence, which can then operate through your conceptual mind also. It can use, it can move through it, but you're not identified then anymore with the conceptual mind because you're not looking for yourself in it. You don't need to identify with the thoughts.

You can use thoughts. You are no longer used by thought. In other words, you know who you are.

When you're used by thought, you don't know who you are. You mistake every thought for who you are. It takes you over.

The presence beyond thought, it's there. Why don't they teach that at school? It's here at this very moment.

That's the real meaning of the power of now. The power of now is the power of presence. And the presence is primordial intelligence.

In theistic language, which I don't use very much, it would be called God. Not the childish God of the angry or jealous man controlling entity somewhere. But in a deeper sense, it is the source of all life.

And that can then, it wants to, for some reason, express itself fully more and more in this dimension through you. You become a channel for it. And you bring something new into this world.

And above all, you bring peace, you bring creativity, joy, aliveness, whatever form that may take. Then you can become whatever you want to be. It is without loss of being, rooted in being.

And then you do whatever life wants you to do, always realizing being is primary. The present moment is primary. Presence is primary.

Everything else flows out of that or any doing or thinking is secondary. So this is being fully yourself. And being fully yourself also is relinquishing ultimately ideas about yourself.

The need to tell yourself who you are, good or bad. For many people, it's more bad than good. And this presence that you sense now, that you are now, can operate in your daily life when you do things and deal with things.

Just remember it's there, not once you remember it's there, you can sense it's there. So you are both the presence, the unconditioned, and you are also a person with his or her history and life situation. But allow the presence to shine through the person and then be the presence more than the person.

That's the most liberating thing that you can walk through life, being essentially a conscious presence. And secondary, yes, you're also a person. Be aware of the mental baggage.

If you're still from time to time, imposing mental baggage on a situation, be aware of the narrative that goes through your head referring to people or situations, or your so-called life. People have all kinds of judgements about my life. And when the moment people think my life, a heaviness descends upon them because, oh God, what is how, what's going to happen?

And what has happened? Ooh. So that they can look to the past, they can have regrets, a few pleasant memories, but it's all gone now anyway.

And then the future is so uncertain of my life. Where is it all going to go, my life? Of

course, not realizing that on that level, my life is a mental construct because the absolute reality of what your life is is this moment is your life.

Your life is never not this moment. The rest is a mental construct. Now, it may well be that you cannot live entirely without mental constructs.

Of course, you will have mental constructs, but you do not need to be trapped in your mental constructs and you do not need to derive your entire sense of identity, your entire sense of who you are from the mental constructs in your mind. And that is a liberation. So your life is now, and this is why I believe it's in my first book, there's your life situation.

Normally what's called my life is my life situation. All the stuff that makes up my life and my life situation is I have to remember it. I have to think about it.

Otherwise there is no life situation. So my life situation is a mental construct in the head. That's okay.

I have memories. I can't get rid of that. Nor do I want to or need.

You don't need to get rid of it. But you recognize that there is my life situation, but there's also my life. Now, my life is now and my life situation exists in time and it exists in the head.

And on that left, that is the personality. That's where it lives. And that's fine.

It continues to live, but I don't need to be trapped in that anymore. And more and more you come, you step into the nowness of now and live your life fully now, instead of being prevented from living your life fully now by excessive identification with the narrative, excessive identification with your life situation in your head. And think, oh, how is it ever going to change?

What about this moment? I'm not interested in that. I want to get somewhere else.

Where? I want to get somewhere where my life situation is going to be better. What about now?

And so, and then if you really open yourself to now, you realize actually, and this is an incredible realization for people who think they have lots of problems, which is most people. You cannot have a problem at this moment. You cannot have a problem now.

Challenge, yes. You can be challenged by some situation. Now there could be a grizzly bear escaped from Grouse Mountain coming into here and suddenly attack me.

Now, that's not even a problem because a problem needs time. It's a challenge in this moment. I wouldn't say now I really have a problem.

It's a challenge. And so either nobody can predict how you respond to a challenge. I might either play dead, run away, or who knows, or make friends with it.

And coming to the present moment. And so, yes, there are situations in your life that you need to deal with, or you might have to wait some time before you can deal with them, or there's nothing you can do about them. That's all true.

But the magical question you can ask yourself many times in your life is, especially when you're burdened by problems, do I have a problem right now? You may be ill. Yes, you might feel a disability.

You might feel a weakness. You might feel dysfunction on a physical level. That's the fact of what is.

This does not become a problem until your mind gets in there and starts constructing a story around it. So you can, can you be in the present moment and go into it, what problem do I actually have now? Well, now, well, I mean, I have to, I have to, the moment you go to problems, you go into the future.

I have to, well, tomorrow I'm meeting that guy and I have to think about what I'm going to say to him and then my lawyer has to see him about my divorce. Not mine, but it's just an example. I'm joking, I'm joking.

I have to declare bankruptcy tomorrow. That's a huge problem. My whole, my company, not mine, by the way.

A huge problem. Yeah, I have to think about it. But do you have a problem at this moment?

What? Yeah, I have to think. This moment, well, no, I don't see it.

I don't, I don't see the bankruptcy anywhere. Why is that strange? Well, I see there's the lights and there's flower and there's, I can feel myself breathing.

So the bankruptcy is also a mental construct because in the moment I take action, when it comes tomorrow, which is not tomorrow, it'll be now, then I take action. I'd say this, I'd sign that paper, and then I do that, and then I do that, and then I look at my bank statement and it will say zero. And again, just looking at that is not a problem until your mind, and I'm not saying take no action.

Action may be necessary, but it's not a problem. It's only the desire of the egoic mind to create problems by dwelling unnecessary on situations that creates a problem. And the ego grows.

The more problems you have, the bigger the ego gets. Me, there are many human beings who consider themselves a problem to be solved. That's their identity.

And many people go to a therapist with that underlying assumption. There's nothing wrong with therapists. Therapists do great work if they are connected with a deeper level of God.

And they go to a therapist with the assumption that I am a problem that needs to be solved. That's my identity. But of course, when it really comes to the crunch, they resist it because they are so, that it derives their identity from their problem, so they don't want to let go because then who am I without that?

Oh, okay, better stay in my problems. So what problem do I have at this moment? None, never a problem.

You could have pain, yes, it's pain. Not to be underestimated, but it's not a problem. But most things that make people happy, it's not even pain.

It's not, it's in the head. It's the problem-making faculty in the head. In the present moment, problems cannot survive.

And then you actually become much more effective at taking action when you don't create problems.

[Speaker 2] (43:25 - 1:06:08)

I have this makeup artist that comes to make me pretty for the camera. And as she was putting makeup on me, she goes, so tell me all the secrets to happiness. And I'm like, wow, that's a big question.

I suppose if we just don't think about it, we're happy. And it's so true. I mean, in our lives, I mean, we have all these roles that we play, you know, where perhaps, you know, a wife, a father, you know, a mother, a husband, a daughter, doctor, lawyer, janitor, whatever it is, we have all these roles that we play in our everyday lives.

And it can consume us, literally consume the space that we are and fill up that space. And we believe heavily and identify with those roles. So we will do together a who am I meditation.

Who am I? Beyond the conceptual mind, beyond the roles that we play in life. And roles are okay, as long as we can kind of like know, really know that that is not who we are.

So deep within us, there is a presence, consciousness, the Tao that cannot be named, but yet we can directly experience and know thyself, not through the conceptual mind, but through awareness, being aware of itself. So this day and age, maybe even some of you might be thinking, oh my goodness, a 30 minute meditation well, it's now 20, but 20 minute meditation, that's just like too much. Maybe 10 minutes is good, five minutes is good.

And now they have these apps that will count down for you to do a five minute meditation so you can become present. It's almost like gone are the days where when we would sit down and meditate and you would sit for an hour to meditate. I don't even know if those exist anymore.

However, I'd like to bring back 19 minutes now of meditation. So let's sit comfortably, I know we had lunch and maybe you had a lot of lunch and your tummy's maybe full, but if you think that you may fall asleep, which often can happen during a meditation, perhaps sit away from the back so you're not leaning against your back of the chair. Whatever will be comfortable for you.

Make sure your feet are flat on the floor or if you're sitting cross-legged, that's fine too. But sitting up nice and tall, either your hands can be face down on your lap or palms facing up and close your eyes. Let's everyone take a deep breath and just let it go with the sigh, letting go of the morning.

And one more time. Ah. And just becoming aware of your breathing.

Becoming aware of form and your breath is form. Unseen, but definitely felt. And perhaps some thoughts arise.

If they rise, just let them arise, but let them go and return your attention to your breathing. Become aware of your body, feeling your sit bones on the chair, perhaps scanning your body from head to toe, noticing any tension, tightness, or maybe even pain, just simply observing it, feeling it. Letting go of the label.

And if emotions are there or they arise in you, just simply notice and feel. And relax your body, relaxing your forehead, relaxing your shoulders, your jaw, relax your entire body. And with the sense perceptions of your ears, just notice the sounds that arise.

And now become aware of your inner body, that feeling of aliveness within. If you don't know what that feels like, just draw your attention to your hands and ask yourself, how do I know I even have hands? And just simply feel.

So there's an awareness of the form dimension, the form of your breathing, the forms of emotions, thoughts, sounds, the body, the sensations in the body, and the inner body. All that we can say is the world of form in this moment. Now see if you can become aware of the formless dimension, the awareness that you are aware, awareness itself.

Ask yourself, who am I? And notice maybe that the thoughts may arise and your attention is in the mind, looking for yourself in the mind. Your brain is such a small fraction of the totality of who you are.

So simply be still, be aware that you are aware. The form dimension remains, but yet there is the essence of who you are, the presence. It's always forms that arise.

Keep your attention on the formless and the stillness in which all forms arise and dissolve, arise and dissolve. You are both those dimensions of form and formlessness. Become familiar, as Matthew Ricard said, we can say meditation, we can say contemplation, can say we become familiar with thyself, to know thyself beyond the conceptual mind, to know thyself as that spiritual dimension.

It's why we are here, why we are on this planet, to evolve and awaken, so we can be in this world, but not of this world, can dance in this world, play our roles, but then lay them back down when we're just here sitting together. Or at any time, you're at work, you play your role, but when you go home, you're no longer that teacher, or doctor, or lawyer, or janitor, but to see our true selves, non-conceptually, is that inner happiness, is that joy, that peace that passes all understanding. So you can sit here with your eyes closed, or you can gently open them, taking in the world of form again.

The world of form tells me it's zero minutes left, so I leave you here with yourself. Thank you.